Imam al-Hadi (A.S.) reply on Fatalists

The following narrations are related to the Imam Abul-Hasan Ali bin Mohammed Al-Hadi (peace be upon him) From Ali bin Mohammed:

Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you and those who follow the right guidance. I have received your message and known what you mentioned about your disagreement in your religion, taking up the question of fatalism, the various opinions of those who believe in fatalism and those who believe in indeterminism that led you to depart and antagonize each other. You then asked me an explanation of the whole matter. I have understood everything. You, God's mercy be upon you, should know that as we considered the traditions and the numerous narrations, we could find out that all things that are embraced by the Muslims who understand God's commandments and affairs had been either right or wrong. The right, however, should be followed while the wrong should be evaded. The entire umma agreed unanimously on the fact that the Quran is undoubtedly right. All the Islamic sects believe in the truthfulness and the verification of the Quran. In this case, they all are true and following the right way, for the Messenger of God's saying: "My umma never agree unanimously on an incorrect affair."

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) then was telling the fact that all the affairs on which the umma agree unanimously are perfectly true provided that the different sects of the umma do not show discrepancy. The Quran, hence, is perfectly true because they all agree upon its revelation and precision. When the Quran verifies an event and a sect denies it, it should necessarily believe it because they originally agreed upon the true verification of the Quran. If such a sect insists on denying such a verified event, it should be dismissed from the religion.

The foremost narration whose verification, credence, and evidence are proved through the Book (of God) is the narration that is related to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) and verified and recognized by the Book in such a way that their sayings cannot oppose. It is the Prophet's saying: "I will leave among you the two weighty things—the Book of God and my progeny: my family. You will not deviate as long as you adhere to both of them, and they will not depart each other until they will join me on the Divine Pool."

The evidences on the accuracy of this hadith are numerous in the Book of God. As an example,

we cite God's saying:

Only God, His Messenger, and the true believers, who are steadfast in prayer and pay alms while they kneel during prayer, are your guardians. One whose guardians are God, His Messenger, and the true believers should know that God's party will certainly triumph" Sunnis related many narrations confirming that Amirul Muminin (peace be upon him), once, gave his ring as alms while he was kneeling in a prayer. God therefore thanked him for this act and revealed the previous Verse in this regard.

We also found that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) had said: "He whose master was I, Ali will be his master." "Ali, your relation to me is as same as Aaron's relation to Moses except that there will be no prophet after me." "Ali will settle my debts, fulfill my promises, and will be my representative on you after me."

The first narration from which the others were extracted is unanimously acceptable for them (Sunnis) since they do not disagree about its accuracy. Moreover, it agrees with the Book of God. As the Book, as well as these numerous evidences, testifies the accuracy of the narration, it becomes obligatory upon the umma to confess of its accuracy necessarily as long as the Quranic evidences on such narrations are obvious.

They agree with the Quran and the Quran agree with them. Afterwards, true narrations of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) that are related to the Truthful (Imams) by trustworthy celebrities are proved. On that account, it becomes obligatory upon every male and female believer to accept such narrations as true. Besides, no one should exceed them except the obstinate. This is because the sayings of the Prophet's family are connected to the saying of God. God says:

Those who annoy God and His Messenger will be condemned by God in this life and in the life to come. He has prepared for them a humiliating torment. The like of the previous Verse is the Prophet's sayings: "He whoever annoys Ali is annoying me, he whoever annoys me is annoying God, and he whoever annoys God is about to be punished." "To love Ali is to love me, and to love me is to love God." "Let the Wulai'as keep on doing so and I will subjugate them to a man who is like myself, loves God and His Messenger, and they love him—Ali, get up and go to them." "Tomorrow, I will appoint (for the commandment of the army going to conquer Khaibar) a man who loves God and His Messenger and they love him, a conqueror not absconder, and he will not return before God gives his victory." As the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) foretold of the victory, every one of his companions looked forward to being the one intended. The next morning, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) summoned Ali (peace be upon him) to give him

the commandment of that army who would conquer Khaibar. Furthermore, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) named him conqueror not absconder and declared that God and His Messenger loved him and he loved them.

The previous introduction was the evidence on our subject of discussion and will help us prove our coming discussion of the matter of fatalism, indeterminism, and intermediacy. All support and power belongs to God on Whom we depend in all our affairs.

First, let us begin with the saying of Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him): “No fatalism and no indeterminism. It is an in-between position. It is the soundness of the creation, the freedom of choice, the enough time, the supplies like the riding animal, and the means of incitement to the doing.” Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) collects the comprehensives of the merits in these five qualities. If a servant lacks any of these five qualities, his deeds will be invalidated.

The Imam is telling the origin of the knowledge that people should seek and the Book refers to its confirmation. The decisive maxims of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) also testified so because the sayings of the Prophet and his family never exceed the limits of the Quran. It is obligatory upon the servants (of God) to follow the narrations that agree with the revealed Verses and confirmed by the Quran. Only the obstinate may breach such an obligation, as we have mentioned previously.

We found out that the sayings of Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) regarding the confirmation on the in-between position and the denial of both fatalism and indeterminism are testified and agreeable to the Book after we had inspected the matter.

We have also another narrative that is related to Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) and suitable for our topic. He was, once, asked whether God forced the servants to commit the acts of disobedience to Him. The Imam answered: “God is too fair to do this.” He then was asked whether God gave the servants the ultimate freedom of choice. The Imam answered: “God is too powerful and dominant to do so.”

It is also related that Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: “Concerning the question of fatalism, people have three different opinions. One is the belief that people enjoy an ultimate freedom of choice in their acts. The adopters of such a belief are disregarding the limitless dominance of God over everything. They are untrue.

Another opinion is the belief that God forces the servants to commit acts of disobedience to Him and imposes upon them responsibilities that are beyond their abilities. The adopters of such a belief are imputing unfairness to God. They are untrue.

The last opinion is the belief that God imposes upon the servants responsibilities that fit their abilities and He never overburdens them. They should thank Him when they practice a good

deed and should seek His forgiveness when they commit a sin. The adopters of such a belief are perfect Muslims."

In the previous narration, Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) declares that the adopters of fatalism and the adopters of indeterminism are opposing the right. I have already shown that the adopters of fatalism are inaccurate and the adopters of indeterminism are wrong. Hence, the true is the intermediacy.

I will cite an example for each of these three beliefs for making the question clearer, more understandable, proved by the Verses of the Book, and verified by the intelligent.

Success and protection are sought from God only.

Fatalism, the adopters of which are inaccurate, is the claim that God the Majestic forced the servants to commit acts of disobedience to Him and will punish them for so. The adopter of such an opinion is describing God's judgment as unfair and belying Him. He also renounces God's sayings: Your Lord is not unjust to any one.

This is the result of what your hands have wrought. God is certainly not unjust to His servants. God does not do the least bit of injustice to anyone but people wrong themselves. In addition, numerous Quranic texts confirm this fact.

Those who claim being forced to commit acts of disobedience are accusing God of forcing them to be guilty and deciding His punishment as unfair. He who accuses God of unfairness is belying His Book, and he who belies God's Book is ruled as atheist in consensus.

The adopters of such a belief are comparable to a slave who did not possess his own freedom or any thing in this world. His master realized this fact, but he ordered him to go for purchasing something without giving him its value. The master claimed that he is just, fair, wise, and impartial, and threatened the slave with punishment if he would return without that thing although he realized that the vendor of that thing was so careful that no one can take anything from him before paying its value completely, and he did not hand the value to his slave. As the slave could not fetch that thing to his master after he had gone to the market for purchasing it, he came back disappointed. The master was highly enraged and punished the slave.

If the master was truly fair and wise, he would not punish the slave, as he knew that he did not possess anything and that he had not given him the value of that thing. If he punishes the slave, he will be wrong, transgressor, and liar in the claim of being fair, wise, and just. If he does not punish the slave, he will break his false and unfair threat that cancels justice and wisdom. God is too Glorious and Exalted to be considered as they believe Him to be. He is the most High and Great.

The adopters of fatalism or its branches are accusing God of injustice and imputing unfairness and oppression to Him, because they claim that He imposed punishment on those whom He forced to be guilty. Those who claim that God forced the servants to be guilty will inevitably believe that He will save the guilty from His punishment. Those who claim that God will save the committers of acts of disobedience from His punishment are belying God's threat that is mentioned in many Quranic texts, such as the following:

There is no doubt that evildoers who are engulfed in sins are the companions of Hell wherein they will live forever.

Those who wrongfully consume the property of orphans are, in fact, consuming fire in their bellies and they will suffer the blazing fire. We will make the rejecters of Our revelations suffer in Hell. As soon as the fire destroys their skins, We will give them new skins so that they may suffer more of the torment. God is Majestic and All-wise.

Those who belie the threat of God are atheists because they deny one of the Verses of God's Book. They are also reckoned with those about whom God says:

Do you believe in one part of the Book and not in the other? Those who behave in this way shall reap disgrace in this world and severe punishment on the Day of Resurrection. God is not unaware of things that you do.

We believe that God will reward the servants for their deeds and punish the guilty for their sins in the limits of the ability that He gave them. He ordered to do definite matters and warned against committing others. In His Book, God says: For a single good deed, one will be rewarded tenfold. But the recompense for a bad deed will be equal to that of the deed and no injustice will be done to anyone.

On the day when every soul will see its good and bad deeds right before its very eyes, it will wish for the longest period of time to separate it from its bad deeds. God warns you about Himself.

Every soul will be recompensed for its deeds on this Day. There will be no injustice. These decisive Verses deny fatalism and its adopters. There are many others Quranic texts in this regard.

The belief of indeterminism that was denied by Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) who also accused its adopters of inaccuracy is the opinion that God the Majestic neglected and gave the servants an ultimate freedom of choice regarding His commandments. This wording is quite deep if efforts are exerted for explaining and understanding it. The Imams of the Prophet's progeny (peace be upon them) referred to this point when they said: "If God gives the servants the ultimate freedom of choice by means of negligence, He must then accede to their choice

and they will obligatorily deserve the reward and it will be improper for Him to punish them since he neglected them."

The opinion leads to one of two meanings:

First, the servants supported each other against God and obliged Him to accede to their own choice necessarily, whether He liked it or not. Accordingly, the Lord is weak.

Second, the Lord is too weak to make the servants abide by His commandments and abstain from committing the matters against which He warned; therefore, He gives them the ultimate freedom to choose among His commandments according to their wills. Hence, they enjoy ultimate freedom to choose faith or disbelief.

The like of that opinion is the master who purchased a slave to serve him, acknowledge his favors of mastership, and carry out his orders. The master claimed that he is predominant, powerful, and wise. He ordered his slave to do definite matters, warned him against others, promised him a great reward if he would carry out his orders, and threatened him with painful punishment if he would break the orders.

The slave did not comply with his master's will as he broke the orders. In other words, he did not keep any of his master's orders and commandments. He followed his own will and did only what he liked to do. The master lacked the ability to stop that slave and subjugate him to his orders and instructions. He therefore had to give him the ultimate freedom of choice and had to accept the slave's deeds that were practiced out of the slave's, not the master's, will.

As the master asked the slave to fetch him something, the slave broke the order and fetched something else that he himself chose. When the slave was back, the master asked him the reason beyond fetching something he had not ordered. The slave answered that he practiced according to his own will and choice because he depended upon the ultimate freedom of choice that his master had given to him.

The authorized persons are not forbidden from doing anything. On that account, ultimate freedom of choice is impossible.

Thus, the master should be able to order his slave to follow his instructions and carry out his commands according to his, not the slave's, will. The master also should grant the slave a limited capacity due to which the slave can follow the instructions and carry out the orders. When the master orders the slave to follow definite instructions and warns him against definite acts, he should inform him of the rewards for following such instructions and the punishment for committing such acts.

He should also give notice against the punishment and interest him in the rewards by

describing them perfectly for the slave who, in that case, will realize the power of his master through the capacity of carrying out the orders and abstaining from the warned acts. Such being the case, the master's fairness and justice will be comprehensive and his argument against the slave will be obvious through his warnings.

If the slave carries out the master's instruction, he will be rewarded, and if he does not stop breaking the master's instruction, he will be punished.

If the master gives the slave the ultimate freedom of choice, he is then too powerless to control the slave who may do good or evil or may obey or disobey. Consequently, the master will be unable to punish the disobedient slave or force him to obey. If the above-mentioned characters are applied to God, then His power, godhead, orders, instructions, rewarding, and punishment are all invalid. It also contradicts the Book of God that says:

He –God- does not want disbelief for His servants. If you give thanks, He will accept it from you." Believers, have fear of God as you should and die only as Muslims (having submitted to the will of God)" We have created jinn and human beings only that they might worship Me. I do not expect to receive any sustenance from them or that they should feed Me.

Worship God and consider no one equal to Him.

Believers, obey God and His Messengers and do not turn away from Him when you hear (His commands).

The adopters of the belief that God gave the servants the ultimate freedom of choice in His instructions and warnings are imputing powerlessness to Him, deeming obligatory on Him to accede to everything they do, and deactivating His orders, promises, and threats. This is because the free to choose can do anything out of his will. He can disbelieve or believe and no one will have the right to stop or forbid him. So therefore, the adopters of ultimate indeterminism cancel God's promises, threats, and orders as well as everything that we have already mentioned. They are included with those about whom God says:

Do you believe in one part of the Book and not in the other? Those who behave in this way shall reap disgrace in this world and severe punishment on the Day of Resurrection. God is not unaware of things that you do.

God is too exalted to meet the descriptions of the indeterminists.

Our opinion is that God the Majestic created the creatures out of His power and gave them the ability to worship Him. He therefore orders them to do certain things and warned them against others. He accepted from the creatures to follow His orders that He chose for them out of His

satisfaction.

He also warned them against committing acts of disobedience to Him, censured the disobedient ones and will punish them. All rights of option belong to God exclusively. Only He can choose whatever He wills and orders to follow His chosen commandments and He can warn against anything and punish for committing it because of the ability that He granted the servants for carrying out His orders and avoiding committing acts of disobedience to Him. He is obviously Just, Fair, and thoroughly Wise.

He perfected the argument for Himself by excuses and warnings. He, absolutely, enjoys the right of option through which He select anyone of His servants for conveying His message and providing His arguments against people. As He chose Mohammed (peace be upon him and his family) and selected him to convey His message to people, the disbelieving ones said, out of envy and arrogance: Why this Quran had not been revealed to a great man from either of the two towns?

They meant Umayya bin Abissalt or Abu Mas'ud Ath-Thaqafi.

God canceled and rejected their choice and personal notions. He says:

Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord? It is We who have distributed their sustenance in this world and raised the positions of some of them above the others so that they would mock each other. The mercy of your Lord is better than what they can amass. Thus, God chose only what He wills and warned against only what He detested. He will surely reward those who obey Him and will surely punish the disobedient. Had He given people the freedom of choice, He would have acceded to the choice of Koreish who selected Umayya bin Abissalt or Abu Mas'ud Ath-Thaqafi since they preferred those two men to Mohammed (peace be upon him and his family).

Moreover, God disciplined the believers by His saying:

The believing men and women must not feel free to do something in their affairs other than that which has been already decided for them by God and His Messenger.

He did not permit them to choose for themselves out of their own ideas and passions. He accepted from them only to follow His orders and avoid the acts of disobedience to Him. These orders and warnings are conveyed to them through the one whom God chose for the conveyance of His message. On that account, he whoever complies with the chosen conveyer will be guided to the right and he whoever disobeys will be astray and subjected to the argument of God, which is the ability to follow God's orders and avoid acting disobediently to Him. The disobedient will be therefore deprived of God's rewards and will surely suffer His

punishment.

This opinion of intermediacy is neither fatalism nor ultimate indeterminism.

Amirul Muminin (peace be upon him) refers to the opinion of intermediacy by the following narration:

Abaya bin Rab'ie Al-Asadi asked Imam Ali (peace be upon him) about the ability through which he can stand erect, sit, and do whatever he wants. Amirul Muminin said: "What do you think of that ability? Do you possess it without the interference of God, or do you possess it as same as God possesses?"

Abaya could not find any answer. "You should answer, Abaya," said Amirul Muminin. "What should I say?" asked he. Amirul Muminin said, "I will definitely kill you if you claim that you possess this ability without the interference of God, and I will kill you too if you claim that you possess it as same as God possesses." "What should I say then, Amirul Muminin?" asked Abaya confusedly and the Imam (peace be upon him) answered:

"You should say that you possess that ability through God Who is the only One that possesses it perfectly. If He gives you the ability in possession, that will be out of His favors. If he takes it back from you, that will be a kind of His test. He is the true Possessor of everything that He gives to you and the true Prevalent on everything that you can do through Him. You have heard people frequently seeking ability of changing and power as they say, 'All ability of changing and power belong to God', have you not?"

"Yes, I have," answered Abaya, "What is the interpretation of this saying, Amirul Muminin?" Imam Ali (peace be upon him) answered: "This means that we cannot avoid the acts of disobedience to God except through His preservation, and we do not have power to obey Him except through His help."

As he heard these answers, Abaya kissed the hands and feet of Amirul Muminin (peace be upon him) out of his admiration. The following is another narration that is related to Amirul Muminin (peace be upon him): A man called Najda came to Imam Ali (peace be upon him) asking about the acknowledgement of God. "O Amirul Muminin," he asked, "How do you acknowledge your Lord?" Imam Ali (peace be upon him) answered: "I acknowledge Him through the ability of discernment that He granted me and the mind that guides me to this acknowledgement."

"Are you enforcedly disposed for this acknowledgement?" asked Najda. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) answered: "If I am enforcedly disposed for this acknowledgement, I should not be praised for a good deed that I practice or censured for an evildoing that I commit. Moreover, if

it is so, then the doer of charity, not the evildoer, should be blamed. But I knew that God is Existent and Everlasting while everything else is created, changeable, and transient. Surely, the Everlasting Eternal (God) is not like the transient created (things)."

"O Amirul Muminin," spoke Najda, "I notice that you have spoken out of wisdom." Imam Ali (peace be upon him) answered: "In fact, I am free. I will be surely punished if I commit an evildoing instead of a good deed."

It is also related that an old man asked Amirul Muminin, in his journey back from Syria (the battle of Siffin), whether their fight against the Syrian people had been out of the act of God. "Yes, it was," answered Amirul Muminin (peace be upon him), "You cannot climb a mount or descend in a valley unless through the act of God." "O Amirul Muminin," asked the old man, "Will I then sacrifice my fatigue for God's rewarding?" Amirul Muminin (peace be upon him) answered: "Do not ask it, old man. God is certainly adapting for you a great reward while you are walking, residing, and returning.

You have not been enforced or compelled to do any of your actions. Perhaps you thought it i.e. act of God, is an inevitable and incumbent act. If it is so, then rewarding and punishment are meaningless, promises and threats are illogical, and people will not be subjected to the indefeasible things. That is the opinion of the idolaters and the Shaitan's disciples.

The orders of God the Majestic are carried out optionally and He warns against things out of admonition. He is not obeyed compulsorily and is not overcome when He is disobeyed. He has not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them purposelessly, even though this is the belief of the disbelievers. Woe to the disbelievers; they will suffer the torment of fire."

The old man, then, kissed Amirul Muminin (peace be upon him) on the head and went on saying (as poetic verses):

"You are the Imam for the obedience to whom we wish for God's forgiveness on the Day of Salvation.

You have disclosed the obscured points of our religion. God reward you with full satisfaction on behalf of us.

No one is excused for committing an evildoing out of wrongness and disobedience to God."

In the previous narrations, Amirul Muminin (peace be upon him) provides evidences that are extracted from the Book of God and rejects the opinions of fatalism and indeterminism, since they -these two opinions- drag their adopters to wrong, atheism, and denial of the Book. God guard us against deviation and atheism.

We do not believe in fatalism or indeterminism. We believe in the opinion of intermediacy. The opinion of intermediacy stands for the test and examination by means of the ability that

God has granted to us and asked to practice through it and we proved it –the opinion- due to the Book and the beliefs of the pious Imams of the Prophet's family (peace be upon them).

As an example on the examination through ability, we cite the following example:

A wealthy master wanted to test his slave; therefore, he gave him some of that wealth in possession and ordered him to practice definite acts that the master liked and avoid spending the wealth in definite fields. The wealth then can be spent in two fields—either the fields that the master likes or the fields that the master dislikes.

The master also lodged the slave in a house and informed him that he would live there temporarily because, in the future, he would be taken to another permanent abode where he would be either rewarded or punished. If the slave spends that wealth in the fields that his master liked and ordered, the master will give him the permanent rewarding in the permanent abode of which he promised. But if the slave spends the wealth in the fields that the master warned against, he will encounter the permanent punishment in the coming permanent abode.

The master limited a definite time for living in the first temporary house. The master would seize the slave and the wealth that he had given in possession, although he is the actual possessor of the slave and his wealth, when the deadline of living in the temporary house fell. Since the master was just, faithful, fair, and wise, he would not seize the wealth that he had given to the slave in possession before the falling of the deadline of living in the temporary house.

Supposing the slave spent the wealth in the fields of which the master ordered, the master then should fulfill his promise to the slave and reward him, should he not? He would be doing favors to the slave as he tested him in a temporary house and rewarded him, for being obedient, with a permanent joy in a permanent abode.

Supposing the slave spent the wealth that his master gave in possession in the fields against which his master had warned during his staying in the temporary house, the punishment with which the master had threatened would unavoidably befall him without the master's being wronging him, since he had already instructed, informed, and warned against spending the wealth in such fields. Hence, the master should fulfill his promises and execute his threats so as to be described as the prevalent powerful one.

The master in the previous example stands for God the Majestic, the slave stands for the human being, the wealth stands for the immeasurable power of God, the test stands for the exhibition of His wisdom and power, the temporary house stands for this world, the wealth that was given to the slave in possession stands for the ability that God has given to the human beings, the fields in which the master ordered to spend the money stand for the ability to follow

the apostles of God and acknowledge whatever they relate to God the Majestic.

The fields against which the master warned stand for the courses of Eblis, the promise of the master stands for the endless source of pleasure of Paradise, (the temporary house stands for this world), the permanent abode stands for the life to come, and the test by the ability that was given to the slave stands for the opinion of intermediacy.

The five qualities that Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) mentioned –the previous saying of Imam As-Sadiq: "No fatalism and no indeterminism. It is an in-between position. It is the soundness of the creation, the freedom of choosing, the enough time, the baggage like the riding animal, and the means of incitement to the doing,"- are the comprehensives of merits. I, hereby, am to explain them separately and provide evidences from the Quran.

Explanation of soundness of the creation:

In his saying, "the soundness of the creation," Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) refers to the perfection of the human beings' creation, the perfection of the senses, the stability of the mind, the discernment, and the full ability of utterance. In this regard, God says: We have honored the children of Adam, carried them on the land and the sea, given them pure sustenance and exalted them above most of My creatures. In the previous Verse, God informs that He preferred the human beings to the other creatures, such as beasts, wild animals, submarine animals, and birds as well as every active creature that man can perceive by the discernment of the mind and articulation. This is clear in God's sayings: We have created the human being in the best form.

Human being, what evil has deceived you about your Gracious Lord Who created you proportionately and fashioned you in whatever composition He wanted.

Furthermore, there are many Quranic texts confirming this fact.

Thus, the foremost God's grace on human beings is the soundness of the mental power in addition to the preference to many other creatures by means of the mind perfection and the discernment of the rhetoric. Every active creature on this earth is independent by means of its senses and self-perfection, whereas the human beings are preferred to other creatures by means of their ability of speaking, which all the other perceptive creatures lack. Through the ability of speaking, God made man dominate the other creatures. Accordingly, the human beings have enjoyed the ability of controling the other creatures, which have become under man's predominance. This is clear in God's sayings:

God has made subservient to you the animals so that perhaps you will glorify Him.

It is God who put the oceans at your disposal so that you could find therein fresh fish for food and ornaments to deck yourselves with. He created cattle which provide you with clothes, food, and other benefits. How beautiful you find them when you bring them home and when you drive them out to graze. They carry your heavy loads to lands, which you would not have been able to reach without great difficulty. Your Lord is certainly Compassionate and All-Merciful.

On that account, God has called the human beings to follow His commandments and obey Him, since He has preferred them to other creatures by means of the sound creation and the perfect articulation and knowledge after He had granted them the ability that is fit enough for making them obey and follow His commandments. This is evident in God's sayings:

Have as much fear of God as best as you can, listen, and obey.

God does not impose on any soul a responsibility beyond its ability.

God does not impose on any soul that which he (or she) cannot afford.

There are many other Quranic texts referring to this meaning.

When God seizes somebody's sense, He acquits him of carrying out the practices that are done through that sense. God says: It is not an offense for the blind, the lame, or the sick not to take part in the battle. Whoever obeys God and His Messenger will be admitted to the gardens wherein streams flow. God will make whoever turns away suffer a painful torment.

In this Verse, God acquits all these classes of participating in jihad as well as every act that they cannot practice owing to their disability. As God gives the solvent the ability of defraying the zakat and performing the hajj, He deems obligatory upon them to do these two things. For the poor, He does not make it obligatory upon them to defray the zakat or perform the hajj. He says:

Those who have the means and ability have a duty to God to visit the House (of God) and perform the hajj rituals. God also says:

Those who renounce their wives by calling them mothers and then change their minds about what they have said will have to set free a slave as a ransom and only then will their carnal relations be lawful. This is what you have been commanded. God is Well Aware of whatever you do. If one cannot set free a slave, he must fast for two consecutive months, and only then can he have lawful carnal relations. If this is also not possible, he must feed sixty destitute people. This is the command of God, so that perhaps you will have faith in God and His Messenger. Such are the Laws of God, and those who disbelieve them will suffer a painful torment.

The previous Verse is a proof on the fact that God (the Blessed the Exalted) has not imposed

upon the servants a responsibility that is beyond their ability and has not warned them against a practice that they cannot avoid. This is the soundness of the creation. Explanation of the freedom of choice:

By the freedom of choice, Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) means that nothing can watch, ban, or prevent man from carrying out the orders of God. This is clear in God's reference to the weak ones whom are too oppressed to have any means or way by which they can obey God. He says: As for the really weak and oppressed men, women, and children who were not able to find any means of obtaining their freedom or of having the right guidance…

Hence, God asserts that the weak individuals whom are deprived of the freedom of choice are acquitted if they are faithful believers. Explanation of the enough time: By the enough time, Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) means the age in which the acknowledgement of God becomes obligatory upon man, namely the time of the ability of discernment and maturity up to death. Whoever dies before he realizes the perfection is on the right (path). This is clear in God's saying:

One who abandons his home for the cause of God will find many places of refuge in the vast land and one who dies, after having abandoned his home to get near to God and His Messenger, will receive his reward from God. God is All-forgiving and All-merciful. God acquits such persons of any imperfection because they could not attain the perfection of their religion due to time limitedness. God also acquits the immature ones of the mattersthat are imposed upon the mature. This is clear in His saying:

Tell the believing woman to cast down their eyes, guard their chastity, and not to show off their beauty except what is permitted by the law. Let them cover their breasts with their veils. They must not show off their beauty to anyone other than their husbands, father, father-in-laws, sons, step-sons, brothers, sons of brothers and sisters, women of their kind, their slaves, immature male servants, or immature boys. They must not stamp their feet to show off their hidden ornaments. All of you believers, turn to God in repentance so that perhaps you will have everlasting happiness. Explanation of the supplies:

By the supplies, Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) refers to the financial potency and the subsistence that help man carry out the Lord's orders. This is clear in God's saying:

People who are weak or sick and those who do not have the means to take part in the fighting are exempt from this duty if their intention remains sincere about God and His Messenger. Righteous people shall not be blamed. God is All-forgiving and All-merciful. This Verse shows that God excused those who could not have enough means for expenditure, while He convicted those who had enough means of subsistence and riding animals owing to which they could

perform the hajj rituals, participate in jihad, and could practice the like obligatory matters. God also excused the poor and imposed the rich to dedicate a share of their resources to the poor. He says:

(The recipients of charity should be given to) the poor whose poverty, because of their striving for the cause of God, has become an obstacle for them, and who do not have the ability to travel in the land, they seem rich compared to the ignorant, because of their modest behavior. You would know them by their faces. They would never earnestly ask people for help. God knows well whatever wealth you spend for the cause of God.

In the previous Verse, God acquits the poor and frees them from the responsibility of preparing for whatever they cannot do or possess its means. Explanation of the means of the incitement to the doing:

By the incitement to the doing, Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) refers to the intention, which is the motive of all the deeds. The heart is the sense of the intention. God does not accept the deeds of anyone who practices an action without true intention. Thus, He says about the hypocrites: They (the hypocrites) speak words that do not come from their hearts. God knows well whatever they try to hide.

As a word of reproof, God addresses to the believers:

Believers, why do you preach what you do not practice? It is most hateful in the sight of God if you say something and do not practice it. Anyone who says something faithfully will be driven by his intention to apply his saying practically. If one says something without belief, the reality of that saying cannot be seen.

Moreover, God accepts the true intention of a deed that does not accord it because of an obstacle. This is clear in His sayings: No one verbally denounces his faith in God unless he is forced but his heart is confident about his faith. God will not take into account your inattentive oath.

The Holy Quran and the Prophet's reported sayings prove that the heart is the possessor of all the senses and the corrector of their deeds. Nothing can cancel what the heart corrects.

The previous was an explanation of the five qualities to which Imam As-Sadiq (peace be upon him) refers in clarifying the opinion of intermediacy between fatalism and ultimate indeterminism. It becomes obligatory upon everyone who has these five qualities gathered in his personality to act perfectly according to the instructions of God and His Messenger. The individuals who lack any of these five qualities are acquitted of practicing the deeds that need that quality.

Many Quranic texts prove the test of ability that comprises the two opinions (of fatalism and ultimate indeterminism) together. God says: We shall certainly test you until We know those who strive hard for the cause of God and those who exercise patience. We will also examine your deeds.

We gradually lead those who have called Our revelations mere lies, to destruction. Their destruction will be such that they will not even notice how it seized them.

Alif. Lam. Mim. Do people think they will not be tested because they say, "We have faith?" In the following Verses, the word ‘fitna’ stands for test:

We tested Solomon by (causing death to his son) and leaving his body on Solomon's chair. Then he turned to Us in repentance…

The Lord said, ‘We tested your (Moses) people after you left them and the Samiri made them go astray.’

(Moses said:) It is only Your test.

The previous Quranic texts are compared to each other and testify for one another.

In the following Verses, the word ‘balwa’ stands for test:

…But He wanted to test you through what He has given to you.

Then He let you face defeat in order to test you.

We have tested them in the same way as we tested the dwellers of the garden.

It is He who has created death and life to put you to the test and see which of you is most virtuous in your deeds.

When his Lord tested Abraham's faith, (by His words)…

Had God wanted, He could have granted them (unbelievers) victory, but He wants to test you through each other.

All the Quranic texts in which the word ‘balwa’ is mentioned are dealing with the subject of God’s test and examination. Yet, they are numerous in the Quran.

All these texts prove the test and examination.

As a matter of fact, God the Majestic has not created the people out of play, has not neglected them, and has not shown His wisdom out of vanity. He asserts this fact in His saying: Did you think that We had created you for a playful purpose?

One may ask: “Did God have no knowledge of the servants’ deeds before He had tested them?” We answer that God has already known completely what the servants will do before they did anything. This is proved by His saying: If they were to return to (the worldly life), they would again commit what they had been warned against, for they are liars. God has tested them only for showing them His justice and for providing the argument against them before He punishes

them. The meaning of this notion is proved in God's sayings:

Had We destroyed them with a torment before the coming of Muhammad they would have said, 'Lord, would that you had sent us a messengers.' We have never punished anyone without sending them Our messenger first.

The Messengers were sent to give people the glad news (of God's mercy) and warn them (of His punishment). On that account, God tests the servants by the ability that He grants to them. This is the opinion of intermediacy, which is a position between fatalism and ultimate indeterminism. This opinion is also testified by the Holy Quran and the reported sayings of the Imams of the Prophet's progeny (peace be upon them).

One may cite the following question:

"What do you say about the exegesis of God's saying: 'God guides or causes to go astray whomever He wants,' and the like Verses? To answer this question, we cite that the previous Quranic text and its like have one of two meanings:

First, the Verses are notifications of God's absolute ability. This means that God is able to guide to the right or cause to go astray whomever He wants. However, if God subjects people –out of His absolute ability- to believe or disbelieve in Him, then they should not deserve the reward or the punishment. We have already referred to this meaning in details.

Second, God's guidance stands for His introduction of the right path. This meaning is clear in God's saying:

We sent (introduced) guidance to the people of Thamud but they preferred blindness to guidance so a humiliating blast of torment struck them for their evil deeds.

If God forced them to accept the right way, they would not have gone astray. Besides, not every allegorical text can be taken as evidence against the decisive texts. God orders us to follow the decisive Quranic texts only. He says:

It is God who has revealed the Book to you in which some verses are decisive statements (which accept no interpretation) and these are the fundamental ideas of the Book, while other verses are allegorical (may have several possibilities). Those whose hearts are perverse, follow the allegorical statements in pursuit of their own mischievous goals by interpreting them in a way that will suit their own purpose. No one knows its true interpretations except God and those who have a firm grounding in knowledge. They say, "We believe in it. All its verses are from our Lord." No one can grasp this fact except the people of reason.

Give the glad news to those of Our servants who listen to the words (of the Quran) and only follow the best ones. They are those whom God has guided. They are the people of

understanding ‘The best words’ in the previous Verse stands for the most decisive and the clearest.

God lead you and us to say and do what He likes and accepts, and save you and us against the acts of disobedience to Him out of His grace and favor. All praise is due to God as fit as He deserves.

The blessings of God be upon Mohammed and his immaculate family.

Allah be sufficient for us. He is surely the best guardian.

Source:

Tuhaf al-Uqoul