

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Series of Questions Addressed to Eminent Scholar Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah

Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir through his Facebook "Fiqhi" Page

Answer to Question

The Concept of Good (Hasana) and Evil (Saiy'a) in Verses 78 and 79 of Surah An-Nisa

To: Mahmoud Sunnuqrut

(Translated)

Question:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his companions, and those who follow him. Peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you. May Allah protect and preserve you, our esteemed Sheikh, and increase you in His bounty and guide you to what He loves and is pleased with. We ask Allah Almighty to hasten victory and empowerment for us, and to bring them about through you in the near future... He is the Guardian of that and is Capable of it.

Allah (swt) says in His Noble Book, in verses 78 and 79 of Surah An-Nisa:

﴿أَيُّنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا * مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنَ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا﴾
“Wherever you may be, death will overcome you—even if you were in fortified towers.” When something good befalls them, they say, “This is from Allah,” but when something evil befalls them, they say, “This is from you.” Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “Both have been destined by Allah.” So what is the matter with these people? They can hardly comprehend anything * Whatever good befalls you is from Allah and whatever evil befalls you is from yourself. We have sent you ‘O Prophet’ as a messenger to ‘all’ people. And Allah is sufficient as a Witness”
[An-Nisa: 78-79].

How can we reconcile the fact that good and evil are from Allah, as the first verse states, with the fact that good (only) is from Allah, while evil is from oneself, as the second verse states, especially since the first verse contains a rebuke to those who said about evil, "This is from you," at the end of the verse: ﴿فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا﴾ **“So, what is the matter with these people? They can hardly comprehend anything.”**

I would appreciate a clear explanation from you, because after reviewing some video clips of several contemporary sheikhs, I did not find what I was looking for. Their words were mostly general and vague, lacking detail. May Allah reward you on our behalf with the best of rewards.

Answer:

Wa Alaikum Assalam Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatuh

Firstly, my brother, the subject of your question is Allah Almighty's statement in the two noble verses:

The first: ﴿وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا﴾
“When something good befalls them, they say, “This is from Allah,” but when something evil befalls them, they say, “This is from you.” Say, ‘O

Prophet, “Both have been destined by Allah” So what is the matter with these people? They can hardly comprehend anything” [An-Nisa: 78].

And the second: ﴿مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا﴾ “Whatever good befalls you is from Allah and whatever evil befalls you is from yourself. We have sent you ‘O Prophet’ as a messenger to ‘all’ people. And Allah is sufficient as a Witness” [An-Nisa: 79].

The first verse was revealed concerning the Jews and the hypocrites, because when the Messenger of Allah (saw) arrived in Medina, they said: “We have been experiencing a decrease in our fruits and crops ever since this man and his companions came to us.” **They attributed the decrease and drought, calling it evil (saiyi’a), to the Messenger (saw)...** But if there was fertility in the crops and fruits (which they called good (hasana), **they attributed it to Allah, saying, “It is from Allah.”** So the noble verse was revealed stating that every fertility in crops and fruits, or every drought and decrease that befalls crops and fruits, is all Allah. Then Allah (swt) clarified their ignorance, saying: ﴿فَمَا لَ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا﴾ “So what is the matter with these people? They can hardly comprehend anything” [An-Nisa: 78].

The second verse relates to people's deeds. If someone does good and finds goodness, blessing, and success, it is (hasana), then let him praise Allah (swt), for that is from Allah's favor and generosity upon him. And if he does evil and finds harm or is afflicted with a calamity (saiy'a), then let him realize that this is due to his evil deeds, as Allah (swt) said in another verse: ﴿وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ﴾ “Whatever affliction befalls you is because of what your own hands have committed. And He pardons much” [Ash-Shura: 30].

And in this there is wisdom, for Allah, Al Aziz (the Almighty), Al Hakim (the Wise), has clarified the matter in the second verse in order to expel the whispers of Satan from the hearts of the believers. The first verse indicates that (fertility and prosperity, and drought and famine) are from Allah (swt). Therefore, Satan may whisper in people's hearts that your actions, whether good or evil, are not your choice, but rather you are compelled to them, for (your good deed and your bad deed) are from Allah (swt), so you will not be questioned about them. **So, Allah (swt) revealed the second verse to clarify that a person is responsible for the actions he performs by his choice. If he does good and receives good in this world or in the Hereafter, it is a favor and grace from Allah, the Exalted. And if he does evil and receives a calamity or punishment in this world or in the Hereafter as a result, it is because of the evil he did.**

And, thus, things are set right, for fertility and barrenness, that is, sustenance (rizq), are all from Allah (swt), whether little or much, fertility or barrenness. And what befalls a person as a result of his own choice: if what befalls him is good, he will be rewarded in this world or the Hereafter, so it is a favor, generosity, and mercy from Allah (that is, from Allah), and if what befalls him is evil, as a punishment in this world or the Hereafter, then that is because of the evil he did (that is, from himself).

Secondly, for further clarification, I will quote below what was said about the two noble verses in some tafsirs:

1- In Ibn Kathir's tafsir, it says:

[Then Allah (swt) says: ﴿مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ﴾ “Whatever good befalls you is from Allah.” That is, by the grace, favor, kindness, and mercy of Allah ﴿وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ﴾ “...and whatever evil befalls you is from yourself.” That is: from your own actions, as Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ﴾ “Whatever affliction befalls you is because of what your own hands have committed. And He pardons much” [Ash-

Shura: 30]. Al-Suddi, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Ibn Jurayj, and Ibn Zayd said: ﴿فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ﴾ **“is from yourself”** That is: because of your sin. Qatada said: ﴿مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنْ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ﴾ **“Whatever good befalls you is from Allah and whatever evil befalls you is from yourself”**.

O son of Adam, you are punished for your sins. And he mentioned to us that the Prophet of Allah (saw) used to say: "لا يصيب رجلاً خدش عود، ولا عثرة قدم، ولا اختلاج عرق، إلا بذنب، وما يعفو الله أكثر" **“No man is afflicted by a scratch from a stick, nor a stumble of the foot, nor a twitch of a vein (muscle), except due to a sin, and what Allah forgives is greater.”** This which Qatadah transmitted has been narrated with a connected chain of transmission in As-Sahih: **“والذي نفسي بيده، لا يصيب المؤمن هم ولا حزن، ولا نصب، حتى الشوكة يشاكها إلا كفر الله عنه بها من خطاياها”** **“By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, no worry, nor grief, nor fatigue befalls the believer, not even the prick of a thorn, except that God expiates some of his sins thereby.”**]

2- In Al-Qurtubi's tafsir: states:

﴿أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشَيَّدَةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا﴾ **“Wherever you may be, death will overcome you—even if you were in fortified towers.”** When something good befalls them, they say, **“This is from Allah,”** but when something evil befalls them, they say, **“This is from you.”** Say, ‘O Prophet,’ **“Both have been destined by Allah.”** So what is the matter with these people? They can hardly comprehend anything” [An-Nisa: 78].

He (swt) says: ﴿وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ﴾ **“When something good befalls them, they say, “This is from Allah,”** That is, if the hypocrites experience prosperity, they say: This is from Allah. ﴿وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ﴾ **“but when something evil befalls them”** that is: barrenness or drought, they said, "This is from you," meaning, "This has befallen us because of your ill omen and the ill omen of your companions"

And it was revealed concerning the Jews and the hypocrites, because when the Messenger of Allah (saw) came to Medina, they said, "We have been experiencing a decrease in our fruits and crops ever since this man and his companions came to us." Ibn Abbas said, "And the meaning of: ﴿مِنْ عِنْدِكَ﴾ **“This is from you”** That is, because of your poor planning. And it was said: ﴿مِنْ عِنْدِكَ﴾ **“This is from you”** Because of your ill omen, as we mentioned, meaning because of the ill omen that befell us. They said this as an expression of superstition. Allah (swt) says: ﴿قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ﴾ **“Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “Both have been destined by Allah.”** That is, hardship and ease, victory and defeat are from Allah, that is, by Allah's decree and destiny. ﴿فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ﴾ **“So what is the matter with these people?”** Meaning the hypocrites. ﴿لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا﴾ **“They can hardly comprehend anything”** That is; what is wrong with them that they do not understand that everything is from Allah...]

I hope this is sufficient, and Allah Knows Best and is Most Wise.

Your Brother,

Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah

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The Link to the Answer from the Ameer's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/AtaAboAlrashtah/posts/122144994717129051>