

The Relationship Between Human Free Will and His Status as God's Deputy on Earth

Human Free Will Guarantees Our Attainment of the Status of God's Deputy on Earth

Can we attain human perfection without possessing free will?

Is there a relationship between human's status as God's deputy on earth (and his free will?

In the previous lesson, we explained that God has created human beings with free will so that we may have the power to choose in our lives. Every decision we make or every path we choose carries a certain value and decree and leads to a destiny or outcome. This divine law, known as decree and destiny, manifests in all five dimensions of our being: the inanimate, vegetative, animalistic, intelective, and supra-rational or human dimensions.

For instance, when someone makes wise choices in financial investments, the result is success and the attainment of lawful and beneficial profit. Another person adopts a proper exercise routine and healthy diet, and as a result of that choice, enjoys a vibrant and healthy body. The same law applies to decisions regarding one's field of study, profession, spouse, place of residence, approach to child-rearing, and all other areas of life. None of these choices would be possible without human free will. It is through the free will granted to us that we are constantly making decisions, shaping the course of our lives.

Undoubtedly, the significance of our choices is far greater in the human dimension of our being—our true self—for this is the eternal dimension of our existence. The

ultimate purpose of life in this world is to acquire human assets and to reach the lofty status of God's deputy on earth. Attaining this status would be impossible without the possession of free will. We must, through our own free will, choose a path and lifestyle that aligns with the purpose of our creation. Thus, there exists a direct and inseparable relationship between human free will and his status as God's deputy on earth.

In this lesson, we will examine in detail the relationship between human free will and his status as God's deputy on earth.

Attaining the Status of God's Deputy on Earth Through Free Will

To explore the relationship between human free will and his status as God's deputy on earth, we must first understand who qualifies as God's deputy on earth. The deputy of God, is one who, by actualizing the divine names and attributes and acquiring human perfection, comes to resemble his True Beloved—Allah—and thus fulfills the very purpose of his creation.

As we know, each of us enters this world with a pure and divine spirit and carries within us the divine names and attributes in potential form. However, actualizing these names is our own responsibility. We are granted free will to choose our path and lifestyle in this world. At every moment, through the relationships we build, the choices we make, and the thoughts and actions we adopt, we shape our soul and heart. Each of us, through the free will granted by God, responds differently to the blessings, trials, and hardships of life. These responses determine whether we ascend toward Allah and true humanity—or descend toward material nature and animalistic tendencies.

For instance, when someone close to us—whether a family member, relative, colleague, neighbor, or friend—treats us unjustly, our responses vary. Some of us respond with forgiveness and overlook the wrongdoing, refusing to let sorrow or anger pollute our mind and heart. Others, however, hold onto resentment and anger for a long time, constantly reminding themselves of the issue, depriving themselves of peace, and sometimes even contemplating retaliation. In the first case, we activate the divine name *Ghafūr* (All-Forgiving) within ourselves and move closer to soundness of the heart and the status of God’s deputy on earth. In the second case, we distance ourselves from the sound heart and the status of God’s deputy on earth. Of course, other responses are also possible. Some individuals not only forgive others—they seek forgiveness (*istighfar*) for the wrongdoer and respond with kindness. Such individuals are rapidly progressing in their spiritual journey and drawing closer to Allah.

The ability to choose between all these states and courses of action is only possible through the free will that God has bestowed upon us. In other words, we are free to either strive toward acquiring the divine names and attaining human perfections—or to gradually drift away from true humanity. We also have the freedom to race swiftly toward Allah and draw closer to similarity with Him, or to advance at a slower, more hesitant pace. Thus, the relationship between human free will and his status as God’s deputy on earth is a direct one. Without this God-given freedom, reaching such a lofty status would be impossible.

In this lesson, we examined human free will. We discussed that the purpose of our creation is to attain the status of God’s deputy on earth—to resemble our Beloved, Allah, by acquiring His names and attributes, and to reach the ultimate state of joy,

bliss, and fulfillment. However, attaining this status is only possible in the midst of the world's contradictions and through free will.

By entering this world, we step onto a path filled with trials, challenges, and constant decision-making. It is through these very choices that we either draw closer to the status of God's deputy on earth—or fall farther away from it.

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