

'Khalifa' : satan, a temporary god on earth?

'Khalifa' Satan, A Temporary God On Earth?

In Rashad Khalifa's new revised translation of the Quran (1992), by a strange twist of irony the word 'Khalifa' has been interpreted as 'Satan, the representative, a temporary god on earth. In verse 2.30 of his latest translation under the heading: "Satan: A Temporary 'god'" it reads: 'Recall that your Lord said to the angels, 'I am placing a representative (a temporary) god on Earth'

In the appendix which sets out to prove that by the sum of all sura and verse numbers where all 'Rashada' (root word of Rashad) and all 'Khalifa' words occur, without discrimination, add up to 1463 which is a multiple of 19. Since the first 'Khalifa' word, which occurs in Sura 2.30, is stated by him to be non-human, it is not included in the calculations.

Generally the word 'Khalifa' in Sura 2.30 is taken to mean that Man is the 'representative' which is being referred to in this verse. However, both are wrong.

Let us explain the significance and importance of these particular deceptions:

It is vicious to spread the false concept that God's sovereignty can be delegated. This concept took its origin among the Christians and gave birth to theocracy. The Christian kings modified the concept to give it the form of "Divine rights of the kings."

The same idea came into vogue among the Muslims after caliphate changed into kingship and Muslim kings began to call themselves 'shadow of God on the earth'. From then onwards, Muslim kings became sovereign in the worldly affairs and Muslim priests in the religious affairs; and the 'Islam' became split up into 'church and state'.

The concept of delegation of sovereignty of God to man is absolutely false from the Quranic point of view.

Delegation of power from one person to another means that the latter gains absolute control of power for a certain period and that the exercise of this power by the former becomes suspended in the meantime.

Secondly, the occasion for the delegation of power by a certain authority arises when that authority itself is not present at the place where the power is to be exercised. But God is Omnipresent.

The question of His being not in control, at any time or anywhere, does not arise. God does not delegate his sovereignty to anyone, not even to His messengers, who themselves are subservient to His laws.

Now let us see the argument produced in support of this false concept of delegation of Allah's sovereignty. They consider man as 'khalifatullah' and erroneously translate it as 'vicegerent of God' which means that he exercises delegated powers of God.

As a matter of fact, there is not a single instance in the holy Quran where man is described as 'khalifatullah' successor of God. He is rather described as 'khalifat al-ard' When God addressed the angels and said:

"I will create a Khalifa' on the earth" (2:30)

It pointed towards the creation of a successor to the preceding prehuman generations that lived on the earth before mankind.

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Moreover, in order to clarify the point that man is not a representative, successor of God, we shall have to clarify the meaning of the word 'Khalifa'. There are three basic concepts in the meaning of the words with the root ' K', ' L', ' F'.

- (a) To succeed,
- (b) To follow
- (c) To undergo change.

The holy Quran is self-explanatory. It says: "And it is He Who made the night and day to follow each other. " (25.62)

Again it is said:

"Day and night coming one after the other. " (2:164)

'B' can become the Khalifa of 'A' only in his absence. 'A' may be dead or alive but 'B' cannot take his place as Khalifa in his presence. The following verses of the Quran support it:

Before Moses went up on the mount for communion with His Lord, he said to his brother Haroon:

"You shall succeed me amongst my people (in my absence) " (7:142)

At yet another place it is said:

"Then We made you successors in the land after them, to see how you would behave. " (10:14)

Hud said to his people:

"(If you turn away from the divine guidance), my Lord will make another people to succeed you. " (11:57)

About the people of Aad it is said:

"In that He made you successors after the people of Noah. " (7.69)

The holy Quran has, thus amply clarified that a Khalifa is a successor in the absence or on the death of his predecessor. Hence the question of somebody being a 'representative' does not arise.

The concept of 'representative' is the invention of self-interested individuals who wanted to exploit people in the garb of 'God's vicegerency.'

God is the lawmaker. The word 'khalifat fil-ard' simply means to hold reins of power with the purpose of putting into application the divine laws in human affairs. God's laws are immutable and cannot be changed.

"No body can change the laws of Allah. " (6:34)

Not even messenger of God:

"(O Messenger of God!) You are not given the authority to change the laws of God. " (3.128)

God is the only Sovereign. There is no sovereign except God. He is the only authority to whose laws subservience of man is due.

The believers are an instrument to enforce the divine laws and its jurisdiction in law making and are confined within specific limits; it does not hold absolute rights of law making.

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The law making in Quranic society is a blend of Permanence and Change. The fundamental principles given by the Quran are Permanent and Immutable.

Rashad's misinterpretation in Sura 2.30 to eliminate one 'Khalifa' to balance his figures is just another abuse of the mathematical 'miracle' of the number nineteen. He has called this 'Khalifa' Satan. Perhaps this has some significance. God Has His own sense of justice.

Main text of this article from 'Conspiracies Against the Quran' by Sayed Abdul Wadud. Lahore, Pakistan.