



The Relationship Between Morality and The Afterlife in Shiism and Catholicism, With an Emphasis on The Qur'an and the Bible*



Reza Kazemi Rad 

Faculty member of the International Ahlul Bayt (A.S) university, Tehran, Iran.
r.kazemirad1365@gmail.com

Abstract

One of the critical topics in the field of theology is the relationship between religion and ethics. Under discussion of the relationship between religion and ethics, the relationship between the hereafter as an essential religious doctrine and ethics is considered one of the most important. If in religions, especially Abrahamic religions, theology is considered their point of difference, then ethics can be considered the common thread of all these religions. Of course, moral teachings in Islam and Christianity are more eminent than in other religions. What a Shia Muslim and a Catholic Christian have in common is, on the one hand, a set of moral teachings and, on the other hand, a belief in other teachings, including the hereafter. Just as there is a significant relationship between religion and morality, such a relationship can also be imagined between morality and the hereafter. When these two categories are placed

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together, they have a mutually influential relationship. The afterlife affects morality in several ways. The afterlife in Shia is indeed different from Christianity's in many ways. However, some things are shared between them, including the resurrection of the dead, judgment of actions, and reckoning. This leads us to commonalities in these two religions regarding the relationship between morality and the hereafter. Finally, what has been obtained from the research in this regard is that in both religions, the hereafter affects morality in three areas: giving meaning, giving motivation, and giving purpose. This article will investigate various aspects of this effect with an analytical and comparative method.

Keywords

Shiism, Catholicism, afterlife, ethics, The Quran, The Bible.

problem statement

If we divide the teachings of religions into three main parts, one of them is moral teachings. Religions have significant differences in rituals, but there are many commonalities in ethics. Therefore, ethics is an integral part of all revealed and non-revealed religions. A part of the Quran and Bible teachings as the sacred texts of the three Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, is focused on ethics. The holy books of these three religions teach us to adopt good qualities in life and to make ourselves praiseworthy and good¹(Tabatabaee, 2015, p. 30-33). In the eyes of Quranic scholars, ethics is one of the four main topics of the Holy Quran. In research on the history of the Qur'an, Hojjati writes: "The topics and contents of the Holy Qur'an can be divided into four general fields, which are: beliefs, laws, morals, and instructive stories."²(Hojjati, 2015, p.153-154).

In the New Testament, morality is an essential subject, so much so that if we were to limit it to only two subjects, one would undoubtedly be morality. Regarding the teachings of Jesus Christ, John B Noss writes that the teachings of Jesus are of two types: "A" religious principles and "B" moral teachings, and these moral teachings, like other prophets, led to his practical teachings. He spoke about moral principles with great power and confidence.³ (Noss, 2012, p.597).

Another part of the holy texts of these three religions is also related to eschatological issues. Simultaneous attention to these two categories, i.e., morality and the afterlife, can point to a meaningful

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1. Seyyed Mohammad Hossein Tabatabaei, compiled by Seyyed Mahdi Ayatollahi, Religious Education or Islamic Teachings, pp. 33-30.
 2. Hojjati, a study on the history of the Qur'an, pp. 154-153.
 3. Noss Jan, The Complete History of Religions, p. 597.

relationship between the two sects of Christianity and Shi'ism. Although the afterlife has different meanings and conditions in the two sects, the essence of rebirth, reckoning, and judgment is similar to a large extent in both Christian and Islamic concepts of the afterlife. The question that can be investigated is the relationship between these two categories of issues. Reflection on this issue leads to the point that when these three traits are applied to the moral system, they lead to the emergence of a particular type of ethics called "eschatological ethics". In this type of ethics, the hereafter affects ethics in the three areas of "knowledge, motivation, and purpose" and thus shapes eschatological ethics. Of course, the characteristics of "eschatological ethics" are related mainly to the meaning of the second variable, i.e., "afterlife". Along with the similarities of this type of ethics in Shia Islam and Catholic Christianity, any change in the meaning of the hereafter can lead to a change in the meaning of ethics. For example, in Shia and Catholicism, it is expected that eschatological ethics is different because, as said, the meaning of the afterlife is distinct in these two sects. Considering this point, the following article aims to examine the manifestations of this ethics in the three mentioned levels, i.e., the level of knowledge, motivation, and purpose.

The influence of the hereafter on ethics in the field of knowledge means that the perception and confirmation of some moral propositions are based on the perception and confirmation of some propositions related to the hereafter. In other words, the meaningfulness, as well as the understanding and confirmation of the propositions of this school of ethics, is based on the understanding and confirmation of the epistemological propositions. For example, in Shiism, the virtue of "self-restraint" is dependent on the concept of "judgment" on the resurrection day, so that if there are no judgments in the hereafter, the virtue of self-restraint (from a religious point of view) is not approved.

In Catholic Christianity, referring to the Bible as the most fundamental source of Christian ethics, especially in the Sermon on the Mount, we encounter moral propositions such as humbleness, avoiding hypocrisy, corruption, and lying. Without an afterlife, teaching and recommending these moral principles will be meaningless.

The concept of ethics

It shows the inner form of a human being. In other words, it is a series of inner properties due to which performing actions is done easily without the need for thinking and reflection.¹ (Ismaili Yazdi, 2006, p. 16). This concept includes positive qualities such as truthfulness, integrity, humbleness, courage, sacrifice, and negative qualities such as lying, fraud, humility, and fear.² (Mesbah Yazdi, 2010, pp.19-20, Moallemi, 2006, pp. 13-14). This definition is a general, inter-religious and universal explanation of ethics. In the same manner, Shia ethics refers to those teachings by which we can judge the good and bad deeds of a person within a religious framework (Mousavi Bojnourdi, 2006, p 285). According to this, to achieve happiness, every Muslim should have his character and behavior based on religious, moral teachings (Mousavi Golpayegani, 2012, vol 1, p. 534).

Ethics in the Catholic Church is considered a branch of theology (Ramirez, 2003, "in New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol 9, p 848) and is known as moral theology (Harvey, 2012, tra. Taheri, p. 84)Therefore, Christian ethics, or moral theology, is a branch of Christian theology that, relying on divine inspiration and revelation, defines and determines right (virtues) and wrong (vices) behaviors from a

1. Esmaili Yazdi, Abbas, Farhang Akhlaq, p. 16

2. Mesbah Yazdi, Philosophy of Ethics, pp. 19, 20; Moalemi, Moral Philosophy, pp. 13 and 14.

Christian perspective (Mc Coy, 2004, p.138). Christian morality is based on revelations, primarily the actions and teachings of Jesus Christ (Moral Theology", in: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2006, p. 749). Moral theology seeks to investigate and study human behavior based on moral rules and orders (Broderick, 1944, "Moral Theology" in: Concise Catholic Dictionary, p. 227). It is stated in Catholic sources that moral theology brings to man all the moral laws and guidelines that guarantee the ultimate happiness of man and warns against all that separates him from the love of God (Catechism of the Catholic Church, (2015), trans. Ahmadreza Miftah and others, p. 526, paragraph 1950).

In the New Testament, the word ethos, which is the root of ethics, has been used three times by Paul, including in the Acts of the Apostles 21:16 and 3:26 and 1 Corinthians 33:15, where in his letter to the Corinthians, while talking about the resurrection, he warns them "Do not be deceived and remember that bad company corrupts good morals (ethos)"

Also, Peter's second letter mentions that "through faith, one can acquire high moral values (ethos). For this reason, you should try hard to complete your faith with chivalry, chivalry with knowledge, knowledge with piety, piety with tolerance, tolerance with godliness, godliness with brotherly friendship, and brotherly friendship with pure love (2 Peter 5:1).

The origin of Christian ethics is in the word of God; therefore, a Christian must do what God commands.

The concept of the hereafter

The constant variable of this article is the concept of the "afterlife". Akhira (آخرة), means "the end, the resurrection", and it is the world that people enter after death and stay in forever. The English

equivalent of this concept is hereafter, its Hebrew equivalent is *הַלְעוֹנִים*, and its Greek equivalent is *εφεξής*. In heavenly religions, the world after this world is called the hereafter. According to religious teachings, the "hereafter" contrasts the "world" and is the place of reward and punishment for man's good and bad deeds in this world. Belief in the hereafter has been one of the essential principles of all prophets' missions. In the Holy Quran, about 2000 verses explain the features and events of the hereafter.

The hereafter is interpreted as "the last day" in many verses. In this interpretation, "the world" is considered the "first day", and the hereafter is the "last day". Also, "Dar al-Qarar" is another interpretation the Qur'an uses about the hereafter.

Shia eschatology:

Eschatology, or belief in the afterlife, is one of the central beliefs of every Muslim. If the foundations and basic principles of Shia Islam are three, one is resurrection and belief in the hereafter.

The literal meaning of the hereafter was mentioned earlier. The word "Akhria", is an antonym for "first" and "preceding" (Mohammadi Ray Shahri, 2007, p.24). In the book "Al-Ain" (*العين*), "the end" and "the hereafter" are considered opposites of "the beginning" (Farahidi, 1987, p.539). Some others have put it in contrast to life in this world and life after death (Ebrahim Mustafa and others, 1989, p.9). However, most theologians have not defined the hereafter and resurrection in their works. Perhaps the clarity and self-evident nature of these two concepts were the reason. Other definitions are as follows: "creating another world like this one and gathering human beings from the first to the last" (Mughniyeh, 1993, trans by Rashidi, p. 157); or "the return of the soul to its origin" (Shirazi, 2021, tras by Ashtiani, p. 528); and "transferring the soul from the visible world to the unseen world." (Ebrahimi dinani,

2000, p. 529). Some have their technical defined of the afterlife, "a place where the soul returns to the body it belonged to" (Kharrazi, 1999, vol 2, p. 96). Regarding the origin of resurrection as one of the concepts related to the afterlife, it is also mentioned in the dictionary books that: "Recurrence is the repetition of something after being done" (Farahidi, 1987, p. 131 – Al-Razi, 1979, vol 4, p. 148). Alternatively, it is stated that: "Resurrection is the place of return" (Ebrahim Mustafa and others, 1989, p.635). Another reading is that "the word resurrection means the time of recurrence, and it may be the name of a place, and it means the place of recurrence." (Mohammadi, 2008, p. 501).

What is common in all the mentioned opinions, both literal and idiomatic, is the return of the human soul to another world; Although there is no consensus on whether this return is purely physical or spiritual, from the collective views of Shia scholars, it can be concluded that resurrection is physical and spiritual.

Christian eschatology

One of the most significant parts of Christian theology is eschatology. Christian eschatology is a general title that, in its individual form, includes five things: death, personal judgment, purgatory, heaven, and hell (New Catholic Encyclopedia, 2003, p. 332). In the collective form, the hereafter includes the end of the world, the return of Christ, and a public judgment (ibid, p 342). In the eyes of some, in addition to the three things mentioned, the resurrection of the dead is also added(Ibid) Like Christian ethics, the foundation and root of the eschatology of this religion should be searched for in the Bible. All the contents of the Bible (especially the New Testament) about the world of the hereafter can be found under categories such as "judgment", "eternal life", "forgiveness of sins", "Day of Resurrection", "punishment and punishment", "hell", "heaven", and "Kingdom of Heaven"(John: 6:39,

44, 54; Luke: 14:14; Matthew: 12:36; Mark: 3:28; Luke: 22: 29, 30; Matthew: 19:16 and 17; Matthew: 16:18). Of course, the related verses in these two parts have different meanings, i.e., the Old Testament and the New Testament. The eschatology of the Old Testament includes the belief that the disasters that happened to the people of Israel are due to not relying on God's laws and will (Encyclopedia of Britannica, 2006, p. 334). In contrast, the eschatology in the New Testament revolves around the return of Jesus Christ and the beginning of human judgment.

In Paul's writings, the importance of the apocalypse for the early Christians has been emphasized a lot (Von Hugel, 2007, p. 103). Of course, after the expectations of the end of time did not come true in the early church era, this issue became a marginal issue for many Christians. However nevertheless, the expectation of the imminent apocalypse has risen among Christians at different times (Cross, L. F, 2005, p. 560).

The relationship between Shia ethics and the hereafter

The goal of all moral teachings and guidelines is for humans to live morally in this world and achieve eternal happiness in the hereafter; The hereafter helps this goal in several ways: first, it essentially makes some of these propositions meaningful; Second, it motivates a person to live morally and thirdly, it gives purpose to a person's moral actions. It is necessary to emphasize that the hereafter has such a function and not the belief in the hereafter; In other words, the mentioned effects cannot be attributed to belief in the hereafter and not the principle of the hereafter itself. If the belief in the afterlife has such effects, then if a person does not believe in the afterlife, such effects should not be imagined. So, the motivation of the afterlife or its role in making a moral doctrine such as self-restraint meaningful can be proven regardless of one's belief or disbelief. In other words,

self-restraint is logically valuable even without belief in the afterlife.

The relationship between ethics and the afterlife in Catholic Christianity

In Christianity, concepts such as death, purgatory, reckoning, judgment, and heaven and hell are among the beliefs related to the afterlife. In other words, Christian eschatology includes judgment, calculation, heaven, and hell. On the other hand, some moral propositions are related to the hereafter in different ways. This relationship exists on three levels of meaningfulness, motivation, and result. These three levels are examined in detail below.

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The role of the hereafter in the meaningfulness of moral propositions

- In Shiism

One of the effects of the hereafter on ethics is its role in giving meaning to some moral propositions. This role means that the supposition and confirmation of some moral propositions are based on the supposition and confirmation of some propositions related to the hereafter. In other words, the meaningfulness and the understanding and confirmation of these ethical propositions are based on the understanding and confirmation of the eschatological propositions. For example, in Shiism, the concept of the virtue of "self-restraint" and its confirmation depends on the concept and confirmation of judgment on the resurrection day. Thus, if the judgment is not validated in the hereafter, the virtue of self-restraint (from a religious point of view) is not validated either. The Holy Qur'an is the best evidence for this issue with the function of proving the hereafter because, according to the verses of the Qur'an, man will face his

actions in the hereafter in different ways. These verses can be divided into at least three categories:

The verses that state that human actions in this world will be seen in the hereafter; As:

"وَقُلْ اَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللّٰهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ" (Surah Tawbah verse 105);
"Whatever you want to do, God, His Messenger and the believers will see your actions."

Or the verse:

"...إِنَّا أَنْذَرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ الْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ" (Surah An-Naba verse 40);
"We have warned you of the imminent punishment! This punishment will be on the day when man sees what he has already sent with his own hands."

The verses that state that a person's actions in this world will be entirely handed over to him in the hereafter; As:

"¹فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جُمِعْتَاهُمْ يَُوْمَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ" "So how will they be when We gather them together for a Day in which there is no doubt, and everyone is given in full what he has provided (of deeds for himself)?"

And, the verse:

"وَإِنَّ كُلًّا لَّمَّا لِيُؤْفَيَّهُمْ رَبُّكَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ" (Surah Al-Imran, verse 25); "And your Lord will give them the deeds of each one without any deficiency; He is aware of what they do."

The verses based on which a person will be questioned and calculated about his actions on the Day of Judgment:

In several verses, the Day of Judgment is referred to as "the

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Day of Reckoning"; including Surah Ibrahim verses 16, 26, and 41, Surah Sad verse 53, Surah Ghafir verse 27. Some of these verses are:

"إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ؛ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ" (Surah Ghashiyah, verse 25-26) "Surely to Us is their return, then surely with Us is their reckoning."

"وَلَسْأَلَنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ" (Surah Nahl, verse 93) "And you will be questioned about what you have done."

Imam Reza (PBUH) also says: "ليس منّا من لم يحاسب نفسه في كل يوم" (Majlesi, 2000, vol 17, p. 116) "He who does not evaluate himself every day is not one of us".

The philosophy of the necessity, justification, and morality of self-restraint and calculation of deeds in this world is the existence of the hereafter and the reckoning of the Day of Judgment. This is why the ethical sources emphasize that one of the effective and useful ways of scrutinizing one's deeds is to remind people of the severe and difficult reckoning of the Day of Judgment when they will carefully reckon the deeds of the jinn and humans. Imam Ali (PBUH) also says: "حاسبوا انفسكم قبل ان تحاسبوا وزنوها قبل ان توازنوا" (Surah Rahman, verse 26) "Before you are judged on the Day of Judgement, judge yourself in this world and evaluate yourself before your actions are evaluated." Now that man is facing such a fate in the hereafter, and such a careful judgment is waiting for him, there rises a need to observe and adhere to some matters such as "self-restraint and evaluation" in this world. These moral propositions derive their validity and meaning from the existence of the hereafter and its consequences, i.e., judgment, reward, and punishment. If such a reality does not await man in the world of the hereafter, the morality of self-restraint and evaluation will not be justified.

- In Catholicism

In Catholic Christianity, referring to the Bible as the most fundamental

source of Christian ethics, especially in the Sermon on the Mount, we come across some moral propositions, teaching, and observing which will be meaningless if there is no afterlife. Thus, the existence of the hereafter and the other world justify the morality of these propositions.

These verses order to do moral matters that there is no support or guarantee for if there is no afterlife. This means that to a person who does not believe in the afterlife, there will be no need to follow these moral matters.

These verses in the Bible can be categorized as follows:

The verses that specify the existence of the world of the hereafter:

Among these verses from the Gospel of Luke:

"Yes, whoever accumulates wealth in this world, but does not carry provisions for the hereafter, is ignorant" (Luke 21:12);

"In this world, he will be rewarded many times over, and in the hereafter, he will have eternal life"; (Luke 30:18).

"Therefore, sell everything you have and give it to the poor so that you can store up a treasure and wealth for your hereafter, a wealth that will never be wasted, and thieves will not touch it, and the elements will not destroy it." (Luke 33:12).

The verses that indicate the judgment of human actions in the hereafter:

Including:

"God will judge the ends of the earth." (Samuel 2:10)

"God... will come to judge the world." (1 Chronicles 16:33)

"But God will judge the inhabited quarter with justice." (Psalms 9:7-8)

"At that time, he will punish everyone according to his actions." (Matthew 6:27)

Verses that indicate reckoning on the Day of Judgment:

"So, each one of us will give his account to God" (Romans 12:14);

And: "They will give account to Him who is capable of judging the living and the dead"(1 Peter 5:4).

The function of these verses is to prove the afterlife after death and the judgment and reckoning of people's actions by God and Jesus Christ. The function of the afterlife is to justify the order to live morally and observe moral propositions. Because moral propositions will have meant if there is an afterlife and human actions are judged and calculated. Based on this, these propositions will be meaningless if there is no afterlife.¹

Hereafter and moral motivation in Shia

In the research that have been carried out in this field so far, sources of motivation for morality from a religious point of view, are said to mainly be "innate cognitive properties, godliness, and perfectionism" (Razza, 1998, p. 84), "social approval", "afterlife reward and punishment", and "divine love".(Mahdavinejad, 2012, p102) The motivations for morality in the Holy Qur'an are also "the innate tendency towards goodness", (Tabatabaei, 2014, trans by Mousavi, vol 12, p 97) "acquiring the comfort of the hereafter", (Ibid, vol 7, p 12) "divine love", and "social approval"² (Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 161-194).

- Belief in the afterlife, the most powerful motivation for moral living

Almost one-third of the Qur'anic verses are dedicated to the afterlife

1. Of course, it is possible that a person agrees to these propositions from another point of view, but it will no longer be religious.

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and resurrection, and all of them play the role of an active motivation for people, along with explaining various aspects of man's afterlife. This vast volume of verses that exist in this regard can be divided into several major categories:

Verses that indicate the existence of the hereafter and return to God:

Such as:

"إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ" (Surah Baqarah, verse 156) "We all belong to God and to Him we return."

“إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ وَالْمَوْتَى يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ” (Surah An'am, verse 36) "Only those who have listening ears will accept (your call); But the dead (and those who have lost their human souls, do not believe; and) God will resurrect them (on judgment day); Then they return to him."

Belief in the Hereafter and the Day of Resurrection and belief that one day humans will return to God so that their actions will be judged undoubtedly plays the most significant role in reforming humans' worldviews, attitudes, and actions. A person who knows that the life of this world is only a temporary bridge and passage to reach eternal life and a place to collect his provisions and determine his future destiny will do his best to adhere to what he must do. Moreover, full-fledged adherence to religious and moral duties will provide the most wealth for a better place hereafter.

Verses that indicate the impossibility of returning to the world and doing righteous deeds:

Some of the verses of the Qur'an that refer to the issue of the afterlife and play the role of motivation are the verses that talk of a request. According to these verses, after death, some people

earnestly ask God for the opportunity to return to the world to reform their way of life, perform righteous deeds, and collect their provisions. Namely: « حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ؛ لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ »¹ (Surah Mominun, verses 99-100) "When the time of death comes for each of them, he will be regretful and say, "My Lord!, Let me go back to the world, maybe I will do a good deed in what I left (and failed to do)!" (But they tell him:) Never! He says this with his tongue (and if he returns, his work will be like before)! And there is a barrier behind them until the day they are resurrected!"

Although the Holy Qur'an is not a book of ethics, by mentioning this fact, it seeks to display its role in human growth and the spread of morality and to make people understand that, firstly, beyond him, there is a system of accurate judgment of his actions in the world and detailed accounting. Moreover, the worldly life is his only chance to do good and moral deeds and collect wealth for that eternal house. And secondly, if this world ends for him, there is never a chance for him to return to make up for his mistakes. Suppose a person realizes that his place in the hereafter will be determined based on his actions in this world and that the decades of life are his first and last chance to do good deeds and achieve a good end in the hereafter. In that case, he will try to create the best destiny for himself in the hereafter by living according to religious and moral standards. This effect cannot be obtained except by remembering the eternal life in the hereafter; This is why the Qur'an describes various aspects of human destiny in the hereafter in detail and repeatedly for its audience.

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Verses that indicate that human actions will be seen and humans will face their actions on the Day of Judgment:

As mentioned earlier, some verses of the Quran are verses that indicate that the actions of man in this world will be seen in the hereafter, such as:

"قُلْ اَعْمَلُوا فَمَا تَرَوْنَ" (Surah Tawbah, verse 105);
"Whatever you want to do, God will see your deeds."

"وَأَنْ يَكُنْ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَى" (Surah Najm, verses 39-40)
"And that there is no benefit for man except his efforts; And that his efforts will soon be seen."

Verses that describe hell and punishments as a warning against the consequences of wrong worldly actions:

"وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَازِبًا لَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ" (Surah Anfal, verse 50); "And if you see the unbelievers when the angels (of death) take their lives and strike them on their faces and backs and (say:) taste the burning torment (you will feel sorry for them)!"

Verses that describe the blessings of heaven and express the fruit of good deeds:

Such as:

"وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِزْقًا قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأُتُوا بِهِ مُتَشَابِهًا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ" (Surah Baqarah, verse 25); "Give good news 'O Prophet' to those who believe and do good that they will have Gardens under which rivers flow. Whenever provided with fruit, they will say, "This is what we were given before," for they will be served fruit that looks similar but tastes different. They will have pure spouses, and they will be there forever."

When a person who believes in Qur'anic teachings witnesses this good news and these warnings, his existence will be filled with fear and hope, which will be the strongest motivation for him to live morally and follow moral teachings.

The motivational function of the hereafter in Catholic Christianity

The motivation of the hereafter for "being moral" means that the Christian's belief in the afterlife and the existence of another world has a motivating role in observing and carrying out moral propositions for the Christian believer. Many verses in multiple categories prove this motivation, including:

Verses that refer to the reward of heaven and the granting of rewards to the righteous and the punishment of sinners in the hereafter; As:

"If your hand or foot leads you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better to enter heaven without hands and feet than to go to hell with hands and feet."(Matthew 8:18).

This verse, with exaggerated language, implies that heaven is the final destiny of those who lead a moral life and avoid sin; It emphasizes the necessity of avoiding sin and immorality at any cost.

We see the same thing in the following verse of the Bible, which says:

"And if your eye causes you to sin, take it out and throw it away. It is better to enter heaven with one eye than to go to hell with two eyes";(Matthew 9:18).

The verses that indicate the existence of hell and punishments for human sins in the hereafter:

The verses related to the torment in hell can be divided into two

parts: the verses that generally promise punishment and hell to the evildoers and the wicked, and the verses that refer to a specific immoral act and promise punishment for the perpetrator.

Among the verses that are in the first category, the following can be mentioned:

"... and they will receive eternal punishment, but the righteous will enter eternal life."(Matthew 46:25).

"A wicked person will be punished for wickedness, and God does not discriminate." (Colossians 25:3).

In the second category, i.e., the verses that refer to a specific issue and emphasize the punishment for doing it, we can refer to the following topics and verses related to them:

- Punishment for tampering with other people's property:

"They consume the wealth of widows and prolong their prayer just to show themselves off. Their punishment will be more severe."(Mark 40:12 and Luke 47:20).

- Punishment for the sin of adultery:

"Everyone should respect marriage and keep the bond away from impurity because God will punish adulterers, whether single or married."(Hebrews 4:13)

- Punishment for hypocrisy:

"Woe to you, you hypocrite Mullahs and Pharisees, you consume the wealth of widows and prolong your prayers while showing off; for this reason, you will face the most severe punishments."(Matthew 14:23).

- Punishment for slandering and wrongfully assaulting a religious brother:

"But I tell you that whoever gets angry with his brother without reason will be punished, and whoever calls his brother a fool will be punished, and whoever calls his brother a fool will deserve hellfire." (Matthew 22:5).

All the verses mentioned motivate Christians to live morally in different ways (some in the form of good news and some with the warning of hell).

The role of the hereafter in giving purpose to moral acts

The third function of the hereafter concerning moral actions is to give them a purpose. The purpose of moral actions is the most important concern and question of every moral activist. Every human being (according to the limitation he suffers by observing moral and ethical propositions) is interested and has the right to know what the result and end of his morality will be. Perhaps this issue can be better explained with the question that a person in such a position is faced with the question, "Why should I be moral?". The answer he is expected to receive will naturally have a similar structure to: "you must be moral to...". What follows this answer is the goal of moral act. The goal of a moral act can be worldly and material matters, as is the case in divine religions, especially Islam, and it can be a matter of the hereafter.

Providing moral actions with a purpose in Shia

The Holy Quran has depicted man's ultimate goal and destiny based on his actions through verses that can be separated into multiple

categories. The categories of these verses are as follows:

Verses that introduce heaven as the result of good and moral actions such as:

"وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا" (Surah Nisa, verse 122); "And those who believe and do good, we will soon admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow, to stay there forever."

The verses that depict hell as the result of ugly and immoral actions:

Such as:

"كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْفُجَّارِ لَفِي سِجِّينَ" (Surah Motaffafin, verse 7); "Never... surely the letter of the evildoers is in prison (Hell)".

"وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ؛ فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ" (Surah Al-Qari'ah, verses 8 - 9); "And whoever's action is worthless and light weight, his place is in the bottom of Hawieh (the abyss)".

The verses that introduce God's satisfaction and pleasure as the result of moral living:

Some verses of the Qur'an that express the purpose of actions in the hereafter introduce God's satisfaction with man as the purpose of his moral and religious conduct in this world. Although a person will get the reward of heaven by following religious and moral teachings in this world and avoiding immoral deeds, he will also receive a higher reward and that is God's satisfaction with him in the hereafter:

"لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأُزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ..." (Surah Al-Imran, verse 15). "For those who fear their Lord,

there are gardens beneath which rivers flow, eternal life in them, and pure marriages and the pleasure of God..."

On the Day of Resurrection, the soul of a righteous person will be addressed, "يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ؛ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً" (Surah Fajr, verses 7-8), "Return to your Lord, satisfied.", "return to your Lord while both you are pleased with God and God is pleased with you".

Verses that state eternal happiness as the outcome and the final cause of moral actions along with acquiring admirable qualities, such as:

"قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى" (Surah Al-Aa'la, verse 14); "Undoubtedly, prosperous is he who purified himself [from inner and outer viciousness]."

Or:

"قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ" (Surah Mominun, verse 1); "Verily, the believers are saved".

And: "وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَحْشَ اللَّهَ وَيَتَّقْهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ" (Surah Noor, verse 52).

"And whoever obeys the command of God and the Messenger and is God-fearing and pious, such people will be victorious and prosperous."

Certainly, it will not be possible to reach the position of a pious person without observing moral teachings in this life; Therefore, the eternal felicity that the Qur'an introduces as the goal of religion will also serve as a purpose for a moral life.

Providing moral actions with a purpose in Catholicism

Observance of some moral teachings by individuals will pay off in this world, but a more significant percentage of moral actions do not

have a tangible result in this world; therefore, there must be another world where the outcome of following those moral teachings will show there. In the Bible - the most important source of Christian ethics - there are many verses from which the purpose of moral actions can be understood. In these verses, the hereafter is considered the ultimate goal for moral actions. These verses can be divided into several categories:

Verses that refer to the principle of "rewarding" human actions in the hereafter, such as:

"The Son of Man will come... and at that time, he will reward everyone according to his deeds."(Matthew 27:16).

And: "You will be blessed... and you will be rewarded on the Day of Resurrection."(Luke 14:14).

Verses that refer to heaven, such as:

"In this world, he will be rewarded manifold, and in the hereafter, he will be blessed with eternal life."(Luke: 30:18).

It is also stated in John chapter six:

"Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever is faithful has an eternal life."(John 47:6).

Verses that refer to hell because of immorality and sins, such as:

"But those who oppose the truth of God's existence and walk upon their sinful paths will be severely punished. Yes, they will be subjects of God's anger and wrath." (Romans 8:2).

All the above being said, it is proven that it is the hereafter that provides a purpose for a Christian's actions in this world; If a Christian takes up an ethical approach, heaven will be their place, and if not, they will be doomed in hell, according to the Romans.

Summary and result

Comparing two concepts of morality and the afterlife in Shiism and Catholicism, similarities and differences can be drawn:

Similarities:

- The meaningful relation of morality and the hereafter in both sects:

In both sects, morality and the hereafter have a meaningful relationship. The revelation and text-centered nature of both Islamic and Christian religions and the emphasis on death, resurrection, judgment, and heaven and hell in the sacred text of both sects reveal a relationship between morality and the hereafter more than before.

- Emphasis on the role of morality and its effect on people's prosperity

The Holy Quran emphasizes the role of action in the ultimate salvation of humanity. Many verses in the Holy Qur'an indicate the significant role of practicing morality in the felicity of humanity in their afterlife. Moreover, the Bible puts much emphasis on practicing morality. The New Testament is full of moral advice from Jesus and Paul. Considering Jesus' advice, it seems his whole mission was to make Christians morally righteous.

The result is that eschatological ethics can be found in both Shia and Catholic sects.

Differences:

Examining various aspects of eschatological ethics in Shia and Catholicism proves that the differences between the two are more prominent than the similarities.

- A call for a persistent moral life in Shiism

The first aspect of the differences between the two sects in the field of ethics is that the eschatological ethics in Shiism invites people to constant practice of morality. According to Shia ethics, all human behaviors can be considered a deal with God, and man is never free of communication with God. Since human growth depends on God's constant presence, a moral Shia person always considers God in his personal and social relationships, to the degree that their obedience affects even their personal and social ethics. The Shia moral system requires consistency and continuous self-restraint. In other words, the Shia moral system is "action-oriented". Tranquility in the Shia moral system is achieved when a person always practices morality and refrains from sins and any immoral deed. In Shia ethics, which needs constant effort. Without persistence, ultimate prosperity is not guaranteed. Based on this, periodic morality has no place in the Shia moral system. Periodic ethics means a person practices morality only at a certain time and occasion. In that particular time¹ (such as Ramadan), one displays a moral life and as it is idiomatically said, they become morally obese; however, during the rest of the year, it is impossible to see them as moral human beings. This procedure is entirely against the Shia moral system because, as it was said and is also taken from the verses of the Quran, the constant practice of morality guarantees human salvation. This is what the Quran and Sunnah prescribe for all human beings. As a result, the emphasis on a constant religious, moral life in Shia (و من يعمل مثقال ذرة خيرا يره), as well as self-restraint (عليكم انفسكم), are clear signs that in Shia morality and

1. Perhaps this topic can be extended to a specific place. Like the people who, contrary to their usual practice, showed a moral character in some holy places such as Mecca and Medina or at the presence of infallible (PBUH).

religious literature, a person should always take care of himself by indulging in ethical behaviors.

However, in Christianity, action-oriented morality is not very prominent; The emphasis of Christian ethics is more on the grace of being saved rather than the effectiveness of actions; Of course, in this regard, the situation in Catholic Christianity is better than in Protestant Christianity, because in Protestant Christianity, instead of emphasizing the role of moral actions, the emphasis on faith and Lord's grace is seen much more.

The fact mentioned above also reveals something else. The immediate and repulsive attitude change of some people, which has occurred and may occur, is not a common incident and contradicts the rules. In the history of Islam, like other religions, we have seen instant transitions in many people, People who suddenly gave up an unethical life and did the right thing. There are many examples of these transitions in Islam; Well-known personalities such as Bushr hafi, Fuzail Ayyaz, and Ebrahim Adham have turned from one side to the other in a sudden turn. In the history of Christianity, the outstanding example of this transition could be Paul, who, in a sudden turn of events, turned his back on Judaism and became a passionate and devout Christian. Constantine is also the same; Because of a dream, he suddenly became a Christian and stopped persecuting Christians, became their biggest helper, and declared Christianity as the empire's official religion. Notably, it should be remembered that both Shia and Catholic sects share this, and these transitions are neither a principle in Islam nor Christianity. These are just random occurrences.

- Eschatological ethics in Shia through death and in Christianity through salvation

Counting the differences between the two, they emphasize the different

eschatological ethics. In Islam, this ethics is highlighted using "death". In a more precise sense, in Shiism, this morality manifests more by stressing concepts such as death, reckoning, judgment, punishment, and reward. Having mentioned these propositions in religion, moral acts then become meaningful. Also, the motivation for doing them is provided, and their purpose – prosperity in the hereafter - is determined.

Although the above propositions can also be proven in Catholic Christianity, the eschatological ethics with the three mentioned factors, i.e., meaning, motivation, and purpose manifests itself in the concept of salvation (not punishment and reckoning). It means to achieve salvation and live morally. According to the viewpoint of the Catholic Church (unlike the Protestant Church, which, following Paul, believes in forgiveness through faith¹), along with faith and repentance, "living morally" is one of the ways of salvation.²

Per the Catholic belief, human beings were in trouble after their descent to earth, religions came to save them, but they failed as if they brought a curse upon them; It was Jesus Christ who came to save humanity. The salvation of mankind depends on the observance of morality on the one hand, and the meaningfulness of moral actions depends on Jesus Christ on the other hand. Therefore, unlike morality

1. justification by faith alone

2. It should be noted that although Protestants believe only faith is the cause of prosperity and salvation, it should not be assumed that good deeds have no value and credibility in their eyes. Because according to their belief, faith necessarily leads to good deeds. In their belief, we are saved without doing anything (Romans, 3:20; Ephesians, 9:2) but we are saved to do good deeds. (Ephesians, 2:10).

in Shiism, which is based on practice, Catholicism is less practice-oriented and instead emphasizes God's grace and hope. In other words, it can be said that ethics in Shiism is more behavior-oriented, and in Catholic Christianity, it is more virtue-oriented.

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