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# Trust in God and the Issue of God's Sufficiency in the Qur'an\*

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## Abstract

*Tawakkul* (trust in God) is among beautiful and valuable concepts in the Qur'an, and grasping its truth bears fruit in discovering the nature of faith and leads to clarification of the meaning of "God will provide for one from whence one does not count upon" and the belief that God is the Primal Cause. Whenever there is a discussion about the creation of mankind and management of human affairs by God, the immediate question of whether God needs human beings arises and is followed by issues such as the relationship between trust in God and laziness or poverty, the way to harmonize trust in God with the necessity to use apparent causes, and internal and external fruits of trust in God. The present article studies Quranic verses and religious texts and discusses the mentioned issues and their different aspects.

## Keywords

Trust in God, causality, dignity, trustee, reckoning, provision, *tafwid*, submission.

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## Introduction

Trusting God (tawakkul) is a requirement of faith in God. It is mentioned frequently in the Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet (s) and is among valuable religious virtues. One of the important points about trust in God in the Qur'an is that God will suffice whoever puts his trust in Him (65:3). To study this point, grasping the essence of trust in God and its meaning helps us analyze the conceptual network of trust in God.

## Essence of Tawakkul

The root of the word tawakkul has been mentioned seventy times in the Qur'an. Reviewing some of the verses helps us elucidate the accurate meaning of trust in God:

And put your trust in Allah; Allah suffices as trustee (*wakil*). (33:3)

In this verse, God advises us to trust in Him and points that He suffices as trustee. Tawakkul means entrusting God with one's affairs. A trustee manages another person's affairs upon the latter's request, and since God is the best director of His servants' affairs, He is their best trustee. "Wakil" means protector, guardian in provision, and director.

To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth, and Allah suffices as trustee (*wakil*). (4:132)

All creation belongs to God, and God is the Director of the world. Quranic commentators have interpreted "*wakil*" as protector, director of the affairs of creation, and guardian (Tabrisi 1372 SH, 3:187; Qasemi 1418 AH., 3:366; Zuhayli 1422 AH, 3:339; Shubbar 1407 AH., 2:111). God

protects His servants and directs their affairs. In supplying His servants' provision, God does not need any assistance or help, and it is He Who drives away afflictions from human beings.

But whoever puts his trust in Allah, then Allah is indeed All-Mighty, All-Wise. (8:49)

Exegetes have interpreted *tawakkul* as asking God for support, submission, and delegation; so, a person who trusts in God entrusts Him with his affairs. Trusting in God is a requirement of faith, which brings about contentment with God's actions (Fayd Kashani 1415 AH., 2:309; Hosseini Shirazi 1424 AH., 2:344; Baghdadi 1415 AH., 2:319).

In the above-mentioned verse, the two noble names 'Aziz (All-Mighty) and Hakim (All-Wise) were mentioned. God is 'Aziz, because He is Invincible, and He is All-Wise, because He directs His servants' affairs based on wisdom and prudence. Thus, the general message of the verse is that if a person relies on God in the face of harassment and slanders and seeks refuge in these two blessed names, God will make him invincible, save him from harms, and direct his affairs based on wisdom and prudence.

The faithful are, in truth, those whose hearts tremble [with awe] when Allah is mentioned, and when His signs are recited to them, they increase their faith, and who put their trust in their Lord. (Quran 8:2)

This noble verse beautifully shows some of the qualifications of the people of faith, one of which is that they trust in God. It can be understood from this verse that the faithful are not indifferent toward God's names and signs and are rather sensitive to them. When God's name is mentioned, their spiritual feelings will be stirred up.

According to the commentators, a person who trusts in God entrusts Him with his affairs, relies upon Him, and becomes disappointed in anyone except Him (Nakhjawani 1999, 1:281; Tha'labi

Nayshaburi 1422 AH., 4:327). However, as Tantawi points out, a person with a sound mind knows that reliance upon God is not incompatible with using means; such a person trusts in God and, at the same time, works hard and benefits from all his capacities (Tantawi, n.d., 6:30).

Put your trust in the Living One who does not die.  
(25:58)

This verse tells us to trust only in the Living One who does not die, because if the trusted one is mortal, the trust will be damaged. A wise person would not base his trust on an ephemeral basis, nor would he attach himself to a mortal being (Kashani 1423 AH., 4:583; Zamakhshari 1407 AH., 3:288).

## **Two Arguments for the Necessity of Trust in God**

In his *al-Mizan*, ‘Allama Tabataba’i mentions two arguments for the necessity of trusting in God (Tabataba’i 1417 AH., 12:32).

### **First Argument**

All changes and forces belong to God, and that is the meaning of the sentence “There is no power and no strength save by God,” which suggests that God is the beginning and the end of everything; He is the Director of everything; and He is the Creator and Owner of all existence. Accordingly, only God is the Trustee of everything. So, it is upon every believer to consider God as his trustee, because He is the Director of all beings “and in Allah let all the faithful put their trust” (3:122).

### **Second Argument**

God guides human beings and shows them the ways leading to

Him. So, He does not betray His servants and shows them their good and benefits. Thus, He who is benevolent to people should be trusted and entrusted with all the affairs. In other words, only God should be trusted, because He alone is the Benevolent Guide: "... and He has guided us in our ways" (14:12).

In a clearer expression, what is common in both arguments is that we should only trust in God, because only God is the Director and the Guide. Therefore, it can be said that trusting in God is necessary, because the world works only based on trusting God. An interesting conclusion of this discussion is that even if a person does not have faith in God, he should trust in God. In some hadiths, we see the following beautiful and meaningful statement: "God is sufficient for me," and this expression is accompanied by trusting in God: "But if they turn their backs [on you], say, 'Allah is sufficient for me. There is no god except Him. In Him I have put my trust and He is the Lord of the Great Throne'" (Quran 9:129).

Barusawi mentions a special meaning for tawakkul: heartfelt belief in God in a manner that leads to relief from worries, distress, and restlessness. Accordingly, trusting in God brings about tranquility for human beings (Barusawi, n.d., 3:546).

That is ALLAH., your Lord, there is no god except Him, the creator of all things; so worship Him. He watches over all things. (6:102)

Elsewhere in the Qur'an, we see that patience accompanies trusting in God, suggesting that those who proceed on the way of God will be granted a good reward. They should practice patience and trust in God:

... those who are patient and who put their trust in their Lord. (16:42)

## **Applications**

Here, a question may be raised: if tawakkul means to entrust another person with one's affairs and tasks, then why should we work? If God manages humans' affairs, humans will become idle. With this meaning, would tawakkul not cause sloth in humans? Would it not lead to isolation and solitude of the person? Would it not lead to poverty? And what is the meaning of emphasis in religious teachings on working and making efforts?

The answer is that God created all things and elements and their effects. For example, when God created water, He also gave it some effects, one of which is to quench thirst. When God created fire, He willed for it to have some effects, one of which is to burn.

God is above all things and means and is the Cause of all causes. He is the Creator and the Owner of the world, who has given all things their effects and influences: if water quenches thirst, God has given it such an effect; and if the sun shines and warms, God has given it such effects. Thus, God is called the Cause-maker, since He has made causes and let them influence in the world.

Now, assuming that working has an effect called income or wealth, then based on the above-mentioned point, God has given such an effect to working. If it is so, all the following are possible:

- The Cause-maker in the world removes the effect from that cause. So, one may work but not receive any income.
- The Cause-maker of the world changes an effect to its opposite. So, one's work may bring him poverty, not wealth.
- The Cause-maker of the world multiplies the effect. So, one's work may result in multiplied income.
- The Cause-maker of the world brings about the effect through other ways. So, one may work but earn money from other ways, not through working.

The difference between a person who does not trust in God and a

person who does so is that the former works and believes that he would gain wealth only through his own works and efforts. This belief may lead him to work more than necessary. He may also put pressure upon his family and resort to inappropriate actions and wrong ways to earn more money. However, a person who puts his trust in God works but does not see his efforts an independent cause of income, because God the Cause-maker can decide about the result of his work in one of the four mentioned ways. Then, the one who trusts in God makes efforts but asks God for the result. Therefore,

- a) he does not work more than necessary;
- b) he does justice to his job;
- c) he keeps his happiness and tranquility at work;
- d) he gains greater fruits due to his trust in God;
- e) Eventually, if his efforts do not result in earning wealth, he becomes certain that the Cause-maker in the world has decided to provide for him from other ways. Thus, he neither becomes worried nor loses hope.

So, the difference between the one who puts his trust in God and the one who does not, is not in working or not working; rather, their difference appears in the appearance and the heart: one who trusts in God believes in Him as the Cause-maker, so he only hopes and trusts in God; and if his efforts do not lead to desirable results, he will not worry. However, a person who does not trust in God depends for his provision on his work or on other people. In other words, trusting in God is not about leaving the affairs to God but about leaving the effect of affairs to God. Tawakkul means working and leaving provision-making to God.

We can learn tawakkul from Abraham (a). When a great pile of firewood was gathered, the fire raged and it was impossible to go near it, so they had to use catapult to throw Abraham (a) inside the

fire. According to a hadith from Imam al-Sadiq (a), “When Abraham (a) was being thrown into the fire, Gabriel went to him, greeted him and said, ‘Do you have any requests?’ Abraham (a) answered, ‘From you? No!’ Gabriel advised Abraham (a) to ask God if he (a) had any requests. Abraham (a) said, ‘His knowledge about my state is sufficient for me.’ Then, God ordered the fire to become cold and safe for Abraham (a)” (Tabrisi 1372 SH, 4:55; Tabataba’i 1417 AH., 14:336).

### **Tawakkul in Hadiths**

Imam Ali (a) is reported to have said, “Tawakkul is the best support” (Amidi 1366 SH, 196). One who leaves the management of his affairs to the Creator of the world saves a capital for himself, from which he can benefit. Seeking refuge in God and trusting in Him is an endless capital, which has infinite fruits. This is probably why Imam Ali (a) said, “Tawakkul is a capital” (Amidi 1366 SH, 197).

The Prophet (s) pointed to this great truth that whenever a person entrusts God with the management of his affairs, cuts out his hope in others, and remains content with his internal and external capacities, he will not need others, and others will need him, because he has relied on a Being who is absolutely rich: “If someone trusts in God with sincere intention, the needs of others will turn to him, so how would he become in need of others while his Master is the Rich and All-Praiseworthy (Nuri 1408 AH., 11:217; Tabrisi 1385 SH, 18).

Tawakkul is an inner feeling. If the feeling of trust in God develops in human beings’ hearts, this holy feeling becomes influential in the world and facilitates everything. Imam Ali (a) has subtly pointed to this issue: “For one who trusts in God, difficulties become easy and the means become ready” (Amidi 1366



SH, 197). In a hadith from the Prophet (s), we read, "If you trust in God, as you should truly, He will provide for you as He provides for a bird that goes with empty stomach and returns full" (Majlisi 1403 AH., 68:151; Shu'ayri, 1363 SH, 117).

## **Different Levels of Trust in God**

Trusting in God has different levels and degrees, as can be inferred from Quranic verses.

### **First Level: Tawakkul**

Tawakkul is a type of trust in God, which comes together with resorting to the means. It is accompanied by efforts and seeking. In tawakkul, it is permissible to seek daily provision and utilize the means for it. With tawakkul, a person can make plans and seek his benefit while considering the causes and effects from God. Entrusting the Lord with all the affairs and relying on Him regarding the effects is nothing but tawakkul. For a person who practices tawakkul, ordinary means are meaningful; he believes that he should plant, though harvest is achieved by the permission of God (Tusi 1369 SH, 112-16; Fayd Kashani 1399 SH, 194-96; Naraqī 1377 SH, 779; Farabi 1371 SH, 37).

Tawakkul is the first step in trusting in God, because in tawakkul one's self is still present and continuously seeks its own development and betterment. Evidently, as long as the self exists and is in effect, one will be drawn into destruction. Tawakkul means that "I act, but the effect and the result is from God."

### **Second Level: *Tafwid* (Delegation)**

In tawakkul, there seems to be a kind of encounter with God,

because whenever one makes an effort, does an action, turns to the means, or makes any change in this world, he has done all with his own power, whereas all forces and powers belong to God: “[This is] as Allah has willed! There is no power except by Allah” (18:39).

In doing tawakkul, a believer trusts in God, but he plans his affairs himself and proceeds with them. He considers his forces and feelings, relatively trusts in apparent means and considers a role for himself. However, in tafwid, although the servant makes efforts, he believes that without the will of God, human beings have neither power nor capacity. Without His will, no force or action is realized in the world. In tawakkul, the person performs the action and relies on God for the effect, but in tafwid, the person asks God for the effective powers and actions. In tawakkul, he trusts God for the management of the affairs, but in tafwid, he leaves the affairs as well as the power to perform them to God. In other words, he submits to the truth and delegates all his being to God.

An example that illustrates tafwid is the story of the birth of Prophet Moses (a), when God said to his mother to throw her newborn baby to the sea and not have any worries. She did so, and finally God the Almighty returned him to his mother. What Moses’ mother did was nothing but entrusting all she had together with her feelings to God.

According to a beautiful hadith, God will disappoint anyone who places his hopes in anyone other than Him:

God revealed to one of His Prophets (a), “By My Glory and My Majesty, I will disappoint anyone who places his hopes in anyone other than Me, and will surely put on him the garment of humiliation among people and push him away from My relief and grace. Shall My servant take refuge in others in difficulties while difficulties [can be solved] by My hand? Shall they seek anyone other than Me while I am the Rich and the Generous and the keys

to closed doors are only in My hand and My gate is open to whoever asks [Me]?" (Kulayni 1365 SH, 2:66; Hurr al-'Amili 1409 AH, 15:214)

In tawakkul, one goes along with the cause, but in tafwid he is with the Cause-maker. In tawakkul, one plans the actions, but in tafwid he has no hopes in his own plans and thoughts. In tawakkul, one expects the effect from God, but in tafwid he considers his existence and powers from God. Thus, it can be said that tafwid is a higher level than tawakkul.

### **Third Level: *Taslim* (Submission)**

*Taslim* (submission) is a higher level than tawakkul and tafwid. Distinctive characteristic of taslim is that the believer should submit to the will of God without any objections or complaints. In tawakkul and tafwid, one entrusts the result of his works and actions to God, but there may still be some objections in his heart about God's actions and decrees. True believers are those who submit to God's will wholeheartedly and "do not find within their hearts any dissent to your verdict and submit in full submission" (Quran 4:65).

Tawakkul means that "I work and leave the result to God"; tafwid means that "I entrust my existence, power, and capacity with God." In taslim, these two meanings are included, and one is also ready to receive the will and order of God.

Thus, trusting in one's self in the sense of trusting in one's God-given powers and is completely in agreement with tawakkul, and this is the first level of trust in God. But if one's submission to God increases and reaches the stage of tafwid or taslim, trusting in one's self becomes meaningless. In tafwid or taslim, trusting in anything other than God fades away.

In tawakkul, one may rely on apparent means and have relative trust in them. Accordingly, humans can build power stations and

dams, investigate about cells and molecules, engineer them genetically, perform complicated surgeries, invent new medicines, introduce advanced systems, and design and invent new rockets. These are not against tawakkul and are possible only by relying on one's capacities and trusting in one's individual or collective self.

Tawakkul is not abandoning the use of causes; rather, it is resorting to a higher level of causes. In tawakkul, a believer establishes a direct relation with the Original Cause. Tawakkul is to trust in God's plans in this world and to believe in the fact that He wills at a higher level than the other causes.

In the glorious Qur'an, the issues of harassing the prophets and their trust in God are mentioned many times together. The duty of prophets was to call people to God, and they did not spare any efforts to fulfil this duty. God instructed them that in the face of all difficulties they should not let disappointment or despair enter their hearts and should not lose tawakkul, because He was with them.

### **Tawakkul and Trust in the Self**

A question with which Muslim thinkers have always been concerned is whether trusting in the self is accepted in Islam. Some believe that trusting in the self is rooted in Western thought, especially in modern psychology, and it is alien to Islamic teachings. Moreover, in these teachings, the concept of tawakkul, which is considered opposite to the idea of trusting in the self is highlighted. "Self-confidence," first used in English in 1657, was regarded as immoral or at least amoral and not in agreement with monotheism.

On the opposite, some people believe that trusting the self fits in the context of religious virtues and does not oppose trust in God, because one can both rely upon his internal powers and

believe that they are from God; we rely upon “God-given powers” and use them for our progress and development. Moreover, there are concepts in religious sources such as self-esteem, self-worth, self-respect, self-knowledge, and accountability, which perfectly indicate the concept of self-confidence. To analyze the true meaning of self-confidence and its relationship with the valuable concept of tawakkul, the following discussions are necessary.

### A. Views

Regarding the concept of self-confidence in Islamic sources, different views have been proposed. Some oppose this psychological concept and consider it a product of modern thought. Some others believe that although self-confidence is not mentioned in religious sources, its content and related characteristics can be found in many places in religious texts. Some other scholars have chosen a middle view between the previous views.

### Opponents

Some contemporary thinkers believe that self-confidence is an anti-Islamic and immoral attribute. They believe that it is against the monotheistic view and the spirit of faith. They hold that self-confidence is the opposite of trust in God and is a moral vice. In his comment under the verse “in Allah let all the faithful put their trust” (64:13) ‘Allama Tabataba’i points that “*tawkil*” (entrusting) means to entrust one’s affairs with someone else and choose him as one’s trustee (Tabataba’i 1417 AH., 19:306), for a person who has chosen a trustee replaces his will by the trustee’s will and his action by the trustee’s action. Thus, if a human being chooses God as his trustee, then he must obey him and follow His orders.

In his comment on another verse (11:88), ‘Allama Tabataba’i

mentions that God created everything, then He established relations between them. He contracts and expands anything He wishes. Thus, all phenomena and affairs are related to God, and He is the Omnipotent and the Dominant over all things. Therefore, a believer should trust in God and turn to Him (*Ibid.*, 10:369).

The Quran teaches us that “whoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him” (65:3). One who trusts only in God, is liberated from his self and wipes out his desires and replaces them with God’s will. God will suffice such a person and provide him with good life. If someone thinks that he is the owner of anything or that something has saved him, he had entertained a vain thought. The truth is that only God is the Omnipotent, the Owner, and the Director of affairs and nothing else can fulfill human beings’ needs. Thus, we should cut out hopes in all apparent means and only trust in God (*Ibid.*, 19:313; 15:233).

‘Allama Tabataba’i mentions elsewhere that God is the Creator of everything, and Creatorship requires Him to be the Owner of everything. So, no one other than Him owns anything. Now, if a human being is not the owner of himself, how can he rely on his self and trust it? (*Ibid.*, 17:288). ‘Allama Tabataba’i mentions the same justification in other cases and insists on “rejection of trust in apparent causes” including causes in human beings (10:113, 116; 12:32, 344; 18:25). In his comment on verse 123 of sura Hud, he writes,

If all the affairs return to Him, the Almighty, then no one other than Him has any ownership, nor does anyone have any independence in anything; so worship Him, the Glorified, and take Him for your trustee and do not trust in anything among the means beside Him, for they are means caused by Him and are not independent beside Him; so, relying on any of them will be out of ignorance. (*Ibid.*, 11:72)

In order to solve the apparent inconsistency between tawakkul and

tawassul (i.e., utilizing the means) ‘Allama explains that we trust in God because He is the Creator, the Owner, and the Director of all affairs, including ours. So, it is only God who is essentially and independently influential and His cause-making is dominant over all other means. At the same time, one can take ordinary causes as means, without considering them independent cause-makers. Thus, tawakkul never means to disregard apparent means; rather, it means to reject their independent influence (Ibid., 11:218) and to reserve absolute trust for God: “The meaning of tawakkul in God is not relying on Him, the Glorified, by rejecting apparent causes, but by rejecting absolute trust in them” (Ibid., 117). Therefore, absolute trust must be in God only, but apparent causes can be trusted in a relative manner. Therefore, if a person relies on his own powers and faculties as incomplete causes and God-given powers and at the same time considers God the True Cause-maker, it would not be in disagreement with tawakkul. ‘Allama maintains that one must take full responsibility of his life and strive to achieve true prosperity and perfection. Trusting in the self is a God-given gem and even a requirement of trusting in God. ‘Allama Tabataba’i writes regarding the strong connection between trust in God and trust in the self: “Trust in the self means showing one’s essential merit in one’s life and not pinning one’s hopes on others; it does not mean disconnecting oneself from God, the Almighty, and considering oneself the source of [the fulfilment] of all hopes and wishes and the sole efficient cause” (Ibid., 208).

### Proponents

Some Muslim scholars do not oppose self-confidence at all; they even emphasize it and speak about it positively. Murtada Mutahhari, for instance, considers self-confidence a religious and Islamic theme and believes that one of the methods in Islamic moral education is cultivating self-confidence in believers. He writes in this regard,

In its teachings, Islam tries to introduce human destiny as dependent on his action; that is, relying on his will. Islam says: “O mankind! Your happiness depends on your action, so does your wretchedness.” Thus, a human being is relying on himself, his actions, and his personality. This is by itself a motive, a cause of awareness and competence. Today, scholars of education try much to awake self-confidence in people, and this is wise. The self-confidence Islam awakens in people is ending human hope in anything other than his own action. (Mutahhari 1384 SH, 25:450)

### **The Middle View**

The third view regarding the relation between trusting in God and trusting in the self tries to separate the negative and affirmative aspects of trust in the self. According to Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi, in the Islamic view, human beings must take God as a guaranteed support for themselves and entrust Him with all their affairs. For more explanation, a person who seeks the fulfillment of his needs has three ways: trusting in himself, trusting in others, or trusting only in God. Among the three ways, the worst choice is trusting in others. But, if a person chooses the first way, it is called self-reliance and can be studied from two aspects: affirmative and negative aspects. The affirmative aspect is to rely on oneself, which is against monotheistic teachings and is not acceptable, because all powers and capabilities belong to God; Human beings' existence and all they have belong to God, and they do not truly own themselves. The negative aspect of self-confidence is to lack trust in others. This aspect is accepted in both psychology and monotheism. The Glorious Qur'an and hadiths teach us that relying on anyone other than God will result in disappointment. (Mesbah Yazdi 1376 SH, 16-17)



A review of previously mentioned views suggests that 'Allama did not consider self-confidence to be in disagreement with tawakkul, and even mentioned that a person who trusts in God surely has great self-confidence. In his view, self-confidence can be in agreement with the monotheistic view.

The view of Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi is about the agreement between self-confidence and the monotheistic view, which has been clarified by 'Allama Tabataba'i. Mesbah Yazdi rejects the affirmative aspect of self-confidence that is, absolute reliance on one's powers and capabilities and not seeing one's powers as dependent on God. It is evident that this understanding of self-confidence is not acceptable in Islam and disagrees with monotheism.

However, in order to have self-confidence, it is not necessary to rely on oneself in an absolute manner and totally reject trust in God; rather, one can see his resources and internal powers as given to him by God and have self-confidence by relying on his God-given powers and resources. Having such a view, a believer can rely on his capabilities, build his own destiny, try not to be a burden upon others, and devote his capabilities to individual and social development.

So, upon a close analysis of the various views of Muslim scholars, we realize that their views are not really contradictory and that they all support individual and collective self-confidence in its correct sense.

## **B. Arguments**

The concept of self-confidence in religious texts can be seen in different ways. If a person has self-confidence, he has self-esteem, does not humiliate himself or others, works hard, knows his powers and potentials, has a goal, respects the dignity of his soul, is hopeful and determined, and benefits from God-given

capabilities and capacities to achieve great goals.

All the above-mentioned concepts can be seen in religious texts, and each can be considered a credible reason for self-confidence. Here, we will mention some examples of the arguments and evidence.

### **Principle of Earning**

If a person wants his potentials and capacities to become actualized and develop, he has only one way, which is to go beyond dreaming and imagination and enter the realm of action. The only factor which can actualize one's hidden powers and bring him success is relying on his own efforts. Referring to religious texts shows us that action is crucial in determining people's destiny.

According to religious sources, one's personality is built upon his endeavors. Basically, one's personality is the result of his behaviors and actions. One is only the owner of his own efforts, and what remains for him is his actions: "[N]othing belongs to man except what he strives for" (Quran 53:39); "Every soul is hostage to what it has earned" (74:38).

### **Principle of Using the Means**

A foundational truth in this world is that human beings reach their desirable goals by using suitable means. However, none of the means is effective on its own. In the case of every phenomenon, God is the one who originates it and gives it its effects. For example, God created water and made it effective in quenching thirst; He created light and made it illuminating. So, God created creatures and made them causes for some effects.

Humans can use the means and, through them, achieve their

goals. If using the means and causes is permitted, and if humans reach their goals through implementing the causes, and if prophets and friends of God have done so, as has been widely reported in the Qur'an, then internal capacities and powers too can be relied upon and used for building the future: "O you who have faith! Be wary of Allah, and seek the means of recourse to Him" (5:35).

### Value and Dignity

The human soul is valuable. A person's chivalry depends on his honor, and Paradise is the price of an honorable life. Knowing the self and acquiring awareness about its capabilities and capacities is the best and most beneficial types of knowledge; and the greatest type of ignorance is ignorance about the self and its potentials.

Such messages can be seen in many hadiths, and they all support the idea of relying on one's potentials and capabilities. The soul is a valuable being, and if one does not debase it, he can reach the highest levels of perfection: "The soul is a valuable gem; one who protects it will rise, and one who debases it will fall" (Amidi 1366 SH, 231). If a person discovers his value and knows his self, he will greatly benefit from the fruits of this knowledge. An honorable person, who sells himself in exchange for nothing but Paradise, has in fact appreciated his value and will not waste himself for lowly and valueless issues. Imam Ali (a) mentions that "chivalry corresponds to the extent of the dignity of the soul" (Ibid.).

A person who values himself does not commit whatever he wishes; he protects his honor, and most importantly tries not to harm others. Imam al-Hadi (a) said, "You will not be safe from the evil of one whose self is debased" (Harrani 1404 AH., 483).

### Practical Conduct of Prophets (s) and the Friends of God

Basically, observing the methods of religious leaders in education is

highly effective. Through their actions, they appear as ideal models and leaders for people. Their actions and manners can be considered the most effective means of education. People can reach happiness following the practical conduct of religious leaders in life and take them as their models. Pieces of advice can be effective, but “two hundred sayings are not like an action in practice.”

The method of religious leaders was that they trusted in the Creator of the world, consulted, deliberated, and benefited from the means and thus paved the path for the guidance for their people. Abraham (a) destroyed the idols to fight idol-worshipping and founded the pillars of the House of God. Noah (a) built a ship to rescue his people. To save his children from harms, Prophet Jacob (a) told them to enter the city from different gates. To be saved from drought, Prophet Joseph (a) proposed to store wheat for seven years. Undoubtedly, the honorable Prophet of Islam (s) had the highest levels of tawakkul, but in all his life, he (s) lived a normal life; when he (s) became hungry he (s) ate food, and when thirsty he (s) drank water; he (s) knew the means well and used them for his purposes.

These points show us that a person can rely on his own capabilities, and while being independent of others, he can trust in his resources and by trusting them, he can become a productive and influential person. The Prophet (s), too, encouraged people to rely on their own powers. It is reported that one of the Companions had a difficult life and was not even able to provide for his family. He decided to go to the Prophet (s) and explain how his life was. When he visited the Prophet (s), before saying anything, he heard the Prophet (s) saying, “Whoever asks us for help, we will help him, but if a person does not stretch his hand to receive help, God will make him rich.” The man heard this and returned home without asking anything. But his poverty continued, so he went to the Prophet (s) for a second time and heard the same from the Prophet (s). When he went to the

Prophet (s) for the third time and again heard the same statement from him, he felt in his heart that the solution to his problem was that very sentence of the Prophet (s). He thought of what he could do. He decided to go to the desert, gather firewood, and sell it. He borrowed an axe, gathered firewood, sold them, and bought some food. He continued this work until he could buy an axe and other things and gradually became rich. Ayatollah Motahhari writes, "When that man left the meeting with the Prophet (s), he walked with stronger steps and decided that he would never again seek the help of God's servants and would benefit from the power and potentials with which God had endowed him and would ask God to make him successful in the way he chose and make him rich" (Motahhari 1384 SH, 18:196).

Perhaps, the most beautiful example was the story of tying the camel's leg. One day, a man went to the noble Prophet (s) and asked if he should tie the knees of his camel or he should trust in God. The Prophet (s) said: "Tie it and trust in God" (Tabrisi 1385 AH., 319).

## Conclusion

Tawakkul is choosing someone as a trustee, who takes care of one's affairs and is protective, helpful, and trustworthy. God is the best trustee one can choose; He is the cause-maker in the world, and all causes depend on Him in their existence and causation. Trusting in God has different levels. In the first level, one works and strives but leaves the result to God. The first level of trusting in God is called tawakkul. The second level, called tafwid, is when a believer trusts God with both the results and with all his powers and capabilities. The highest level of trust in God, which is called taslim, is when a believer has no complaint or objection about God's actions and truly entrusts all his affairs to God.

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