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AN EXPLANATION OF WHAT DIVINE REVELATION IS IN IBN ARABI'S MYSTICAL THOUGHTS AND IDEAS

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ABSTRACT

Revelation is one of the issues that has occupied the minds of the human race and has forced them to search and research to answer their questions and doubts in this regard. Ibn Arabi, a prominent mystic of Islam, has studied this issue in detail and has answered human doubts and questions in this regard. He confines Revelation to a reference to the revealing of abstract rational meanings in sensory forms at the level of imagination, which is revealed to living beings, especially human beings, as a result of divine blessings, in order to free themselves from the misguidance of the material world and follow the divine way—examining what divine Revelation and the doubts about this mysterious consciousness in Ibn Arabi's mystical thoughts and ideas can answer many questions and doubts of people about Revelation, especially among the followers of the heavenly religions. This research intends to first define Revelation and express the reality and nature of Revelation from Ibn Arabi's point of view through the descriptive-analytical method, then continue by examining two types of general Revelation and special Revelation from his point of view and by expressing and analyzing the quality and revelation levels from the Ibn Arabi's point of view. Ibn Arabi believes that Revelation has an eternal source and is revealed in five stages, which includes all beings, both human and non-human. However, in the meantime, the highest type of this divine word is the Revelation specific to the Shari'a, which is only for the divine prophets and in order to implement the Shari'a in the realm of the senses, which highest state of Revelation is that it is revealed directly to the pure heart of the Prophet by God Almighty.

INTRODUCTION

Revelation is one of the most important topics in the heavenly religions, which has led to many questions about these religions' teachings. Few thinkers and mystics can be found who have not directly or indirectly considered this issue. Due to the various studies and results obtained by the thinkers and mystics of the heavenly religions, according to some of their different teachings and beliefs, one has many questions and confusions about what Revelation and other topics related to this divine word. Thus,

the study of the thoughts and ideas of Ibn Arabi as a prominent mystic of the Islamic world that has emerged in the West of Islam (Spain) and in many cases, including Revelation, which is known as science related to the world of intellects, he has presented the highest and most respected theories and speeches (Elhami, 2000, 9), and can help man in solving many of his questions and confusions about this mysterious thing. Ibn Arabi has examined Revelation because of its importance in the material world and the doubts that have been created about it and consider this induced knowledge as a divine gift that God Almighty gives to each of his servants who have walked the spiritual levels and is worthy of it.

Research Background

Since the creation of human, God has guided them through the prophets, and since human alone can not achieve happiness through his intellect, God has honored the prophets with his word, which is the same as Revelation, which to guide a human. Since then, the issue of Revelation and what is Revelation? It was revealed how the Prophet received it has been an issue that has occupied the human mind. In the meantime, Ibn Arabi, as a prominent mystic in the Islamic world, tried to answer these questions.

So far, no research has been written that examines the nature and what Revelation, the types of Revelation, and how it was revealed and received by the Prophet according to Ibn Arabi's point of view. This research is the first to examine these issues about Revelation from Ibn Arabi's point of view. In Yadollah Dadjoo (2012) research entitled "Analysis of revelation in Ibn Arabi's thought," only the nature of Revelation has been considered, and the types of Revelation and how to receive Revelation and its Revelation have been neglected. This research's initiative is that for the first time, it examines the axes of what Revelation is, the types of Revelation, the reality of Revelation, and the levels of Revelation in Ibn Arabi's mystical thought.

Problem Statement

From the beginning of his presence in the material world, human has realized the occurrence of some things that have been revealed to him in the imaginary world and through the senses. Revelation is one of these things that with the advent of the prophets of the divine religions became more clear and attracted the attention of more people, especially among the followers of religions such as Christianity, Islam, etc., and raised for them questions such as is scientific Revelation virtual or real? Is Revelation a kind of mystical discovery and intuition? Can all mystics attain the degree of Revelation? Therefore, thinkers and mystics decided to study and research this issue and explain this issue about humans and other living things.

Ibn Arabi, as one of the famous Muslim mystics in the Islamic world, has tried to explain the answers to his questions about Revelation and inform them of the reality and nature of this subject; therefore, he has considered the levels and types for it and has studied the reality of Revelation.

In this research, by examining and explaining what Revelation is in Ibn Arabi's thoughts and ideas, an attempt is made to answer such questions with reliable and reliable sources and correct analyses.

What is Ibn Arabi's definition of Revelation? Is Revelation something that human endeavors are effective in achieving or not? Is the study of the subject of Revelation dependent on knowing another subject in Ibn Arabi's thought? What are the types of Revelation? Are all types of Revelation equal to each other, and are they similar in a revealing way? How does Revelation come to the heart of the Prophet? Is the Revelation revealed suddenly and at the same time, or does it have different levels?

DEFINITION OF REVELATION FROM IBN ARABI'S POINT OF VIEW

Ibn Arabi considers Revelation to be specific to the prophets, who have not attained that status and have not attained intellectual and intuitive perfections; they are also deprived of its existence. He also believes that Revelation is achieved through effort and the role of God's grace and forgiveness in the selection of his special servants. In this regard, he says: "Revelation is from God and not from the souls of the prophets or their thoughts and intellectual structures; as God says "It is sent by God the wise"(Fuṣṣilat 42) and also said:" There is no falsehood behind it and in front of it"(Fuṣṣilat 42) and this is because the book that was revealed to the Prophet is from God and not from man and his thought (Ibn Arabi, 2013, vol. 4, 269).

Ibn Arabi defines Revelation as: "Revelation is a reference that replaces the phrase. The phrase is a bridge that the audience crosses to reach the purpose; that is why it is called the phrase, but in Revelation, it is not the passage from one thing to another; rather, it refers to the same meaning and purpose, and because it happens quickly and the understanding and concept of it is a truth, and Revelation is, in fact, the same as the first concept and the first understanding (Ibid., vol. 8, 329). He also says in the definition of Revelation: "Revelation is the revealing of abstract intellectual meanings in sensory forms that are bound in the level of imagination and are among the evidence of sense in the level of perception and the level of imagination (Ibid., vol. 8, 329).

Ibn Arabi believes that Revelation before revealing to the Prophet is simple and abstract and does not have multiplicity. He states that this simple and abstract Revelation is manifested in the world of sensations and in the thought of the Prophet in the form of concepts and words, and the Prophet also communicates these manifested concepts and words to the people.

Ibn Arabi states that the perception of the teachings of Revelation is of the type of intuitive knowledge in which no error occurs. Because it is from God, it can not be considered a defect, and Revelation is the divine knowledge that is from God, and it leads people through the Prophet.

According to Ibn Arabi, Revelation is first related to the senses and then enters into abstract matters outside the senses. Also, the beginning of Revelation is only with dreams, whether in sleep or waking, and the meaning of Revelation is the truths with which the divine law is established.

Ibn Arabi believes that Revelation is a kind of revealing and induction of meanings from God to the Prophet, and Revelation itself is a kind of way of knowledge and cognition along with reason and sense. In the light of it, great knowledge is revealed to the Prophet, and he guides by expressing those teachings. In Ibn Arabi's thought, Revelation is a divine gift to the servants. They receive the divine message and word to prosper in this world and the hereafter, and by following the divine commands, they provide a kind of blissful life for themselves and others.

THE REALITY AND NATURE OF REVELATION FROM IBN ARABI'S POINT OF VIEW

In order to express the reality and nature of Revelation from Ibn Arabi's point of view, it is first necessary to pay attention to his ontology and explain the reality of Revelation in the light of his ontology.

Ibn Arabi divides the levels of ontology into five types, which are:

1. Absolute and real absence
2. The world of spirits
3. The heavenly world
4. The world of the kingdom
5. The world of the perfect man (Kharazmi, 1996, 25)

Ibn Arabi's ontology is based on the manifestation of the Supreme Being because this manifestation expresses how the Supreme Being acts and shows the quality of the relation of unity to multiplicity and how multiplicity and truths originate from a single source.

Among the five mentioned levels, from Ibn Arabi's point of view, the level of the perfect man is the most important of the worlds because the reality of the perfect man, which is interpreted as the Muhammadan reality, is the source of life and soul of the universe and the mediator between God and his/her servants. All human beings receive everything they have from the Muhammadan reality and the perfect man.

Ibn Arabi believes that Revelation's reality is not acquired but a kind of divine grace that God considers perfect man in spiritual and intellectual dimensions worthy of receiving.

According to Ibn Arabi, during various spiritual journeys, man should get rid of all thoughts, lusts, and carnal desires and break the veils of light and darkness. Eventually, as a result of this struggle and during the divine houses, the divine names and attributes are manifested on him, and he becomes a special basic manifestation of God and deserves to receive Revelation; of course, as mentioned, Revelation is not an acquired thing, and whoever deems worthy, God attains the status of receiving Revelation (Dadjoo, 2012, 152).

According to Ibn Arabi, the reality and nature of Revelation are rooted in God's and to guide man and save him from error and misguidance who enjoins the prophets to receive and convey his word to the people in order to establish his laws among the communities and to guide the people to the right path in which there is no misguidance.

Ibn Arabi believes that the reality of Revelation is also rooted in God's mercy and generosity, which although people sin and do not obey His commands, despite his unlimited generosity, he commands his prophets to walk among the people and informs them of the reality of their existence

with his words, so that they may be guided to the right path and put aside evil thoughts and deeds.

TYPES OF REVELATION FROM IBN ARABI'S POINT OF VIEW

According to Ibn Arabi, Revelation is of two types; general Revelation and Special Revelation. General Revelation includes all the creatures of God Almighty and is not reserved for humans and angels, and all my creatures, including inanimate objects, plants, and animals, also receive it. Ibn Arabi says in this regard: "As the general revelation is not specific to a particular type of creatures and all creatures from humans to plants and jinn and animals receive it" (Ibn Arabi, 2013, vol. 78, 2).

According to Ibn Arabi, general Revelation and encompassing all creatures and phenomena are also about the various components of creatures, such as all the components of the human body from flesh, soul, skin, bones, hair, hands, etc., receive the general Revelation. Ibn Arabi says in this regard: "Indeed, all the components of beings can receive Revelation in the general sense, for example, for a person from soul and skin to hair can receive general Revelation (Ibid).

According to Ibn Arabi, general Revelation is such that the addressee accepts it without doubt and acts on it. In this regard, he refers to Moses's mother (PBUH), who, according to the verses of the Holy Quran, God Almighty revealed to him to throw Moses (PBUH) in the Nile River he acted on this Revelation. Ibn Arabi considers this type of Revelation, like what was revealed to Moses's mother (PBUH), to be a revelation in the general sense, which is irresistible, and the recipient acts on it without any doubt.

But special Revelation, unlike general Revelation, does not apply to all creatures and is specific to human beings, which itself is of two types; Revelation specific to the law, which only the prophets received, and by which they create the divine law among the people, and another type of special Revelation is inspiration, which is reserved for the divine saints. Among the types of special Revelation, Revelation specific to the Shari'a is much higher than Revelation and inspiration to the saints, and what the divine saints receive is related to the understanding of the Shari'a and is not intended to create the Shari'a. However, Revelation is specific to the prophets to create and explain the divine law among the people.

THE QUALITY OF REVEALING REVELATION FROM IBN ARABI'S POINT OF VIEW

Ibn Arabi believes that the revealing revelation verses are done through the angel of the Revelation in two ways; either the angel of the Revelation induces the words and concepts of Revelation in the heart of the Prophet, or it descends physically and what is obligatory from God to hear the Prophet and the Prophet receives Revelation. Therefore, Revelation is received by the Prophet both through sense and intuition.

The angel of the Revelation is not revealed except by the command of God Almighty. Of course, this does not mean that God commands them to reveal and descend from the rank of address; rather, when God Almighty wants to send Revelation to man, he induces it in the souls of the angels. Then they do not find themselves worthy of the Revelation that has been

induced in them, and they realize that they must be revealed and induce that reality in human beings. Then they see the face of the person to whom it is to be revealed, in the form of faces. From those faces, they recognize the owner of the faces on the ground, and they descend on him and induce him with what has been induced in them, which this induction is interpreted as Sharia and Revelation. This type of Revelation is specific to human beings; therefore, if it is attributed to God, as a rule, it is called the Qur'an, the Torah, the Psalms, the Bible, and Scrolls. If it is attributed to God as an act, it is called a hadith, news, and opinion (Zamani Gheshlaghi, 2012, 14). Ibn Arabi believes that the Revelation has another quality: God reveals the concepts and teachings of Revelation directly and without intermediaries on the heart of the Prophet. He believes that the highest level of Revelation is this level, and receiving Revelation in this way from God depends on the spiritual progress and ascension of the Prophet, and God immediately reveals concepts on the heart of the Prophet.

Ibn Arabi believes that the first appearance of the principles of the Revelation of the prophets occurs as an intermediary between the world of sense and the absolute Mundus Imaginalis. Then it is perceived in the higher world. This is why he states that the first verses revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) were done through dreams.

Ibn Arabi states that the soul of the Prophet must rise to a level where he can first receive and comprehend Revelation in the imagination and then in the world of absolute Mundus Imaginalis. In other words, to complete the reception and communication of Revelation, both the angel of the Revelation and the soul of the Prophet must go through imagination. Since imagination is an intermediary between the world of sense and absolute Mundus Imaginalis, by passing through it, they can become absolute Mundus Imaginalis. That is where divine Revelation is revealed to the Prophet, the angel of the Revelation. The Prophet communicates the divine Revelation to the people in the form of words.

THE LEVEL OF REVEALING REVELATION

Ibn Arabi believes that revealing divine meanings and concepts from the world beyond the senses to the heart of the Prophet is not sudden and goes through different levels that each level has its own characteristics that distinguish it from others. The revealing levels of Revelation from Ibn Arabi's point of view include:

1. The level of intellect: At this level, the divine command, which is in the form of the same divine names, is revealed to the intellect in a voluntary manifestation, and revelatory concepts are manifested in the Prophet's thought.

2. The level of the soul: At this level, the revelatory concepts that have passed the level of intellect are manifested in the form of soul concepts and outside the material attributes on the soul of the Prophet.

3. The level of the empyrean: In this level, the concepts of Revelation become the empyrean, and the empyrean in Ibn Arabi's thought is the first level of the world of creation.

4. The level of the Ultimate: After the manifestation of the revelatory concepts from the rank of the empyrean, they are manifested to

the level of the ultimate, and in this level, the revelatory teachings and concepts appear in a way other than the one that was on it in the beginning.

5. The order of the Sidra al-Muntaha¹: The divine command that is revealed is the divine, the intellectual, soul, empyrean, and ultimate; that is, the sum of the forms of everything that has passed in its path. Of course, it appears at the same level in each order until manifestation in the creatures' hearts (Ibn Arabi, 2006, 28-30).

6. The human level: The last level of Revelation is that the concepts and teachings of Revelation are fully received by the Prophet and are communicated to the people at this stage.

From Ibn Arabi's point of view, the revealing revelatory verses on the heart of the Prophet and his imaginative and eloquent power is not such that people can easily understand it because human beings are at the lowest level of intellect and intuition and do not have the necessary perfection to understand the divine word, which is outside sensory features. Hence, divine Revelation goes through different levels of revealing to be in the Prophet's imagination in such a way that it can be understood by human beings in the world of sense, for example, to be heard or read. Of course, Ibn Arabi emphasizes that all levels of Revelation from the Prophet are divine, and the Prophet does not make any change in the message of the divine word. The same word that is read and heard by man in the world of the senses is God's word and by his command.

Ibn Arabi considers the revealing Revelation to be conditional on this level, because from his point of view because the initial state of Revelation does not have the characteristics of the material world and is beyond the senses, it is incomprehensible to humans. They do not have the necessary talent to understand those concepts because it requires a special intellectual and spiritual perfection to which the prophets' souls are merely adorned and which other human beings lack. Hence, divine Revelation goes through these levels until it is finally communicated to the Prophet's people on the human level.

CONCLUSION

Revelation is one of the most important topics in the heavenly religions. Due to its frequent occurrence in the world of being and different people, from the distant past to the present, thinkers have been considered by thinkers mystics of these religions and even non-heavenly religions. Each of them has studied and analyzed this issue in detail according to the specific teachings of their religion.

Ibn Arabi is one of the most prominent Muslim mystics who, according to the Holy Quran and the basic teachings of Islam, has studied and analyzed this issue and presented a logical conclusion. He confines Revelation to the revealing abstract intellectual meanings in the sensory forms that take place at the level of imagination; therefore, he believes that Revelation is obtained first in the imagination world and through the senses, and then it is manifested in a multiplicity in the world of the senses and intellect and helps the man in managing the affairs of the material world so that if these abstract intellectual meanings are not revealed to man, he will

¹ The Lote Tree of the Ultimate Boundary

be misled and misguided. It can be said that this analysis of Ibn Arabi indicates the presence of divine Revelation, which due to the manifestation of the essence of the Almighty in this type of science, there will be no ambiguity and doubt in this regard, and the divine word is completely reliable and trustworthy. He also considers Revelation as a non-acquired thing that arises from the grace and care of the Almighty towards his special servants who practice austerity and self-purification. This means that only persons can be qualified to receive and preach Revelation in the world of multiplicity, which purify the soul and purify the interior and walk in spiritual ranks and positions, and free themselves from material and worldly belongings. Therefore, the grace of God is included in the condition of the servants who have reached the degree of perfection. Therefore, Revelation should not be confused with knowledge and sciences obtained through piety. One of the most basic Revelation features is that it is granted, and human sense and intellect have no role in considering it.

Ibn Arabi divides Revelation into two types of general Revelation and special Revelation, which means general Revelation is a revelation that is generally about all beings and even their body parts such as hair, skin, soul, etc. That this kind of Revelation is inevitable and the recipient is not able to resist it, and considering that Revelation is one of the sciences that is revealed to beings through imagination and in the world of sense. In order to ensure the correctness of this science, they have not committed any transgression. They are practicing the same subject of Revelation in the world of being because they know that what has been revealed to them is the most correct and best action that can emerge. The special Revelation that only human beings can attain is divided into two types of inspiration and Revelation specific to the Shari'a. Inspiration belongs to the divine saints who do not have the duty to convey the divine word in the world of multiplicity. Because this type of Revelation is assigned to the understanding of the Shari'a by the saints of God and others are not required to follow it, in which case there is no need for publicity and proclamation. However, the Revelation specific to the Shari'a is that only the prophets received and in communicates in the world of the sense and, if necessary, explains and interprets the divine word among the worlds so that they too may become aware of it. Simultaneously, the prophets strictly implement the divine law among the people and try to internalize this Shari'a. In humans, this type of Revelation contains the realities with which Shari'a is fulfilled, and this type of Revelation is the highest degree of Revelation.

According to Ibn Arabi, Revelation is revealed to the Prophet in three ways, the highest of which is revealing Revelation, which is revealed directly from God Almighty. The reason why this type of revealing is the best can be considered as its immediacy because, in the other two ways, both of which are performed by the angel of the Revelation, the angel for Revelation is present either physically in front of the eyes of the Prophet and states the contents of the Prophet or blows them into the pure heart of the Prophet, in which case the angel of the Revelation becomes a mediator in conveying the Revelation to the Prophet. Of course, the Revelation by the angel of the Revelation is not to change God's order. However, the Revelation angel is obliged to explain the contents accurately to the Prophet after converting them from the realm of meaning to the realm of words. The

Prophet is also obliged to convey the divine news to the people in the form of the word, and after communicating the word of God, to explain it among the general public so that they also know about the divine word. Therefore, what is said by the Almighty God is not made and paid for by the powers of the Prophet. Besides, Ibn Arabi considers a level for Revelation, without which it will not be possible for people to understand Revelation; because each level has its characteristics, for example, the first level is a beyond the sense revelation that no one other than the Prophet can understand, and gaining knowledge about this level requires intuition and self-perfection. These levels are the level of intellect, the level of the soul, the level of the empyrean, the ultimate level of the Sidra al-Muntaha. In the end, Ibn Arabi considers Revelation as a sensory thing that prevents the deviation and misguidance of all beings, especially human beings, which is revealed to the material worlds in various levels and ways. The highest type of Revelation is the Revelation of the Shari'a, which the Almighty reveals to the Prophet's pure heart.

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