

Divine Will and Providence

Razie Sadeghi¹, Seiyed Ahmad Miriyan Akandi²

¹PhD student of Quran and Hadith Science of Islamic Azad University, Sari Branch

²Department of Quran and Hadith Science of Islamic Azad University, Sari Branch, Iran

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ABSTRACT

One of the attributes of God, often mentioned in the Book and tradition, is the attribute of the Providence and Will of God, being particularly significant among the qualities of God. The present paper states that: Will is of the Divine beauty properties, characterized both in the stage of essence and the hierarchy of action. Will is of the perfection properties of living thing. This is vivid that the Giver of perfection cannot lack it, then the Almighty is of the Revelation and Bestower and Will of perfection properties cannot lack it; therefore, the Glorified is the disciple of the truth of Will, and at the same time, since the Will of God is absolute, human is the follower and free to choose, but his will and authority depends on God and, thus predestination and delegation is substituted with Amr byn Alamryn (the affirmation of man's power by preserving his causal relationship with the Divine will). It is of the Divine decrees that man is totally free in selecting the action and he is himself the builder of destiny and the writer of life lines and the designer of bliss and misery and God's decree isn't anything else except that every man is totally free to do what he wants, and is free and authorized in choosing bad, good, useful and harmful.

KEY WORDS: Will, Providence, free will, Divine Actions

INTRODUCTION

One of the perfection attributes of God is Providence and Will, as the Purposer has been considered of the Divine Names. In the Qur'an, the terms Providence and Will and Purposer haven't been used for God, while in many verses, the terms *يريد الله*, *اردنا*, *اراد الله*, *يشاء الله* and *يشاء الله* have been applied. Regarding these verbs, the attribute of Providence and Will and the name *شائى* and Purposer have been abstracted and used as the Divine Attributes and Names. Apart from this application, the mentioned attributes and names are found in the narrations.

Some of the theologians have taken Providence and Will as the same attribute and others consider these two as separate and some have quoted explanations about the difference of these two (Ragheb Esfahani, 1412 AH). What has been inferred from the Quranic applications about these two terms is that Providence has only been applied in the Evolutionary Will of God and also the Legislative Will of God. With respect to the collection of the verses and narrations, it can be claimed that Will and Providence in God express one attribute.

Literal Meaning of Providence

(مشيئت) or Providence of the matter (شئى) and infinitive (شاء يشاء) that in this word, it is interpreted as Will; and terminologically, it refers to tending to something so that that thing is achieved. Since this word is of the common ones between God and the creatures among the theologians, Ragheb has defined it as (creating an object) and (to strike) with this detail that Providence about God means to create an object and the existence of an object, while it is used for humans as to strike (Ibn Manzur, vol. 1, p. 103). It is worth mentioning that the Qur'an has pointed out the Divine Providence with phrases such as (شاء) and (اراد) and the derivatives of these two, in which the matter (شاء) has been used 227 times and the matter (اراد) 147 times in the Qur'an. This multiplicity of use points to the special significance of this issue from the monotheistic viewpoint of Islam.

Verbal Meaning of Will

(اراده) or Will is an Arabic word from the root (رود) meaning aspiration and free will (Johari, 1988, 1:478). The enthusiasm for doing a task (Ibn Fārs, 1399 AH, 2:457), gently commute for searching something, and about God, the meaning Decree has been given (Ragheb, 1412 AH, 371). In some lexicologists' mind, (مشيئت) or Providence is synonym for Will and means requiring and asking (Johari, 1988, 1:478). Of course, Providence and Will are slightly difference from each other; Providence is merely wanting something, but Will is to go towards something and take actions; thus, it can be stated that Providence is the weak order of Will at a distance from actions and Will refers to the strong order of Providence and connected with action (Asgari, 1412 AH, 35-36).

* **Corresponding Author:** Razie Sadeghi, PhD student of Quran and Hadith Science of Islamic Azad University, Sari Branch. Email: Sadeghi.1363@gmail.com

Is the Divine Providence Different from the Divine Will?

The Divine Providence and the Divine Will are along the Divine Actions. Based on the religious teachings originating from the Imams (AS), whatever Allah wants does not take place unless after the Knowledge of God attaches it, then it is the time for the Divine Providence, and the Divine Will and following it Destiny and then Predestination, and then the Signature (Ratification) by God. The Providence and Will of God is of two types: the Evolutionary Will of God and the Legislative Will of God. In terms of Legislative Will, God willed the guidance of all people; thus, He sent down the Prophets and the Revealed Books. But in terms of the Evolutionary Will, God wanted people to choose the path based on their free will and authority, not to be forced to resign to religion. Providence and Will slightly differ; Providence is merely wanting something, but Will is to go towards something and take actions; thus, it can be stated that Providence is the weak order of Will at a distance from actions and Will refers to the strong order of Providence and connected with action. Knowledge and Providence and Will of God and of Imams (AS). It is quoted that Imam Sadiq (AS) says:

قلوبنا اوعيه لمشيئته الله فاذا شاء الله شيئا شئنا و الله يقول ما تشاؤون الا ان يشاء الله

"Our hearts are the vessel of the Divine providence. Then when God wills something, we have wanted it and this is the Promise of God stating: "You don't want anything except what God wills (Tusi, 1411 AH, P.247)". Imam Sadiq (AS) also states somewhere else that:

ان الامام و كر لاراده الله عز وجل لا يشاء الا من يشاء الله

"Indeed, the heart of Imam is the nest of the Divine Will. He does not want except what God desires (Majlisi, vol.25, p.385). What is set forth here isn't the Inherent Divine Providence and Will, rather it is the Agent Providence and Will of God. The action of God is the creature and possible and requires a manifestation. This narration states that: "If God wills, this Divine Will is like a bird requiring a nest. Then the Divine Will and Providence's bird's nest is the heart of the Prophet's Household. From this, it is also understood that, first, they are aware of what is going on in the world, then the other beings are the Angels-close to God. Based on this, the Prophet stated:

و نحن اذا شئنا شاء الله، و اذا كرهننا كره الله، فالويل كل الويل لمن انكر شيئا مما اعطانا الله فقد انكر قده الله و مشيئته فينا

"Whenever we desire something, it means God wills and when don't, it means God doesn't will it. Then *ويل كل* (a place in the Hell) is for the one who denies our virtue and our qualities and denies what God has granted us, since anyone who denies what God has bestowed us, verily, he's denied the power of God and His providence about us. Some theologians, especially the al-Ash'ari theologians, considered Will of the inherent traits and part of Ghodamaye Samaniyah (the 8 ancient creatures or 8 obligatory existences as essence, and 7 attributes called life, knowledge, power, will, hearing, sight, speech). They believed that: The Will of God is ancient and something other than the Knowledge and beyond the Essence of God. By referring to the examples of this narration, some other claim that:

خلق الله المشيئته بنفسها ثم خلق الاشياء بالمشيئته

(Bihar al-Anwar, vol.4, p.145) "It turns out that Providence is the creature". In some narrations, it is specified that God has created some Names for Himself and the Name created in His Essence doesn't leave His Essence. It should be noted that the term creature here isn't interpreted conventionally or philosophically and it doesn't mean that this Name that God put for Himself is a creature. He addressed this way: "If it is the case, the question posed is with what He created that Name? As one aspect, I state that maybe this is more appropriate to say that the creature about that Name exclusively for the Divine Essence means Manifestation.

About the creation of the universe, again a false idea has been raised by some of the old scholars and that is saying: "The emergence of the universe of God is a sort of compulsion; that is, God couldn't create. The Essence of God requires creation and Providence does not play a part here." That is, the emergence of the universe is from the Divine Nature and the Almighty Al-Ayazbala is deterministic. In contrast to this false idea, the narrations and verses strongly stress that all things depend on the Divine Providence. And teaches the Prophet to recite "God willing" expression when doing a task:

وَ لَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ اِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكَ غَدًا اِلَّا اَنْ يَشَاءَ اللهُ

(Al-Kahf, 23/24)

"Nor say [Messenger] of anything, Surely, I will do such and such tomorrow, without adding "if Allah Wills." And mention this remembrance if you forgot and also say: "it may be that my Creator and Nurturer will guide me nearer than this way to the right course." And of our religious rites is to say "God willing" in everything and in our heart, this should dwell in our heart that nothing can be done without His Providence; even in the Qur'an, a delicate meaning has been used and stated:

وَ مَا تَشَاءُونَ اِلَّا اَنْ يَشَاءَ اللهُ

(Al-Insan/30 & At-Takwir/29)

"And you, the believers do not wish something unless it is according to Allah's Will verily, Allah is the Knowing Decree." God strongly emphasizes that we get to know Allah this way that nothing in the world is realized without His Will and Providence. Perhaps when Will and Providence are used with each other, their meaning differs; but when they are used interchangeably, they are synonym. Anyway, the word "شاء" has been strongly emphasized. Qur'an stresses that never consider God closed-handed. Where we assume the decree is

definite and the sufficient cause exists, we are unaware that there is another component for the cause and that is the Will of God; if He Willed, all these things would have disrupted. We should never think that God is close-handed and even God cannot change any more! Close-handed God is no longer God. This depends on the Providence of God in all creatures, whether old or originated, abstract or material. The existence of every creature depends on the Will of God and in one sense, the embodiment of God's Will.

Divine Will from Hadiths' Perspective

What is interesting and significant in the Islamic narratives about Will is that:

First, the Divine Will differs from His Knowledge and Power.

Second, will is viewed of the attributes of action, not that of the essence; and in both, the verses and narrations are used. The very issue (the attribute of action) has been set forth about the Divine Providence. Of the Quranic verses, this (the action attribute's will) is inferred well. Such as the following: A) In several cases, Will is subject to (إذا). As stating:

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ
(Yasin/82)

"Verily, when He decides to create somebody, something or some event, He only Commands to it stating: Be! And immediately it comes to existence." If Will were the essence attribute, it has to be always existing, while "إذا" is for the starting point of something. B) Also Will has been subject to (لو):

لَوْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَخْذَ وَلَدًا لَأَصْطَفَىٰ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ سُبْحَانَهُ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ
(Az-Zumar/4)

"If Allah had willed to adopt a child, He would have chosen from whatever He had created [in the Heavens]. He is the Absolute Pure and above the attachment that they ascribe to Him; He is the One yet the Dominant over all powers." C) In addition, it has been subject to (إن):

إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوءًا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً
(Al-Ahzab /17)

"If it be Allah's Will to punish you or to bestow Grace upon you nothing can bar His Command to be fulfilled and they, the people cannot find any Guardian and Supporter but Allah."

إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا
(Al-Fath/11)

"If His will be to cause some loss on you or to give you some benefit? But Allah is the Absolute Aware about what you people do." The Essence attributes are related to the Glorious God and abstracted from the Essence. While the Action attributes are realized regarding both sides. Thus, the Glorious God will be the Sustainer if there is a creature and God will sustain them, since Will won't come true without the other party (object of will). Therefore, Will is of the Action attributes. That Will is of the Action attributes, some infer that in this case the mankind's actions are of the non-representative tasks of God, can get out of His Will circle and only God orders the good and forbids the evil. That is, they consider the issue settled at this stage.

Second: The Evolutionary Will and the Legislative Will

The Islamic scholars have developed two Wills, Evolutionary and Legislative, for the Glorious God. Allame Tabatabaee stated that: the agent's will occurs on doing an external affair, of course sometimes directly. That is, the Evolutionary Will. Sometimes for this reason, there is no need for a special incentive for the representative to make an affair realized; rather, he wants to fulfill his will through the will and power of those who are kind of prior to them. In this case, the power to order other ones has been created in him. This is known as the Legislative Will. It is true about the Divine Will. The Evolutionary Will of God as the legislator is not assigned to the Worship Actions, rather the Evolutionary Will of God has been assigned to His Own Action, that is the same order to His Servants. When this Evolutionary Will is compared with the question action issued by the agent, it is called as the Legislative Will.

Third: Analyzing Divine Will and Providence from the Book and Tradition

Will and Providence have two distinctive concepts and orders. In the Qur'an and the hadiths by Imams (AS), there are separate concepts and nowhere these two have been taken as synonym. It can't even be claimed that they are united about God based on application. Literally, (مَشِيَّةٌ) means want and (إِرَادَةٌ) means intention or demand and although, the meaning will is in both, in the first one -Providence -the goal is to want and inclination to something and in the second one -Will -there is want accompanied with the intention to reach.

In a hadith by Imam Reza (AS), (إِشَاءَ اللَّهِ) has come with the meaning the beginning of an action and (إِرَادَةٌ) as affirmation and in another hadith by the Infallible Imam (AS), the Divine Providence has been defined as (هَمَّهُ) (امام الشیبه) having the same meaning with the previous hadith. Association between Mankind's Providence and Divine Providence In the Qur'an and hadith, Mankind's Providence has been subject to the

Divine Providence. While this hasn't been reiterated about Will .About the Providence of Mankind, Qur'an stated that:

إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا. وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

(Al-Insan/29&30)

"Verily, this Qur'an is a Reminder and a Guide and whoever who wishes can find through it ,a way towards his Creator .And you ,the believers do not wish something unless it is according to Allah's will ,Allah is the Knowing Decree. "

And added:

كَلَّا إِنَّهُ تَذْكِرَةٌ ،فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَرَهُ .وَمَا يَذْكُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ هُوَ أَهْلُ التَّقْوَىٰ وَ أَهْلُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ

(Al-Muddassir/54&56)

"For sure, this Qur'an is a Reminder [for all in the human society]; and they will not be reminded unless Allah's Willis the source of Righteousness and the Owner of Forgiveness."It can be perceived that in both verses, the mankind's Providence towards God and endurance and attention to the Truth are dealt with .In both cases, mankind's Providencehas been negated without the Divine Providence.

C) Human's Will and Lordly Will

In Qur'an and hadith, Will has been mentioned for human similar to that for God. Though, in some verses, the Guidance and Distraction of human has been related to the Divine Will .But their Willhasn't been negated verses the Divine Will, while about the Providence, it is said that :

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

(Al-Insan/30)

"And you, the believers do not wish something unless it is according to Allah's Will ".It seems as if the above verseintends to state that the principle of human's providence has been based on God's Providence, so that without His Providence, the human's providence does not exist.Then the difference between Providence and Will is clear cut. Based on the Divine Providence, human has been created free and various facilities have been made available for him, whatever human wants is within the facilities and means God made accessible for human, then human cannot exercise the slightest will and providencebeyond the rules and agents of the Lord's Creation. If human desires to go to the right path, then he has to move according to these Divine facilities and inspect his way. If human has taken the rebellion path, again he has been enjoying the same Divine Facilities and Agents.

Whatever good and right exists thanks to the DivineProvidence, since the human's providence for good deeds wouldn't be possible without the Divine Providence. Then the origin of good deeds is the Glorious God .The Lordly Capital and the power to exploit these facilities and the free will of human belong to God, while every sort of sin and evil is related to human because he has been given the Divine Facilities and he is truly free and selective.

God's Providence from Qur'an Perspective

One of the attributes of God's Perfection, sometimes implicitly and occasionally, explicitly raised in the Qur'an and throughout history as one of the most controversial verbal and interpretive topics is the issue known as God's Providence. In Qur'an, lots of verses indicate God being fully dominant on all affairs of the existence, introducing all the events of the world based on the Divine Providence and considering human as lacking any power:

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكِ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَ تَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَ تَعْرِضُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَ تُنْزِلُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِبَيْدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

(Al-E-Imran /26)

"Have you not [O, Messenger] observed those who have been given a portion of the Scripture? When they are referred to the Book of Allah that it may judge among them, then a party of them turn away while protesting ".But besides these verses, there are some verses introducing mankind as the possessing authority and considering him as the agent behind changing his destiny, and thus human beings have been assigned responsibilities and rewards and penalties have been determined for them:

وَ قُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَ مَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا

(Al-Kahf/29)

"Say,[O, the Messenger]:This Word of Truth is from your Creator .They are free to choose between belief and disbelief .Surely, we have prepared from the disbelievers a Fire that its Pavilion encompasses them".The sum of these verses is this way that the free will of human isn't the absolute authority and along with God's Providence; since if we accept the fact that man is absolutely free, we need to mention that a creature has been found that is outside God's Ruling and Power and this is polytheism and opposed to the Divine actions' Unity and on the other hand,if we admit that human is absolutely bound, in this case, there is no outcome except obligation's negation and sanction(punishment or reward) and this idea is inconsistent with the selection right in humans as a vivid issue ;Thus it is right that the Order of Creation has been outlined based on Amr byn Al amryn (the affirmation of man's power by preserving his causal relationship with the Divine will) ,i.e., our power, wisdom,

reason, free choice and will are because of Him and are along the Divine Will and Providence and its effect ;because God has provided all the arrangements and means of Will and its application for us and it is with us to make the final decision to perform or quit the affairs. Then because our actions are necessary for the arrangements that the Compassionate God bestowed us, we can attribute these means to Him and to the one making the actions .Therefore, not only there is no contrast and contradiction between these two classes of the verses, but also no particular equality exists between them(MakaremShirazi ,2007,vol.5,P.385).Kinds of the Divine Providence:God's Providence is discussed onto two dimensions:

1-Evolutionary Providence

The Evolutionary Providence refers to the status of creating objects as exclusive for God and Creates them based on His knowledge, wisdom and expedient and since this Status is the Essence of the Truth and originates from the Divine Everlasting Power, its violation is impossible and the servants have no right in this domain:

تُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَ تُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَمَاتِ وَ تُخْرِجُ الْمَمَاتِ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَ تُزْزِقُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

(Al-e-Imran /27)

"You cause the night to merge into the day and You cause the day to merge into the night; and You bring the living out of the dead and You bring the dead out of the living .And You give substance to whomsoever You will without any limit."These examples of the verses are of the Evolutionary Will kinds related to God's Evolution and Predestination and out of the creatures' will.

2-Legislative Providence

By the Legislative Providence, it means God makes the servants aware of their interest or loss through sending the Messengers so that they act or abandon with no force or compulsion ;thus ,its violation is impossible and the Qur'an takes it as Providence:

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا

(Al-Insan/3)

"Then We showed him the Straight Path; whether he chooses to be grateful or to be ingratitude and disbeliever."

Conclusion

However, considering the above discussion on the Essence attributes and actions and the debate on the way to apply this attribute for God and regarding the narrations by the Imams (AS) about the Divine Will and Providence, we can conclude that Will is considered of the attributes of God's Actions.Will in God differs from that in human, i.e., in human Will has to go through some stages to reach the emergence stage of will and action .That is, first the image of action and then knowledge and its advantage and after that the career in that action and following it the will and making the action are involved , while it isn't the same in God that to go through some stages for action will and Will is His Essence and will Creates whatever He Desires immediately and it is stated that God owns two types of Will classified as the Evolutionary and Legislative. The Evolutionary Will is the exterior verses .The Legislative Will is the very agents and statements of the Prophets that infact impart the Divine Agents to us.

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