

Free will and predestination in islam assignment

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Predestination is a divisive issue that has not just been confined to Christianity, but is a prevalent issue within the Islamic community. Like Christianity the idea of free will has been an issue that is centuries old and possesses a highly divisive nature. To better understand free will and predestination in Islam it is important to first look at the history of the idea and to then review what Islamic theologians, such as al-Goalie and AH-Has, have said on the matter.

In studying this subject, it becomes evident that the argument of free will had major political and theological implications that made it become a formative element in Islam. Despite Salami's foundation in the 7th century A. D. , the idea of predestination was already present in Arabic society. Modern historians have ascertained this through the study of pre-lilacs Arabic poetry. In these discovered works, the Arabs speak of their destinies as being completely predestined by the abstract force of Time, or dear and zamia. Time itself was not necessarily a worshipped god, but was rather an abstract force that determined an individuals coal, which is the length and date persons life will end. 2 This idea of Time as an impersonal force formulated the idea fatalism. Fatalism posited that no matter what action a man took, his or her fortune and date of death had already been predetermined according to their coal. 3 This belief was particularly appealing in Arabia due to the unpredictable and harsh lifestyle.

The unpredictability of Arabia, whether it was weather or robbers, made it nearly impossible for a man to completely prepare and defend himself from misfortune. Consequently, the view of fatalism allowed Arabs to cultivate an attitude of accepting what the day brought rather than try to prepare against

every possibility of hardship. This view came to be known as fatalism. Fatalism had been ingrained into the minds of Arabs for centuries and to a large degree, survived the transition into Islamic Arabia and been integrated into Islamic theology.

Because of this it was fairly shocking when some Muslims began to promote the idea that an individual was capable of controlling his or her destiny through their own choices and actions. The Islamic idea of free will and predestination was centered around the term *Qadar*, God's power to determine human action and events. Even though this term seems somewhat counter to the idea of free will, those who promoted free will came to be known as the *Qadariyyah*. ⁵ *Sadism* arose during the mid 8th century during the oppressive rule of the *Umayyad* dynasty.

At the time there was much contention over the legitimacy of the *Umayyads* claim to the caliphate. The *Umayyads* had various arguments to defend their claim, but the one that is most pertinent to free will and predestination was their claim to divine authority. ⁶ One verse from the *Qur'an* they often quoted says: "The earth is God's; he has entrusted it to his *caliph*; he who is head in it will not be overcome." The *Umayyads*' appeal to this verse led to a debate over the true meaning of the word "caliph" or *caliph*.

Overall, the *Umayyads* main claim to legitimate rule was that of divine authority, which in a large way sparked the debate over God's determination of events. Islamic Thought, "it was the theological standpoint of the *Umayyads* which forced their opponents also to adopt various theological positions." ⁷ The two key players in the foundation of *Sadism* are *Muhammad al-*

Johann and Callaghan ad-Diminish. Little is known of al-Johann. It is unknown how he derived his Quadrate views; however it is certain that he was anti-Mayday in that he thought that many of their acts were wrong and disagreed with their claim to divine authority. The latter influencer, Callaghan, was very open in his opposition to the Mayday dynasty and even went as far as to write to the caliph Muar bin-' Bad-al-' Aziza, urging him to instigate reforms. Despite his prominence and influence in the movement, Callaghan was executed by the caliph Hashish. Both of these men were significant in that they were the first major proponents of Sadism and sparked a major theological debate over the matter. As mentioned, the Quadrates supported free will, while their opponents over time came to be known as AH-Jaybird, who claimed that God controls every aspect of a man's life and that he has no freedom to choose. One of the major Islamic theologians to take part in this debate, albeit roughly three hundred years after the debate began, was al-Goalie, who is debatable the most influential player in the formulation of Islamic theology. Goalie took a less polarize view in that he was not necessarily a Quadrate or AH-Jaybird. In response to the issue, AH-Goalie wrote Faith in Divine Unity & Trust in Divine Providence. Throughout the book he synthesizes his view on the matter. In essence, AH-Goalie states his belief that " God is personal and an absolute reality beyond human reason. Al Because of this, AH-Goalie said that one should try and attain absolute trust in God since there is no way an individual can understand God. However, Al- Goalie to some extent believed that God had somewhat control over events. He says hat " all that exists in creation-sustenance given or withheld, life or death, riches or poverty, and everything else that can be named" originates and is initiated solely by God. 12 So yes, AH-Goalie would

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say that God is in control, but no human can possibly understand how he is in control and to what level He controls human action.

In relation to causality of events, AH-Goalie viewed that God, in a sense, was the glue between cause and effect relationships. To illustrate his point, he uses the example of fire burning cotton. When one observes fire burning cotton, all they see is the fire and then burnt cotton; what they cannot see is the power that fire has to burn cotton. The implication is that God is the source of the power. 13 AH-Goalie drew this concept from an account from the Quern in which Abraham was thrown into a fire by his polytheistic enemies, yet emerged unburned. 4 From this AH-Goalie ascertained that God alone possesses the power to deny the effective nature of causal actions, thereby meaning that God ultimately possesses control of all events. While AH-Goalie was and still is highly influential in the debate of free will, he abated the matter roughly three centuries after the argument began. AH-Has al-Basis is an important scholar of this matter because he debated the subject during its inception under the Maydays. While AH-Has shared many of the Quadrante views he was not a full-on Quadrante, so to speak. However he was clearly not Al-Jaybird.

His opposition to them stemmed from his opposition to the Mayday calm AT Lovely attenuator Ana was swells concerned Tanat men would use predestination as an excuse for inactivity and drift. Consequently “ he emphasized individual responsibility in the moral sphere, and held?? or at least implied?? that an was in general capable of fulfilling God’s commands. “ 15 This is also strikingly similar to a question Muhammad answered in a Haiti as to why men should bother to do good works: “ They (the <https://assignbuster.com/free-will-and-predestination-in-islam-assignment/>

Companions) inquired, ' O Allah's Messenger! Why should we carry on doing good deeds, shall we depend (upon Allah) and give up work?

The Prophet said: ' No, carry on doing good deeds, for everyone will find it easy (to do) such deeds that will lead him towards that for which he has been created. ' Then he recited the verse: ' As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him, and believes in the Hereafter, We will make smooth for him the path of Ease. ' (92: 5-7). In this sense AH-Has was considered a Mujaahid. While scholars have debated whether or not he was indeed a Mujaahid, AH-Has made arguments that appeared pro-Mujaahid due to his opposition to the AH-Jaybird. In these arguments AH-Has appealed to the Quran.

Likewise the predestination party quoted the texts such as the one that states " God sends astray who he will. " 16 To this, AH-Has countered that this verse needed to be interpreted in light of the scripture which says that " God sends astray the evildoers. 17 AH-Has synthesized these verses to mean that God acts according to a man's choice to do good or evil and likewise possesses the power to compel men to choose, but does not exercise this power. Along with this he thought that despite men's supposed free will, God is still all knowing in that he knows the choices a man will make before they are made.

However, AH-Has is considered predestination in that he believed that God designated a man's sustenance. This is obvious in his interpretation of Surah 57: 22, which states: " no mishap has happened to the land or to yourselves but it was in a decree before we brought it to be. " While Mujaahid opponents

used this verse as predestination support, AH-Has simply interpreted it as only being applicable to wealth and possessions, not actions. 18

Interpretations such as these have led scholars to debate whether or not AH-Has was actually a Quadrate.

In essence, Al- Has definitely held beliefs similar to that of a Quadrate and is clearly not Al- Jaybird in that he opposed their assertion that man lacks basic free will. AH-Has and his opponents make evident the fact that various predestination factions interpreted the Quern and its concepts in different ways. Two concepts that the AH-Jaybird used for support for predestination were coal and iris. Coal, as mentioned earlier, was the idea of a " fixed term" lifespan that was prevalent in pre- Islamic Arabia and maintained its pertinence in the Quern.

For example, 63: 11 says that " god will not defer (the death of) any person when his term comes. " Along with this being the one who designates the date of an individuals death, the Quern also characterizes God as the one who numbers a man's days beforehand. For example, 6: 2 says " He is the one who created you from clay then fixed a term; and a stated ERM is in his keeping. " The idea of iris however, roughly translates to " provision", " sustenance", or " food". 19 This is seen in 30: 39-40 which states " God is the one who created you, then made provision for you, then causes to die, then brings you to life. In the same Sarah, another that states " God lavishes provision on whom he will and stints it. " As Watt says in *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* " The idea that provision may tons De plentiful or scarce Is Treatment In ten Quern Ana Is presumably linked with experience of the erratic character of life in the Arabian desert. " As seen n pre-lilacs <https://assignbuster.com/free-will-and-predestination-in-islam-assignment/>

poetry and the Quern, coal and iris clearly held a prominent place in the minds of Arabs due to the unpredictable and dangerous lifestyle of Arabia. Despite these assertions of the AH-Jaybird, the Quadrates interpreted the Quern differently.

For example the Quadrates used the Last Judgment as their support in that they believe each man alone will hold responsibility for their actions. Quern 16: 93/95 says: " If God had so willed, he would have made you one community; but he leads astray whom he wills and guides whom he wills; assuredly you will be asked about (held responsible for) what you have been doing. While the first part of the verse appears predestination, the Quadrates ask the question of how a man can be held responsible for acts that are not his.