

What Is Our Covenant with God?

Have We Lived in *Alam adh-Dharr*?

In Which Realm Was Our Covenant with God, Known as the Covenant of *Alast*, Established?

- Have you ever heard of *alam adh-dharr*?

-Are you familiar with the covenant between human beings and Allah? Did we truly live in another realm before this world, where we made a covenant with Allah?

-What are the principles of our covenant with God, and why should we adhere to it? Do we remember and remain faithful to it?

-What effect does our covenant with God have on our lives and our eternity?

A covenant means a promise or commitment to do or refrain from something. Throughout our lives, we may have made various commitments, such as educational, professional, or marital ones. As we know, keeping covenants is one of our most important duties as human beings; however, some of us may not remain faithful to the promises we have made, and as a result, we must accept the consequences of breaking them. The negative effects of unfaithfulness to commitments vary. Sometimes, due to not adhering to a commitment, we may have to pay a heavy price; for example, failing to meet school or university commitments can lead to expulsion, and unfaithfulness in marriage can result in separation and divorce.

Our covenant with God is the most significant and vital promise we all bear, a covenant related to our origin and resurrection. Remembering this covenant and

being faithful to it has positive effects in this world and the hereafter, while unfaithfulness to it will have negative consequences for us.

-What does the covenant with God mean?

-When was this covenant made?

-Why have some of us forgotten it?

-What are the consequences of being unfaithful to this covenant?

In this lesson, we will answer these questions.

Our Covenant with God, or the Covenant of *Alast*

The Holy Quran refers to a covenant between humans and God in verse 172 of *Surah Al-A'raf* [1], known as the covenant of "*Alast*" "...and made them testify about themselves. 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'Yes, we testify.'" There are various interpretations of this verse. Some believe that we existed in that time with the same true identity we have now and testified to God's divinity in a realm called *alam adh-dharr*.

However, the truth is that the covenant of *Alast* and our testimony to Allah's divinity and lordship was not a verbal testimony but an existential one, meaning that our monotheism-oriented *fitrah* (innate nature) and our infinity-seeking spirit, both of which originate from Allah, testify to His divinity and lordship. This is also true in this world. When we listen to our hearts, we encounter desires that have no limits. We desire everything infinitely: infinite wealth, infinite power, everlasting beauty, eternal life, etc. The world is a realm of limitations; therefore, as we

previously examined and proved, these desires cannot originate from the world but rather have roots in our spirit, which is of divine essence. Thus, whether we are aware of it or not, every part of our being testifies to the existence of the Infinite Existence, meaning Allah, and there is no difference between a believer and a disbeliever in this regard.

Considering these points, our most important covenant with God is to live according to our *fitrah*. Allah has entrusted all His names and attributes to our *fitrah* and soul by breathing His spirit into us, and our only mission in this world is to actualize and manifest these attributes so that we can reach the highest rank for which Allah created us, that is, the rank of being Allah's deputy on earth. Now that we know our covenant with God, the question arises: Can we remain faithful to this covenant under all circumstances?

Faithfulness to the Divine Covenant

Being faithful to the covenant with God means we must not forget that the truth and origin of our existence come from God. Throughout our lives, we should always move toward Allah and strive to become like Him so that we can return to Him with a sound heart and the same pure spirit with which we were born. The term "resurrection" means return; all human beings go through the same stages when coming into this world, but on the path of return, some individuals' paths diverge from others. Those who remain faithful to their covenant with God and uphold their human dignity move toward eternal Heaven, while those who break their covenant with God and taint their pure spirit, which is the most important trust of their lives, are destined for Hell for purification.

We can remain faithful to our covenant with God in our journey of life only if we have awareness and knowledge of the stages of our life; that is, we must know where we came from, where we are, and where we will go. No matter what our worldly condition or status is—whether wealthy or poor, healthy or ill, famous or unknown—what matters is that in every situation and location we are, we do not forget our origin and resurrection and remain faithful to our covenant. The main purpose for all of us should be to grow closer to Allah and acquire divine names and attributes according to our personal circumstances. Allah expects from each person according to their abilities and resources, not more. Therefore, if each of us fulfills our duties according to our personal circumstances, we will acquire utmost perfection and reach the highest level of human growth.

The Effects of Adhering to the Covenant with God

Inner happiness and peace are among the most important effects of adhering to our covenant with God because this covenant allows us to dominate our true self or our human dimension over our material nature and animalistic dimension, making our main purpose in life to reach Allah and to acquire divine attributes. Thus, the world becomes like a gym for us, where we aim to become like our Mentor, Allah, and the hardships and difficulties of life serve as training exercises that bring us closer to our purpose. Therefore, when facing life's challenges and difficulties, we do not fall into anxiety, sorrow, or despair, nor do we feel wretched or miserable; instead, we attain light from those very situations. For example, by being patient in the face of illness or the grief of losing loved ones, we acquire Allah's name of *Sabur* (The All-Patient); by forgiving and not holding grudges

against those who have wronged us, we acquire the name of *Ghafur* (The All-Forgiving); and by properly using blessings and expressing gratitude for them, we acquire the name of *Shakur* (The Grateful). Moreover, remembering our covenant with God keeps us constantly excited and help us move with vitality in our journey toward our Beloved, steering us away from laziness and apathy. That is because we know that at every moment of our lives, we must move toward Allah through our decisions, relationships, thoughts, and behaviors, using every opportunity to acquire divine attributes, which is very energizing and exhilarating.

Why Do Some of Us Forget Our Covenant with God?

Despite all the blessings and benefits of our covenant with God, why do some of us forget it or become negligent of it? The main reason for forgetting our covenant with God is a lack of self-knowledge; if we do not truly know ourselves and do not understand where we came from, why we were born, and where we will go, we have essentially forgotten our covenant with God because in this state, we have forgotten our true self or our human dimension, which is the Spirit breathed into us by Allah. As a result, we become preoccupied with inanimate, vegetative, animalistic, and intellective beloveds and neglect our movement toward Allah and the acquisition of the necessary tools for the hereafter.

Another reason for forgetting and being negligent of our covenant with God is the attacks of Satan. Satan constantly tries to hinder us from reaching the purpose of our creation with his four types of attacks; therefore, if we do not know Satan and his attacks, we will be deceived on our path toward Allah and may stop moving forward. For example, due to Satan's attack from behind, we may constantly feel

sorrow about past mistakes, failures, resentments, and sins, while in his attacks from the front, we are worried and anxious about the future, which leads to our negligence of our covenant with God and living according to our *fitrah*.

In this lesson, we discussed the covenant between humans and God. We stated that we cannot accept the existence of a realm called *alam adh-dharr* and agree that we made a covenant there with our same earthly characteristics. The essence of our covenant with God refers to our infinity-seeking spirit, which is a breath from Allah because we are inherently in love with infinity and inclined to become infinite. Thus, our covenant with God signifies that our truth comes from God, and we have come into this world to acquire divine attributes and become like Allah. Our faithfulness to this covenant means that we must constantly remember our origin and resurrection in this world and move on the path of acquiring a sound heart and becoming similar to Allah; consequently, we will have a healthy birth into the hereafter and achieve eternal bliss. Happiness, peace, constant enthusiasm, and avoidance of laziness and apathy are signs of a person faithful to this divine covenant.

References

[1]. "And when Your Lord summoned the descendants of Adam, and made them testify about themselves. 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'Yes, we testify.' Thus you cannot say on the Day of Resurrection, 'We were unaware of this.'" (Quran, 7:172)