Bada

Reza Brenjkar

Abstract: Bada' means "a change in non-confirmed destiny". This Islamic significant concept declares that ***God is always free*** *in* ***changing people's destiny****. There are valuable proof in Quran and the words of infallible imams concerning this concept. Bada' can be also confirmed logically. in the present article we will learn about its different aspects.*

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Badā' (the literal meaning of the word: "revealing after concealing", "alteration in the divine will" or "origination of something new") refers to God revealing his Will about a decision. Bada' opens the doors of humbleness towards everyone even infallible imams. Understanding Bada' casts lights on every aspect of human life. Prayers, charity-giving, alms, and strengthening the ties of kinship are some ways that accordingly God will make a change for better in our lives.

Bada'

Bada' is one of the most important Islamic beliefs which can influence our understanding about God, prophets, imams and even mankind. There are quite a few number of Quranic verses and traditions mentioned in Shia and Sunnite books regarding this topic.

The meaning of Bada'

Bada' means "a change in destiny when it is not fixed". Our destiny is considered to have two parts: "***absolute and unchanging",*** and ***"changeable and flexible".*** As it is clear a change is feasible in the latter part. Imam Baqir said,

"Some affairs are absolute and unchanging, they are fixed and eventually they would happen. Some other affairs are going to be determined by the Will of God; He would put some affairs first before some others, He would erase some, approve some and make them happen."[1]

Bada' is derived from "b-d-v" means reappearance; and it is used in two senses; "revealing after concealing" and "appearance of a new

[1] Tafsir Ayashi, 2:217.

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decision".[1] The second meaning can have two meanings: "origination of a new decision without any prior decision" or "making a decision which is against the previous one".

One of the most significant Quranic verses concerning Bada' is the following:

"Allah blots out, and He establishes what He Will. With Him is the essence of the book." *(the holy Quran, 13:39)*

Imam Sadiq says, "Can erasing be applied to anything except something which was present and existed once? And can creating be applied to something except a thing which did not exist before? [2]

Imam Sadiq in the explanation of the above verse referred to "a Book" which is not Quran. He said that truly there is a book from which God eradicates or in which He adds whatever He desires. In this book, the changeable destinies have been written which can be altered by prayers, alms, good deeds, etc. But when they enter Ommul-Kitab, even prayers can not make any change in them.[3] (And they will happen exactly the same.)

From this tradition, we can infer that there are two books. One of them is Bada' book and other one Ommul-Kitab book. Whatever God determines for us based on our present personality is written in Bada' book and it can be changed. But when they enter Ommul-kitab, they are not changeable. The knowledge of angels, prophets and imams about future is from this book. Imam Sadiq said that God has two types of Knowledge. One is hidden and no one knows but Him and Bada' is of this

[1] Al-Qamus Al-Mohit, Al-Sihah, Mojam Meqa'ees al-Loqat, b-d-v entry.
[2] Osul Kafi, 1:147.
[3] Tafsir Ayashi, 2:220.

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type. The other one is the knowledge He taught to His angels and prophets.[1]

The hidden knowledge here is Ommul-kitab in which Bada' will not happen. The interesting point is even Bada' and all changes which are going to happen are written in this book. This part of knowledge is just for God and because of this we claim no one is Omniscience.

It has been said from imam Ali, imam Hassan, Imam Husain , Imam Sajad, imam Baqir and imam Sadiq who said,

"By God, if it was not that verse in the book of God (Sura Raad, verse 39), definitely I would inform you of whatever is going to happen till the Resurrection day, and that verse is this "Allah makes to pass away and establishes what He pleases, and with Him is the basis of the book."[2]

Of course this tradition is about Bada': the events which are changeable. In a tradition in one of the Sunnite's book, one interpretation of the mentioned tradition given by holy Prophet is the length of life, which means God will decrease from the years of our life and will add to it as He wishes.[3] Or in another tradition, another interpretation has been given which is livelihood, it means God will give or take whatever He likes.[4]

Another important verse concerning Bada' is this, ***"the Jews say: 'the hand of Allah is chained. ' their own hands are chained! and they are cursed for what they said! Rather, His hands are both outstretched, He spends as He will."*** *(the holy Quran, 5:64)*

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[1] Osul Kafi, 1:147.

[2] Qorb Al-Asnad, 353; Biharul Anwar, 4:97

[3] Al-Firdos, 5:261

[4] Al-Tabaqat al-kobra, 3:574

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According to imam Sadiq, Jews here did not mean God has hands and His hands are tied up by a rope but it means God had made His decisions as He desired and the decisions are not changeable. God answered them revealed the mentioned verse.[1]

This verse and the traditions assert a logical issue which is God's Unlimited Power. This Unlimited Power should be able to make any change any time when He likes: turn a destitute one into a wealthy one, lengthen someone's life or shorten it, etc.

Therefore Bada' means revealing something new which is different from previous one. It can cause the prior thing being eradicated completely or making something completely new. For example a job was written for a person but after Bada' another job is replaced with the present job. Or something can be added or deduced from the book. Or something can happen before something else.

Imam Baqir said that God does not abandon whatever existed (before us), or it is present now or will be in future unless He has recorded them all in a book. This book is at His presence and God considers it. Then He will put whatever He likes before other things. He will postpone whatever He likes. And He will erase whatever He wishes. He will give existence to whatever He desires….[2]

In Quran there are numerous verses asserting Bada', for example Yunus tribe was going to be tortured but people's repentance hold that torture back.[3]

"Why, was there never a village that believed and its belief benefited them? Except Yunus' nation, when they believed, we spared

[1] Tohid Saduq: 167; Tafsir Ayashi, 1:330
[2] Tafsir Ayashi, 2:215
[3] Ibid, 2:136

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them from a degrading punishment in this life and we gave them enjoyment for awhile." *(the holy Quran, 10:98)*

The logical reasons for Bada'

Beda can be approved logically. Each human being by contemplating on his situation can understand that his/her situation can be changed. Anyone who believes in God and asks for a change for better, in fact, believes in Bada'. Logic accepts that God should be Omnipotent. According to this, He could be able to make a change in whatever He likes.

The role of Bada' in knowing God, knowing prophets and imam and knowing human beings

Knowing God

Proving God's Power and Freedom is the most important impact of believing in Bada'. It means that even God's chosen destiny for people will not limit His freedom in changing that chosen destiny.

Knowing prophets and imams

Due to the importance of Bada' in recognition of prophets, imam Riza said, God did not choose any prophet unless He ordered them to prohibit wine and confess to Bada'.[1]

By Bada' prophets learned that though God had informed them of the destiny of everything and every one in the world but these destinies can be changed and this knowledge is exclusively for God; in this way, Prophets would not rely on their knowledge only and feel their dependency to God in all affairs. The only knowledge which is unchangeable is God's

[1] Al-Touhid, 334

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knowledge while knowledge of angels, prophets and imams are all subject to change. Therefore, they would not rely on their knowledge unless in those affairs which are absolutely confirmed and fixed by God such as reappearance of imam Mahdi (a.s.).

knowing human being

If we refuse Bada' and assume that God has made unchangeably decisions for every creatures and then abandon them by themselves, there would remain no motivation to make any change. If God is not going to change our destiny by our prayers, why should we implore Him and why does He invite us to pray?

Believing in Bada', from one hand, will bring hope and motivation to our life and from the other hand will strengthen the willing to pray and implore God.

The causes of Bada'

Each action - positive or negative – can make a change in the destiny of people. In Quran and traditions some causes have been mentioned especially prayers, alms, strengthening the ties of kinship are considered to be among these causes.

The holy prophet recognized prayers as a key in changing destiny:

"Prayers can change destiny, even if it is approved and fixed."[1]

Imam Sadiq said, "pray and ask from God and do not say God wrote my destiny and it is not changeable.[2]

Imam Kazim said,

[1] Osul Kafi, 2:470; Tarikh Baqdad, 13:36.

[2] Osul Kafi, 2:466.

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"It is on you to pray, because prayers and imploring God will hold back a disaster which is about to happen to you, and just a signature left to make it happen."[1]

Prophet said about the importance of giving alms in postponing death, "giving alms will hold back a bad death from human beings."[2]

Imam Baqir said, "Being a benefactor and giving alms will keep away poverty, will lengthen life, and will hold back a bad death."[3]

Prophet said about the role of frequently visiting relatives and strengthening the ties of kinship in postponing the time of death and a cause of prosperity like this:

"Anyone who likes to postpone his death and being prosperous in his life time should visit his relatives frequently." [4]

As good actions can cause good changes in our destiny, bad actions can cause change for worse in our life.

As we have seen Beda can add an invaluable aspect and depth to our life. It can cultivate hope in our heart to try to change life for better not only for ourselves but for others and in whole for society.

[1] Ibid, 470
[2] Ibid, 4:5
[3] Bihar Al-Anwar, 96:119
[4] Osul Kafi, 2:152

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