The Will of Allah and Our Destiny

Part I: An Overview of the Beliefs of Muslim Schools

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Abstract: *In the series of these articles, we will discuss the issue of free will and fatalism in the view of Muslim schools. The rational arguments and the supportive narrations from the holy Quran and the traditions reported by different groups will be provided. In the first part, which is presented here, we provide an overview of the issue, the historical and traditional backgrounds that gave birth to various issues concerning this subject.*

Key words: *Bakri, Jabriyyah, Taqdir,Fatalism*

Introduction

Since the early period of Islam, there have been three schools of thought regarding the issue of determinism vs. free will. A main group, namely Jabriyyah, believe in compulsion (Jabr) on the actions of human being. A second group, called
Mufawwi
d

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ah
, believe in independence (
Tafwi
d
) of human will, and that Allah has no planning for the voluntary actions of human beings. The first two groups comprise the schools of creed for the
Bakr
i
’s
.
[i]
Most of the Bakr
i
’s, however, are among the first group, and the second group is almost distinct as most rulers did not find it in accordance with their interest.

The third group, namely the Shiā or the followers of Ahl al-Bayt [ii] (PBUT) [iii] , reject both Jabr and
Tafwidh
in human actions and believe that man is free in his action but his decision and action requires Allah’s permission.

In this part, we will first look into the historical background of this issue. Then, we will examine the claims and the evidence of the various schools as well as the consequences of their beliefs.

The beliefs

The provide more detailed explanations, the school of compulsion as the mainstream of Bakri’s claims that since Allah mentions in many verses of the Quran that everything happens according to His will, it follows that man’s actions are in reality those of Allah. In the view of this school, the human being has no real choice because Allah has already decreed his actions as well as his fate. In this point of view, the will of Allah becomes the cause for all actions in the world.

On the other hand, the school of “independent freedom of will” states that man has been left independent in the domain of his volition and Allah has relinquished His authority over man’s

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voluntary actions. In other words, Allah has no engineering or planning (Taqdir) on the inter-related actions of people and the effects of their actions in the universe. They believe He has resigned and left the planning of people's voluntary actions to themselves.

In contradistinction to the prior two, the school of Ahl al-Bayt (PBUT) maintains that although the will of Allah encompasses all man's voluntary actions, it is not a compulsory will and is not the cause of man's choice of actions. Man is completely free in his domain of volition, but he chooses what Allah knew of his action and permitted to happen in His will. However, the foreknowledge and will of Allah is not the cause, it is rather His planning for what He allowed to happen in His kingdom. They say that man's will is not against the will and knowledge of Allah, and the effect of man's action on the universe is based on the planning of Allah and his decree. Therefore, this position lies between those of the other two schools.

Historical Backgrounds

Although the idea of compulsion had roots before the advent of Islam, it was promoted by some rulers after the demise of the Prophet (PBUH&HF) especially by the Umayyad dynasty, and history has recorded many of such indications. For instance, during the reign of Uthmān [iv], when the revolters charged him of nepotism and mismanagement of the affairs and pressed him to resign from the Caliphate, he said, "
I will not take off the dress of Caliphate that Allah has put on me.
" [v]
By this statement, Uthmān was trying to attribute the action of few people who assigned him to rule, as Allah's action, and convince people that his assignment was a compulsory will of Allah, and thus, people should remain loyal to his rule. This way, Uthmān attributed to Allah the Caliphate that reached him due to Abdurra□mān Ibn □Awf's vote for him on the Day of Consultation (
Shurā
).

After Mu□awiyah succeeded in his coup against Imam □asan [vi] (PBUH) and became the ruler of the Muslim community, he made his first speech in Medina saying, "
Action and effort does not have any benefit since all matters are in the hand of Allah.
" [vii]
In another instance, he said, "

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This Caliphate is an authority and command from Allah's authority command and a decree from Allah's decree.
"

[viii]
After choosing his drunkard son, Yaz
i
d, as his successor, Mu aw
i
yah said, "
This (Caliphate of ours) is the imposed decree of Allah and no one has any choice over Allah's decree.
"

[ix]
Once the son of Uthmān opposed Mu aw
i
yah for choosing Yaz
i
d as his successor and told him, "
You have come to power because of (the status of) my father.
" Mu aw
i
yah replied, "
This is the kingdom that Allah has granted us.
"

[x]

When Yazid came to power, he sent a letter to the governor of Medina and ordered him to get the oath of allegiance from Imam al- usayn [xi] (PBUH). Here is the opening of his letter: " Certainly, Mu awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyān was a servant among the servants of Allah, whom Allah favored him, granted him the Caliphate, vested him with the authority, and firmly established his kingdom in the states. This was of the decree of Allah that was preceded the first and the last generations from which no close angel and no sent Prophet turned away. And now Allah has invested us with the rule that was with him...
"

[xii]

When the army of Yazid killed Imam usayn (PBUH) and his companions, they captured their women and children, brought them to K ufa
, and took them to the Palace of Ibn Z
i
yād, the governor of K

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u
fa. When they brought the young Imam al-Sajjād
[xiii]
(PBUH)
before the governor, he asked, “
Who are you?
” The Imam
(PBUH)
replied, “
I am Ali Ibn al-
usayn
.
” Ibn Z
i
yād said, “
Didn’t Allah kill Ali Ibn al-
usayn
(referring to Ali Akbar)?
” The Imam
(PBUH)
replied, “
There was a brother for me who was also named Ali and people killed him.
” Ibn Z
i
yād said, “
Rather Allah killed him.
” The Imam
(PBUH)
kept silent. Ibn Z
i
yād continued, “
What is the matter with you that you do not answer?
” Thereupon, the Imam
(PBUH)
replied by the following two verses from Quran:

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“Allah takes the souls (of people) at the time of their death, (39:42) and Nor is for any soul to die except by Allah’s leave.” (3:145)

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Upon hearing the reply, Ibn Ziyād became furious and ordered to kill the Imam (PBUH), but Lady Zainab
(PBUH)
(his paternal aunt) intervened...
[xiv]

By the above verses, the Imam (PBUH) meant that although the martyrdom of Imam usayn (PBUH)
was allowed to happen and was made possible by Allah to take place, the action of murdering him by his killers cannot be attributed to Allah. This wrongful action although was in the will of Allah, but it did not please Him and was against His command.

The emergence of the school of compulsion and the support it received from Muslim rulers led to people's disgust with it. This gave rise to the other extreme, namely the school of independent freedom of will, which claimed that Allah does not will the voluntary actions of human being. Although Ma mun, the shrewd Abbasid Caliph, advanced this alternative ideological movement for a short period in order to gain people's support, this school retained a minority of adherents throughout the history of Islam. As we will show later, the dangers of the heretical beliefs of the school of independent freedom of will are no less harmful than those of the school of compulsion.

The Opinions of Bakri Scholars

Let us now see how some eminent Bakri scholars have taken sides on this issue when presenting their creed. The first one that we will quote is Abul- asan al-Ash ar
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(d. 324) who is one of the leading Bakr
i
theologians and founder of the Ash ar
i
school of creed. He writes in his creed:

[illegible]

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The Will of Allah and Our Destiny

Written by Vahid Majd
Saturday, 08 October 2016 00:18 -

الأشياء تكون بمشيئة الله عز وجل، وأن أحدا لا يستطيع أن يفعل شيئا قبل أن يفعله ... و
هذا هدم قولهم؛ لأنهم زعموا أنه لا يفعل الكفر إلا كافر ... فإذا قدرهم على الكفر، فهو
قادر أن يخلق الكفر لهم، وإذا قدر على خلق الكفر لهم فلم أبيتم أن يخلق كفرهم فاسدا
متناقضا باطلا، وقد قال تعالى :
فعال لما يريد
وإذا كان الكفر مما أراد فقد فعله وقدره ويرد عليهم في اللطف . ..

وزعمت القدرية أنا نستحق اسم القدر؛ لأنا نقول إن الله تعالى قدر الشر والكفر، فمن
يثبت القدر كان قدريا دون من لم يثبته ... يقال لهم : القدري هو من يثبت القدر لنفسه دون
ربه عز وجل، وأنه يقدر أفعاله دون خالقه ... فلما كنتم تزعمون أنكم تقدرون أعمالكم
قدرية؛ لأنا لم نضف الأعمال إلى وتفعلونها دون ربكم، وجب أن تكونوا قدرية، ولم نكن نحن
أنفسنا دون ربنا عز وجل ...

ولا يجوز أن تكون إرادة الله محدثة مخلوقة؛ لأن من لم يكن مريدا ثم أراد لحقه النقصان ...
والجواب عن ذلك : أن اللوهما خلقت الجن والإنس إلا ليعبدونإن سألوا عن قول الله تعالى :
تعالى إنما عنى المؤمنين دون الكافرين؛ لأنه أخبرنا أنه ذرأ لجهنم كثيرا من خلقه،
فالذين خلقهم لجهنم، وأحصاهم، وعدهم، وكتبهم بأسمائهم وأسماء آبائهم وأمهاتهم؛ غير
الذين خلقهم لعبادته ...

وجاء في الخبر : « أن المنافقين يجعل في أصلابهم كالصفائح فلا يستطيعون السجود » ، وفي
هذا تثبيت ما نقوله من أنه لا يجب لهم على الله تعالى إذا أمرهم أن يقدرهم، وهو بطلان
قول القدرية ...

فلما زاغوا أزاغ فإذاً خلق الله الأكنة في قلوبهم، والقفل والزيغ؛ لأن الله تعالى قال :
وال الله قلوبهم
ختم وضيق الصدر تم أمرهم بالإيمان الذي علم أنه لا يكون، فقد أمرهم بما لا يقدرون عليه،
وإذا خلق الله في قلوبهم ما ذكرنا من الضيق عن الإيمان، فهل الضيق عن الإيمان إلا الكفر
الذي في قلوبهم ؟ وهذا يبين أن الله خلق كفرهم ومعاصيهم . ..

إذا كان القافتإلذا جاء أجلهم لا يستأخرون ساعة ولا يستقدموأنليس قد قال الله تعالى :
عندكم قادرا على أن لا يقتل هذا المقتول فيعيش، فهو قادر على قطع أجله وتقديمه قبل
أجله، وهو قادر على تأخيره إلى أجله، فالإنسان على قولكم يقدر أن يقدم آجال العباد
ويؤخرها، ويقدر أن يبقي العباد ويبلغهم ويخرج أرواحهم، وهذا إلحاد في الدين .

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“Surely everything exists by the will of Allah, the mighty and the majestic, and no one is able to commit something before Allah commits it... They (i.e., the Mu’tazilah who believed in the independent freedom of will) think disbelief is not committed except by a disbeliever... When Allah enabled them to disbelieve, He was able to create disbelief for them, and if Allah plans disbelief for His creation, why do you think creating their disbelief (by Allah) is contradictory and invalid? This is while Allah, the
Glorious said,
‘He does what He intends’
. Thus, since disbelief was of His intention He was indeed the One who committed it, planned it, and averted His Grace from them…

The Qadariyyah think we deserve the title of Qadar since we say Allah has apportioned the evil (Sharr) and disbelief (Kufr). This is while a
Qadar
i
is he who establishes apportionment (
Qadar
) for himself instead of Allah, and thinks that he plans his actions instead of His creator. Thus, since you (
Mu’taz
i
lah
) think you plan your deeds and you commit them instead of Allah (committing them), you are the real
Qadar
i
yyah
(that are denounced in the prophetic traditions). We are not the
Qadar
i
yyah
since we do not attach the deeds to our souls instead of to Allah, the mighty and the majestic…

Allah’s intention cannot be a novel and a created thing, because a person who does not intend and then starts to intend, would have a deficiency... And if one asks about the saying of Allah, ‘ And We did not create the Jinn and the human except that they may worship Me,’ (51:56) the answer is that by this verse, Allah meant the believers, not the disbelievers, because Allah has informed us that He has made Hell for many of His creation. Therefore, those whom He created for Hell are other than those whom He created for worshipping Him...

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There is a (Bakri) report stating that ‘Hard plate-like (pieces) have been placed in the backbones of the hypocrites so that they are unable to prostrate’. This confirms what we say concerning that it is not required for Allah to give people the capability (to perform a deed) when He commands them. And this disproves the saying of the Qadariyyah...

Allah said, ‘Then when they deviated (from the right), Allah let their hearts deviate (from the right).’ (61:5) He sealed their heart and made it tight for faith. He then commanded them to faith that He knew it would not happen. Thus, He commanded them to what they were unable to do. Allah created in their heart what we mentioned of tightness for faith. Then, what is tightness for faith other than the disbelief (i.e., concealment of truth) that is in their heart? This explains the fact that Allah created their disbelief, and their sins...

Allah said, ‘When their appointed time comes, they would be able to neither postpone (it) for a single moment, nor advance (it).’ (16:61) If you think a murderer is able to avoid murdering and the person that was supposed to be killed remains alive, then the murderer has been able to delay the appointed time, and to keep alive people and to take their souls (as he wishes). This is infidelity in the religion.” [xv]

Moreover, other statements in Ash□ari’s creed show that he believed the will of Allah and His intention are always in accordance with His approval, pleasure, and consent. For instance, he writes:

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“... If you say that something can exist in His Kingdom that He did not intend, then He has permitted in His Kingdom what He did not like... If His servants do that which He does not intend and does not like, they have indeed compelled Him. This is the state of coercion and Allah is most exalted from this... If the sins existed while He did not will them, then He would have disliked their existence and would have refused them to exist. This would require the existence of the sins whether He wills them or refuses them, which is the attribute of weakness, and Allah is most exalted from it.” [xvi]

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Saturday, 08 October 2016 00:18 -

Another great Bakri theologian, Abu Jaʿfar al-Tahāwi (d. 321) writes in his creed:

جف القلم بما هو كائن إلى يوم القيامة ، وما أخطأ العبد لم يكن ليصيبه ، وما أصابه لم
يكن ليخطئه . وعلى العبد أن يعلم أن الله قد سبق علمه في كل كائن من خلقه ، فقدر ذلك
تقديرا محكما مبرما

“*The (divine) pen has dried up having written down all that will be in existence until the Day of Judgment* . Whatever a person has missed he would have never hit, and whatever he hits he would have never missed. It is necessary for the servant to know that the knowledge of Allah has preceded everything that is going to happen in His creation and that *He has foreordained everything with a solid and decisive planning* .” [xvii]

(Note: For the English phrases, *italics* have been used for emphasis throughout the text.)

Al-Ghazzāli (d. 505) is yet another great Bakri theologian who writes in his creed:

وأن إرادته قائمة بذاته، في جملة صفاته لم يزل كذلك موصوفاً بها، مريداً في أزله لوجود
الأشياء في أوقاتها التي قدرها فوجدت في أوقاتها كما أراده في أزله، من غير تقدم ولا
تأخر بل وقعت على وفق علمه وإرادته، من غير تبدل ولا تغير ...

أن إرادته قديمة وهي في القدم تعلقت بإحداث الحوادث في أوقاتها اللائقة بها على وفق
سبق العلم الأزلي ... العلم بأن كل حادث في العالم فهو فعله وخلقه واختراعه ... أن المعاصي
والجرائم إن كان اللّه يكرهها ولا يريدها وإنما هي جارية على وفق إرادة العدو إبليس
لعنه اللّه مع أنه عدو للّه سبحانه، والجاري على وفق إرادة العدو أكثر من الجاري على
وفق إرادته تعالى فليت شعري كيف يستجيز المسلم أن يرد ملك الجبار ذي الجلال والإكرام
إلى رتبة لو ردت إليها رياسة زعيم ضيعة لاستنكف منها؛ إذ لو كان ما يستمر لعدو الزعيم
في القرية أكثر مما يستقيم له لاستنكف من زعامته وتبرأ عن ولايته . والمعصية هي الغالبة
على الخلق وكل ذلك جار عند المبتدعة على خلاف إرادة الحق تعالى وهذا غاية الضعف
والعجز، تعالى رب الأرباب عن قول الظالمين علواً كبيراً ... أنه يجوز على اللّه سبحانه
أن يكلف الخلق ما لا يطيقونه ... أن للّه عز وجل إيلام الخلق وتعذيبهم من غير جرم سابق ومن
غير ثواب لاحق

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“And that His intention (Irādah) is of His Essence (Dhāt), among His attributes. He has eternally been attributed by it. He intended, in His Eternity, the existence of things at their destined moments. Thus, they came to existence at their proper times as He intended in His eternity without any advance or delay. They happened according to His knowledge and His intention, without any substitution or change...” [xviii]

“His intention was eternal, and in eternity it was attached to the events in their proper times in conformity with His eternal knowledge... The first principle is to know that *any event in the world is His action*, His creation, His innovation, and that there is neither any creator nor any causer other than Him. He created the creation and generated their power and their movements.
Thus, all the actions of His servants are His creation and His invention... Had Allah disliked the sins and the crimes
and had He not intended them, then they would have been based on the intention of His enemy, Satan, the accursed. In that case, most of what happens would have been according to the intention of His enemy… This is the utmost weakness and helplessness, and the Lord of lords is most exalted from such a saying by the wrongdoers... It is permissible that Allah, the exalted, charges and burdens the creation with that which they cannot bear... It is for Allah, the exalted, to torture and to punish the creation even if they have not committed any crime.” [xix]

It is unanimous among the Bakri scholars that the will of Allah is eternal and that Allah never makes changes in His will. Some of them also clearly expressed that any event, including the evil deeds of people, is the action of Allah, and that had He disliked its happening, He would not have let it take place.

Some Bakri Traditions in Support of Fatalism

Without doubt, the opinion of the Bakri scholars on this issue has roots in the Bakri Hadith collections. Here, it would suffice to quote the following few examples from the most revered Bakri collections of narrative traditions:

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Narrated Abu Hurayrah: The Prophet said, “Adam and Moses argued with each other. Moses said to Adam. ‘O Adam! You are our father who disappointed us and turned us out of Paradise.’ Then Adam said to him, ‘O Moses! Allah favored you with His talk (talked to you directly) and He wrote (the Torah) for you with His Own Hand. *Do you blame me for an action* which Allah had written in my fate forty years before my creation?’ So Adam confuted Moses, Adam confuted Moses,” the Prophet added, repeating the statement three times.
[xx]

In the above alleged tradition, Abu Hurayrah attempts to induce the idea that a person who does wrong voluntarily should not be blamed, because Allah has already written his wrong action. It is interesting to know that the Shiā traditionists have also reported a long Hadith on this issue as one of the things that Prophet Mu□ammad (PBUH&HF) witnessed on the Night of Ascension (Mi□rāj). [xxi]
However, the Sh
i
ā version does not share the above implication in any way. While acknowledging that his action had been written according to Allah’s foreknowledge, it notes that his excuse was that Satan had sworn in the name of Allah that He was advising them sincerely. Prophet Adam
(PBUH)
, until then, had no experience with someone who would allow himself to swear falsely by Allah. The Quran corroborates this:

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And he (i.e., the Satan) swore to them both, that he was their sincere adviser. (7:21)

The Shiā report while complying with the facts is more sober and does not lead to the implication of the Bakr i counterpart. Such variations in the text, although subtle in some cases, can substantially change the implications of the traditions attributed to the most noble Messenger of Allah (PBUH&HF). Any modification to the original sayings of the Prophet (

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The Will of Allah and Our Destiny

Written by Vahid Majd
Saturday, 08 October 2016 00:18 -

PBUH&HF) may easily introduce heretical beliefs, which may ridicule and destroy the faith among populace.

In another Bakri tradition, it is reported:

عن حذيفة بن أسيد، يبلغ به النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال ” يدخل الملك على النطفة بعدما
تستقر في الرحم بأربعين، أو خمسة وأربعين ليلة . فيقول : يا رب ! أشقي أو سعيد؟ فيكتبان .
فيقول : أي رب ! أذكر أو أنثى؟ فيكتبان . ويكتب عمله وأثره وأجله ورزقه . ثم تطوى الصحف . فلا
يزاد فيها ولا ينقص “

Hudhayfah ibn Usayd reported directly from Allah’s Messenger (may peace be upon him) that he said, “When the drop of (semen) remains in the womb for forty or forty five nights, the angel comes and says, ‘My Lord, will he be good or evil?’ And both these things are written. Then the angel says, ‘My Lord, would he be male or female?’ And both of these things are written. His deeds and actions, his death, his livelihood—these are also recorded. *Then his document of destiny is rolled and there is no addition to and subtraction from it*.” [xxii]

The major problem with the above Hadith is in the last sentence where it is alleged that the “pen” has dried up from writing. This would leave no possibility of Allah changing our destiny. This way, good effort, supplication to Allah, trying to seek His pleasure, etc., would all be in vain. Again, there exists a Shiā version of this Hadith, which does have such a connotation. The Shiā version rather expresses that Allah makes a stipulation in that record that He may later change what He had written for His servant. [xxiii]

According to the following Bakri traditions, Allah will never change what we are going to confront, no matter what we try to do:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال : قلت: يا رسول الله، إني رجل شاب، وأنا أخاف على نفسي
العنت، ولا أجد ما أتزوج به النساء، فسكت عني، ثم قلت مثل ذلك، فسكت عني ثم قلت مثل ذلك،

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Narrated Abu Hurayrah: I said, “O Allah’s Messenger! I am a young man and I am afraid that I may commit illegal sexual intercourse and I cannot afford to marry.” He kept silent. Then I repeated my question once again, but he kept silent. I said the same (for the third time) and he remained silent. Then I repeated my question (for the fourth time), and only then, the Prophet said, “O Abu Hurayrah! *The pen has dried after writing what you are going to confront. So (it does not matter whether you) get yourself castrated or not* .” [xxiv]

In another Bakri Hadith:

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Jābir reported that Surāqah ibn Mālik b. Ju□sham came and said, “Allah’s Messenger, explain our religion to us (in a way) as if we have been created just now. Whatsoever deeds we do today, is it *because* of the fact that the pens have dried (after recording them) and the destinies have begun to operate, or do these have effects in the future?” Thereupon he said, “ *The pens have dried and destinies have begun to operate* .” (Surāqah ibn Mālik) said, “If it is so, then what is the use of doing good deeds?” Zuhair said, Then Abu Zubayr said something but I could not understand that and I said, “What did he say?” Thereupon he said, “Act, for everyone is given facilities (to act towards the purpose for which he is created).” [xxv]

There is no dispute in the genuineness of the last sentence of the above Hadith, that is, “Act, for everyone is given facilities”. What the Prophet (PBUH&HF) meant by this sentence is that everyone who has been charged with religious duties (Mukallaf) has already been given the faculties by which he can perform his duties. In other words, everyone can worship Allah and submit to His command voluntarily to the extent of his ability, as everyone has been created for worship and submission to Him. This sentence of the Prophet

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(PBUH&HF)
was also widely narrated by the Sh
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ā traditionists and was explained by the Imams
(PBUT)
in detail.
[xxvi]
However, the first part of the Bakr
i
version of the Hadith quoted above is not at all compatible with its last part. Moreover, in explaining the above common sentence, the Bakr
i
’s allege that the Prophet
(PBUH&HF)
said:

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“Act, for everyone is provided with facilities so that whoever belongs to the blessed ones is given facilities to perform the acts of the blessed people and whoever belongs to the unfortunate ones is given facilities to perform the acts of the unfortunate people.”
[xxvii]

As we have quoted earlier, some famous Bakri scholars expressed their belief that not all people were created for worshiping Allah and for doing good deeds. They claimed that some people were created only for Hell and some only for Paradise. According to them, it is made easy for those who were created for Hell to perform bad deeds and is made easy for those who were created for Paradise to perform good deeds. In later parts, we will examine the explanation given by the Imams (PBUT)
regarding the authentic saying of the Prophet Muhammad
(PBUH&HF)
in this regard.
It is notably different from that of the Bakr
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narration.

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Finally, in another Bakri Hadith, it is mentioned that:

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Ibn □ Abbās narrated: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said, "*The pen dried up having written down all that will happen until the Day of Judgment*
."
[xxviii]

Drying up the "divine pen" that has written the future means that all the future events including our destiny are fixed and that Allah will never change them based on this alleged Hadith.

Some Verses of the Quran on the Will of Allah

In addition to the traditions, the supporters of the school of compulsion have used many verses of the Quran to strengthen their views. The fact that everything, including our voluntary actions, happens according to the will of Allah has been clearly mentioned in many verses of the Quran. For instance:

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And ye shall not will unless Allah wills, the Lord of the worlds. (81:29)

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Those against whom the word of your Lord has been verified will not believe, even if every sign was brought unto them, until they see (for themselves) the painful punishment. (10:96-97)

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The Will of Allah and Our Destiny

Written by Vahid Majd
Saturday, 08 October 2016 00:18 -

وَ لَوْ شاءَ اَللَّهُ ما أَشْرَكُوا

If Allah willed, they would not have been polytheists. (6:107)

لَوْ شاءَ اَللَّهُ مَا اِقْتَتَلُوا وَ

If Allah had (so) willed, they would not have fought each other. (2:253)

وَ لَوْ شاءَ اَللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً واحِدَةً وَ لكِنْ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشاءُ
وَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشاءُ وَ لَتُسْئَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

If Allah (so) willed, He would certainly make you all one people. But He misguides whom He wills, and He guides whom He wills; and you will certainly be called to account for all your actions. (16:93)

قُلْ لا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعاً وَ لا ضَرًّا إِلاَّ ما شاءَ اَللَّهُ

Say, “I do not possess any benefit or harm for myself except what Allah willed.” (7:188)

وَ ما يَذْكُرُونَ إِلاَّ أَنفَمَنْ شاءَ ذَكَرَهكَلاَّ إِنَّهُ تَذْكِرَةٌ
يَشاءَ اَللَّهُ هُوَ أَهْلُ اَلتَّقْوى وَ أَهْلُ اَلْمَغْفِرَةِ

Nay, this surely is a reminder. Let any who will, take heed! But none will heed unless Allah wills. He is the Lord of Righteousness, and the Lord of Forgiveness. (74:54-56)

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This is an admonition. Thus, whosoever wills, let him take a (straight) path to his Lord. But ye shall not will unless Allah wills, for Allah is the ever Knower and Wise. He will admit to His Mercy whom He wills; but for the unjust, He has prepared a painful chastisement. (76:29-31)

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Nor say about anything, “I shall surely do that tomorrow” (unless you say) “except if Allah wills (otherwise).” (18:23-24)

In translating the verses of the Quran concerning this issue, the Bakri’s often translate “He wills” as “He pleases”. As quoted earlier, some of the leading Bakr
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scholars expressed their belief that the will of Allah is equivalent to His pleasure and consent. The majority of the Bakr
i
’s maintain that Allah’s will is eternal, i.e., His will is His Essence, and thus there is no change in His will because there is no change in the Essence of Allah.
Thus, Allah’s will is irrevocable even by Himself.

By utilizing such verses of the Quran, the school of compulsion attempted to establish that if tyrants do wrong it is because of Allah’s will, and therefore, they have to be tyrannical. Recall the example of a murderer given by al-Ash□ari which was quoted before. They asserted that the will of Allah is the cause for people’s actions, and that people’s actions are of Allah’s actions in reality. They adopted this doctrine since they wanted to justify the injustice of the tyrannical rulers. As the Ahl al-Bayt (PBUT) pointed out to (be discussed in later parts), if such an idea were to be true, then tyrants would be rewarded on the Day of Judgment even more than the righteous. This is because they were forced to play the role of a bad person in this world and they perfectly performed their assigned task in doing what is disdainful and evil.

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The school of Ahl al-Bayt (PBUT) does not overlook the above-mentioned verses regarding the will of Allah. However, the Imams (PBUT) emphasized that while everything, even our voluntary action, does indeed take place according to the will of Allah and His intention, His will on our voluntary actions is not a compulsory or a necessitated will, nor is it the cause for our choice of actions.
Therefore, our choice of a wrong action cannot be attributed to Allah. Moreover, according to Ahl al-Bayt
(PBUT)
, Allah's will is His
creation
, not His Essence, and therefore, it is not eternal. Thus, He may make changes in it as He chooses. In the view of the Sh
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ā, the meaning of the "will of Allah" in our voluntary actions is different from what the Bakr
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's uphold. The Sh
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ā bind themselves to the guidance of Ahl al-Bayt
(PBUT)
for understanding each and every religious concept, and seek their interpretation for understanding the verses of the Quran. The Sh
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ā believe that the Ahl al-Bayt
(PBUT)
are the only individuals who are authorized by Allah to interpret the verses of the Quran. This is due to the sayings of Allah in the Quran and those traditions of the Prophet
(PBUH&HF)
whose authenticity is agreed upon by all Muslims.
[xxix]

Conclusion

The complexity of the issue of the will of Allah vs. our will has confused many intellectuals and ordinary people alike. Understanding this difficult subject is a key point to correctly analyze many controversial issues between the school of Ahl al-Bayt (PBUT) and other deviants.

I this part, we provided and overview and historical background of the issue. Below are some of the questions to that will be dealt in future parts by will of Allah:

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1- What is the meaning of the will of Allah, His intention, and His planning about our actions? Is the concept of voluntary actions relevant in light of these concepts?

2- Is the will of Allah the cause for our actions? Is the will of Allah in our voluntary actions an imposed will?

3- Are our actions Allah's actions?

4- Does the will of Allah always accord with His pleasure and His command?

5- Is it possible that Allah changes His will? Is His will eternal?

6- Is there any possibility that Allah changes our written destiny?

7- Does Allah create evil?

8- What are the meanings of guiding and the misguiding attributed to Allah in the Quran? What is our role and what is Allah's role on our guidance? What are the meaning and the effects of "the seal on the heart"?

Understanding this issue has great impact on the approach of individuals towards the religious commandments and their prosperity in the hereafter.

Misunderstanding this crucial issue may endanger ones faith and leave one outside the boundary of monotheism. Therefore, the details of this issue should be given great attention.

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[i] The group of Bakri's, named after Abu Bakr, are the greater population of Muslims who deviated from teachings and commandments of the Prophet Mu amma d (PBUH&HF) after his martyrdom concerning submission to his divinely appointed successor, namely, the Commander of Believers, Ali Ibn Abi T ā lib (PBUH). They instead believe that Abu Bakr was his successor who was, in reality, nominated and usurped power by some influential people. Bakr i 's call themselves Ahl al-Sunna or Sunn i (the follower of traditions), claiming that they follow traditions of the Prophet (PBUH&HF) and his companions. On the other hand, a minor population among Muslims who really remained loyal to the traditions and commandments of Prophet (PBUH) concerning the divine appointment of the Commander of Believers, Ali (PBUH) where called Shi ā (follower) of Ali or Rafidhi (those who rejected the transgressors and usurpers of the right of Ali (PBUH)).

[ii] *Ahl al-Bayt* means People of the House. However, the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet (PBUH&HF) as specifically defined by him refers only to the divinely selected individuals of his house. They are his daughter (Lady F

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t
i
ma
(PBUH)
) as well as twelve divinely appointed leaders (Imams) who were the spiritual successors of the Prophet
(PBUH&HF)
. The twelve Imams include the Prophet's son in law and his cousin, Al
i
(PBUH)
, his two sons, al-

asan and al-

usayn
(PBUT)
, as well as nine descendants of al-

usayn
(PBUH)
.

[iii] The acronym "PBUT" refers to phrase "peace be upon them". Also, "PBUH&HF" refers to phrase " peace be upon him and his family".

[iv] The third ruler of the Muslims and the head of the Umayyad tribe.

[v] Ibn Qutaybah al-Dinwari al-Marwazi, Abu Mu ammad abd-Allah ibn Muslim, *al-Imāmah wa al-S iyās ah*
, vol. 1, (Cairo: Mu

assasat al-

alab
i,
1967) p. 61;
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t al-Kubr
ā
, vol. 2, p. 66.

[vi] The second divinely appointed leader and the grandson of the Prophet (PBUH&HF).

[vii] Kandhilwi, Shaykh Mu ammad Yusuf, *ayāt al-Sa ābah*, vol. 3, p. 529.

[viii] The Concise History of Damascus, vol. 9, p. 85.

[ix] Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 205.

[x] Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 214.

[xi] The third divinely appointed leader and the grandson of the Prophet (PBUH&HF).

[xii] Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imama wa al-Siyasa*, vol. 1, p. 225; Balādhuri, A mad ibn Ya yā, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*
, vol. 5, p. 313.

[xiii] The fourth divinely appointed leader and executor of the Prophet (PBUH&HF).

[xiv] Al-Tabari, Mu ammad ibn Jarir, *History of al-Tabari*, Arabic Edition, vol. 4, p. 350; Abu Mikhnaf, *Maqtal al- usayn* (PBUH), , p. 206;
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lam al-Warah
, p. 252; Abu Mikhnaf,
Maqtal al-
usayn
(PBUH)
, Abd al-Razzaq al-Muqarram, p. 325.

[xv] Basāri Ash□ari, Ali ibn Ismā□il, *al-Ibānah*, pp 9-59.

[xvi] Basāri Ash□ari *al-Ibānah*, pp 48-49.

[xvii] al-Ta□āwiyyah*, A□mad ibn Mu□ammad, Usul al-'Aqidah al-Ta□āwiyyah*, chapter of "faith in *Qadhā* and *Qad ar* ", pp 47-48.

[xviii] al-Ghazzali *Qawā□id al-□Aqa□id*, , Chapter 1.

[xix] al- Ghazzali *Qawā□id al-□Aqa□id*, , Chapter 3.

[xx] al-Bukhari *Sahih*, Volume 8, Book 77, Hadith 611; Muslim *Sahih*, , Book 033, Hadith 6409.

[xxi] al-□Ayyāshi, *Tafsir*, vol. 2, p. 10, Hadith 10; Allameh Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār,* vol. 11, p. 188, Hadith 44.

[xxii] Muslim,*Sahih*,Book 033, Hadith 6392 (See also Hadith 6393 which has more interesting wordings).

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[xxiii] Kulayni, *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 14, Hadith 4.

[xxiv] Al-Bukhāri, *Sa□i□*, Volume 7, Book 62, Hadith 13b.

[xxv] Muslim, *Sa□i□*, Book 033, Hadith 6402 (See also similar traditions: Hadith 6404 & 6406); Ibn Hanbal, Ah mad, *Musnad*, vol. 3, Chapter of Musnad of Jabir Ibn Abdill ā h.

[xxvi] Shaykh Saduq, *al-Tawhid*, p. 356, Hadith 3; Allameh Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 5, p. 157, Hadith 10.

[xxvii] Muslim, *Sahih*, Book 033, Hadith 6398; al-Tirmidhi, *Sahih*, vol. 5, under the commentary of the Chapter of the Night, Hadith 3402; Abu D a wud , *Sunan* , vol. 2, the Chapter of Qadar , Hadith 4694; A □ mad Ibn □ anbal , *Musnad* , vol. 1, Under Musnad of □ Umar.

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[xxviii] A□mad Ibn □anbal, *Musnad*, Two traditions under Musnad of Abdullah Ibn □Abbas and Abdullah Ibn
□
Amro Ibn
□
Aa
s
; Muttaq
i
Hindi,
Kanz al-
□
Umm
ā
l
, vol. 1, Chapter titled, “Belief in
Qadar
is of perfection”, Hadith 631 & 632; al-Haytham
i
, Ali ibn Ab
u
Bakr,
Majma’ al-Zawa’id
, Book 31 (
al-Qadar
), Chapter titled, “The Cause for the guidance”, Hadith 11813.

[xxix] See verses 3:7, 4:83, 17:9, 75:17-19, 13:43, 29:49, 16:43, 40:4, 10:59, 17:36 and the corresponding commentaries by the Prophet (PBUH&HF). See also the Hadith al-Thaqala yn and other traditions that prove the inseparability of the Quran and Imam Ali (PBUH) and his possessing the Knowledge of the Book.

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