



## Examining the Educational Challenges of Disbelief in the Divine Dignity of Man



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### Abstract

### Research Article

By endowing humans with intellect (*'aql*) and intellection (*ta'aqqul*), God Almighty adorned them with “intrinsic dignity” (*karāmat-i dhātī*). He provided them with Quran and Sunna guidelines to attain “acquired dignity” (*karāmat-i iktisābī*). The Quran articulates the educational damages inflicted upon humans in various realms of life. Familiarity with these damages is crucial for achieving eternal happiness and reaching sublime dignity in religious and human lifestyles. The research methodology employed in this paper is descriptive-analytical and the method by which the Quranic verses are analysed is the “*istintāqī*” (to make the text speak) method. The research findings indicate that disbelief in the absolute teachings of Quranic education in the domains of belief, emotion, and behavior significantly damages individuals and society. This research shows that issues such as loss of human identity, turmoil in life, bias and stubbornness, depression, the emergence of multiple personalities, and so on stem from neglect of monotheism. Just as the occurrence of feebleness and weakness, hypocrisy and lack of motivation in following the divine law (*sharia*), injustice towards God’s creature, and so forth result from neglecting the Hereafter.

**Keywords:** Personality, Damages in belief, Educational damages, Life turmoil, Quranic teachings.

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## Introduction

The innate and primordial sense of absolute human worth and dignity, as stated in verse 70 of *Sūrat al-Isrā'*, “*Certainly We have honoured the Children of Adam, and carried them over land and sea, and provided them with all the good things, and preferred them with a complete preference over many of those We have created with a complete preference*”<sup>4</sup> (See: Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1996, 13:155; Mohammadi Ashnani 2022, 89) and consequently, the exposition of the truth of dignity from the Quranic perspective with its dimension of belief and its impact on human education, are among the crucial educational topics in the Quran. The significance of this great blessing in human life becomes apparent when one observes the blessings derived from this sense and the consequences arising from its absence in one's personal and collective life. Attention to the damages resulting from disbelief in human dignity and personality, in terms of the incurred severe educational harms on the psychological, behavioral dimensions, etc., on individuals and society, becomes immensely important. Hence, the pivotal issue here revolves around whether the worth derived from believing in God and Hereafter holds blessings for humans, and what irreparable educational damages are inflicted upon humans and their lives in denying this kind of dignity?

In this paper, the author aims to explore the direct impact of belief in human dignity on human education in various aspects of human life. The paper also delves into the theological consequences of disbelief in human dignity in two areas: its origin and eschatology from the Quranic perspective, and its adverse educational outcomes. The objective is to emphasize the genuine and inherent dignity that stems from belief in monotheism and divine providence, and its influence on human education.

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<sup>4</sup> «وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبُرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا»  
(الأسراء/٧٠)

This is contrasted with the superficial dignity associated with prosperity, comfort, and wealth, which is considered disrespectful and a real disgrace, as mentioned in verse 15 of *Sūrat al-Fajr*.

## Background

The writer's exploration of the impact of disbelief in the divine value of humanity, as examined in the works of Quranic researchers, did not yield specific results. However, there are numerous available works that examine the intrinsic worth of humans and human dignity from a Quranic and hadith-based perspective. For example, the book “*Karamat dar Quran*” by Ayatullah Javādī Āmulī, published by Rajā Cultural Center in 1990, and articles such as “Human Dignity in the Light of the Quran and hadiths” [in Persian] by Kāzīm Qāḏī-Zādiḥ and Muṣṭafā Salīmī Zāri‘ published in the *Bayyināt* journal in 2007, issue 53; “An Analysis of the Concept of Human Dignity in the Holy Qur’an and Its Challenges” [in Persian] by Sayed Mohammad Ali Ayazi, published in the journal of *Quran and Hadith Studies* in 2020, volume 13, issue 1.

Compared to similar works, the present writing offers several advantages. It specifically focuses on the impact of turning away from divine dignity on human beings and emphasizes the character development for the human soul as outlined in the Quranic verses.

## 1. Terminology

### 1.1. The Meaning of “*Karāma*” (Dignity)

The term “dignity” is equivalent to “*karāma*” in Arabic. The word “*karāma*” means noble, respected, honored, dignified, generous, and benevolent. The term “*takrīm*” is used in the sense of exalting, selecting, honoring, respecting, and magnifying. The word “*karam*” when attributed to the Almighty God, as in “*my Lord is indeed all-sufficient, all-*



*generous.*<sup>5</sup> (Quran 27:40), refers to the apparent kindness and blessings of God. When attributed to humans, as in “*Indeed the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most Godwary among you*”<sup>6</sup> (Quran 49:13), it denotes commendable ethics and behaviors. When attributed to the Quran, as in “*This is indeed a noble Quran,*”<sup>7</sup> (Quran 56:77), it refers to the esteemed contents. And when describing speech, as in “*but speak to them noble words*”<sup>8</sup> (Quran 17:23), it implies honorable, dignified, and noble speech (Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī 1991, 429).

In the Quran, the term “*karāma*” is not used, but derivatives such as “*ikrām*” and “*takrīm*” are utilized. In the pre-Islamic era, “*karāma*” meant family honor and lineage greatness, but with the advent of Islam, it became closely associated with the concept of piety, forming a close and inseparable bond. Thus, the concept of nobility arising from religiousness and piety became accepted (See: Yāḥaqqī 1993, 3:1212; Izutsu 2014, pp. 49-51).

## 2. Types of Dignity in the Quran:

From the verses of the Quran, two different types of dignity for humans can be proved and conceptualized:

**A- Inherent Dignity:** From verses like verse 70 of *Sūrat al-Isrā’*, “*Certainly We have honoured the Children of Adam, and carried them over land and sea, and provided them with all the good things, and preferred them with a complete preference over many of those We have*

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<sup>5</sup>. «... فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ» (النمل/ ٤٠)

<sup>6</sup>. «... إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اتِّقَاتُكُمْ...» (الحجرات/ ١٣)

<sup>7</sup>. «إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ» (الواقعه/ ٧٧)

<sup>8</sup>. «... وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا» (الإسراء/ ٢٣)

created”<sup>9</sup> (Quran 17:70), it becomes clear that humans possess “inherent dignity” and the primary worth bestowed upon them by God.

**B- Acquired Dignity:** From other verses, such as verse 13 of *Sūrat al-Hujurāt*, “Indeed the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most Godwary among you”<sup>10</sup> (Quran 49:13), the acquired dignity is inferred, indicating that humans can, through their efforts in personal and collective life, attain values termed as secondary divinely-bestowed values.

From the mentioned contents, it becomes clear that human dignity before the advent of Islam connoted material and sensory nobility, meaning that if someone possessed wealth, offspring, and worldly amenities, they were considered noble. However, after the emergence of Islam, the term “noble” came to be associated with spiritual concepts such as generosity, selflessness, and so forth. The Quran also employs the term in the same spiritual and moral sense, signifying that someone occupies a high spiritual position and attains a level akin to angelic virtues (Javādī Āmulī 1990, 98). It should be noted that humans’ inherent dignity comes from their meaningful relationship with God (See: Hashemi 2023, 116).

### 3. The Meaning of Interrogative (*istinṭāqī*) Method in Quran

Based on the mentioned content, it becomes clear that the methodology employed in this article is the “*istinṭāqī*” (to make the text speak) method. This method is superior and distinct from the “*istizhārī*” (demonstrative) method. In the *istizhārī* method, the focus is solely on the type of denotation and its meaning. For example, verses regarding prayer can imply either obligatory or recommended acts, but through context and other clues, the obligatory meaning is inferred. However, in the *istinṭāqī*

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<sup>9</sup> ﴿وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبُرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا﴾  
(الإسراء/ ٧٠)

<sup>10</sup> ﴿... إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اتَّقَاهُ...﴾ (الحجرات/ ١٣)



method, the issue is first identified, then presented to the Quranic verses, and through a specific process and using the Quranic text, the Quran's view on the matter is extracted (Şadr 1979, pp.10-20). When a challenging topic related to religious-social beliefs or existential realities is considered, it is approached as a question. The exegete then seeks an answer by analyzing and contemplating the Quranic text. In this method, the exegete asks the question and the Quran responds, allowing the Quranic perspective on the subject to become evident (ibid, 20).

#### **4. The Connection between Dignity and Quranic Dignity**

The term “*karāma*” in the exegetical thoughts of exegetes is understood to encompass intellect, eloquence, physical beauty, acumen in managing worldly and otherworldly affairs, and more (Havvī 2003, 6:3103). Sometimes, it is interpreted in a broader sense, encompassing all of the physical and spiritual faculties of humans (Fakhr Rāzī 1999, 21:372). Additionally, it is interpreted as the special favor and grace of the Creator towards humans in providing them with “reason and wisdom,” which regulates all aspects of human life materially - such as eating, drinking, and living - as well as discerning between right and wrong, good and evil, and striving towards desired perfections and closeness to God (Ṭabāṭabā’ī 1996, 13:156).

#### **5. The Origin of Human Dignity**

Some Quranic verses attribute dignity to human will and conduct, presenting it as a matter of value that can be termed as “acquired dignity.” This type of dignity enhances human worth. From the Quranic perspective, such dignity is deserving of divine praise, and its fundamental gateway is “God wariness” (*taqwā*) (*Sūrahs al-Hujurāt/13, al-Hajj/50*). Some Quranic verses consider “God wariness” as the fruit of knowledge and righteous deeds (*Sūrahs al-Baqarah/177-179, Yūnus/6, al-Hashr/18*), and

introduce true dignity as being rooted in God wariness and belief in the Oneness of God and the Hereafter (*Sūrahs al-Ḥujurāt/13, al-Ḥajj/18*).

On the contrary, some other verses consider deviation from the path of monotheism as the cause of the loss of human dignity, condemning humans and reproaching them, such as likening humans to animals (*Sūrahs al-Jumu'ah/5, al-A'rāf/176*), inferior to animals (*Sūrahs al-A'rāf/179, al-Furqān/44*), portraying them as greedy and covetous (*Sūrat al-Ma'ārij/19-21*), and depicting them as ungrateful (*Sūrahs al-Ḥajj/66, al-Zukhruf/15*).

Quranic verses warn humans against falling into the traps of apparent means of dignity such as wealth, prosperity, and comfort (*Sūrat al-Fajr/15*), which can undermine their true character and dignity.

Based on Quranic verses and Islamic texts, a close connection exists between dignity and an individual's belief in God and the hereafter. This is because one of the educational principles within a person is his knowledge of God and certainty in the hereafter. Anyone who pays attention to his innate nature and the possibility of returning to his eternal abode always strives to protect himself with wisdom and restraint, guarding against baseness and degradation. Due to the direct impact of belief in dignity on human behavior and education, indicators of dignified human behavior in personal and social realms are expressed in Quranic verses and Islamic narrations, such as abstaining from lust, sin, and stinginess, avoiding baseness and degradation, striving to preserve the dignity of others, their character and honor, forgiveness, compassion, and so on. For example:

In the verse, “An honourable reply [in response to the needy] and forgiving [their annoyance] is better than a charity followed by affront. Allah is all-sufficient, most forbearing”<sup>11</sup> (Quran 2:263), Allah commands

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<sup>11</sup>. «قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعُهَا أَذَىٰ وَاللَّهُ عَنِّي حَلِيمٌ» (البقرة/٢٦٣)



the preservation of human dignity through respectful and courteous speech, which is deemed more deserving than giving financial assistance with personal humiliation.

In the verse, “*O you who have faith! When you are told, ‘Make room,’ in sittings, then do make room; Allah will make room for you. And when you are told, ‘Rise up!’ Do rise up. Allah will raise in rank those of you who have faith and those who have been given knowledge, and Allah is well aware of what you do*”<sup>12</sup> (Quran 58:11), Allah advises honoring the personality of others, recommending people to respect and preserve each other’s dignity, especially in gatherings. ‘Allāma has interpreted “إِذَا قِيلَ” (And when you are told, ‘Rise up!’ Do rise up) as implying another form of etiquette, suggesting that the term “تُشْتَوِزُ” signifies rising from a place and making room for another, thereby displaying humility and respect (Ṭabāṭabā’ī 1996, 19:188).

Dignity and its equivalents in Quranic verses, such as (Quran 17:70; 49:13), are put next to concepts like Allah, light, piety, honor, virtue, forgiveness, and others. However, the opposite term of dignity, namely humiliation and degradation, is mentioned in Quranic verses, including (Quran 2:257; 14:30), alongside terms like idols, darkness, disgrace, and punishment. From these, it becomes evident that human worth is intertwined with spiritual and humane issues. Therefore, whenever a person distances himself from spiritual and divine dimensions, he simultaneously distances himself from human dignity and worth, moving closer to animalistic dimensions.

Dignity is an innate characteristic within human beings, reflecting God’s special favor towards humanity. The value of a human being, due to their ability to discern and make choices, necessitates that all individual,

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<sup>12</sup>. ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ انشُرُوا فَانشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ﴾ (المجادله/ ١١)



familial, and social aspects align with dignity as a fundamental principle (Muhassis 1392, 36).

## 6. Solutions for Achieving Human Dignity in the View of the Infallible Imams (a)

The Infallible Imams (a) have expressed significant strategies for enhancing the personalities of individuals through their words and deeds during their lives. For example, a person asked about the meaning of dignity from Imam Hasan al-Mujtabā (a): “What is *karam*?” The Imam replied “To initiate giving before being asked and to offer sustenance during times of scarcity”<sup>13</sup> (Ibn Shu‘bah 1986, 225). From this hadith, it becomes clear that showing compassion towards others in their time of need can be a source of human dignity.

Islamic history also indicates that the Infallible Imams (a) have served as practical role models for others, with their lives characterized by generosity, good morals, compassion for the needy, and so forth (See: Muṭahharī, *An Inquiry into the Prophet’s Sirah* (1995) & *An Inquiry into the Infallible Imams’ Sirah* (1996).

## 7. The Relationship between Education and Belief in the Divine Dignity of Humans

According to Quranic verses, the source of all goodness, including dignity, is Allah. Turning away from monotheism, on the other hand, is the source of all degradation and humiliation. In verse 18 of Sūrat al-Ḥajj, Allah says: “Whomever Allah humiliates will find no one who may bring him honour”<sup>14</sup> (Quran 22:18), considers the bestowal of dignity as exclusive to the Lord of the worlds. Therefore, turning away from Allah and not

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<sup>13</sup>. «... قَالَ الْإِبْتِدَاءُ بِالْعَطِيَّةِ قَبْلَ الْمَسْأَلَةِ وَإِطْعَامُ الطَّعَامِ فِي الْمَحَلِّ...».

<sup>14</sup>. «... وَمَنْ يَهِنِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ مُكْرَمٍ...» (الحج/ ١٨)



submitting to Him will only lead to disgrace and humiliation. Moreover, belief in the Hereafter, based on verses like “*for what my Lord forgave me and made me one of the honoured ones!*”<sup>15</sup> (Quran 36:27), has a direct impact on human life, especially on their dignity, as demonstrated by the example of the believing man (Habib Najjar) who became a martyr in the path of belief in resurrection (Quran 36:22). Conversely, his people, due to their disbelief in the hereafter and their attachment to their idols, suffered severe punishment and wrath from Allah and ultimately faced nothing but disgrace and humiliation (Quran 22:28-30).

## 8. Characteristics and Educational Consequences of Non-Monotheistic People

From the perspective of the Quran, any deviation from the path of monotheism leads to the destruction of human dignity and brings about numerous negative consequences for human education in various dimensions. Therefore, a monotheistic individual always enjoys psychological states such as tranquility (*Sūrat al-Ra’d/28*), security (*Sūrat al-An’ām/ 81-82*), reliance on God (*Sūrahs Ibrāhīm/12; al-Zumar/38*), and steadfastness in faith (*Sūrahs Hūd/112; al-Shawrā/15*). In terms of behavior, they are always striving for unity and solidarity (*Sūrah Āl-i Imrān/64*), equality and justice (*Sūrahs al-A’rāf/ 85; Hūd/84*), and intellectual and ideological freedom (*Sūrat al-A’rāf/157 & 176*). However, a polytheistic or hypocritical individual constantly suffers negative educational consequences in various psychological, behavioral, individual, and social dimensions, such as the collapse and disintegration of social personality (*Sūrahs al-Furqān/ 43-44; al-Hajj/ 31*), inclination towards despicable matters and away from God wariness (*Sūrahs al-Mā’idah/ 90; al-A’rāf/ 71; al-Tawbah/ 28*), confusion and wavering in behavior (*Sūrat al-An’ām/ 71*), constant fear and anxiety (*Sūrahs Āl-i*

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<sup>15</sup>. ﴿بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَ جَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ﴾ (يس/ ٢٧)

'Imrān/ 151; al-Kahf/ 49), and degradation and dishonor (*Sūrat al-A' rāf'* 152).

Therefore, cognitive, psychological, and behavioral damages occur due to the lack of belief in the divine dignity of humans, some of which include:

## 8.1. Cognitive damages in turning away from the divine dignity of humans

### 8.1.1. Justification of Sins

The Holy Quran recounts the first behavior of hypocrites as arrogance and obstinacy, considering their inclination towards intellectual degradation as a factor of dignity and honor. It states: “*And when he is told, ‘Be wary of Allah,’ conceit seizes him sinfully; so let hell suffice him, and it is surely an evil resting place.*”<sup>16</sup> (Quran 2:206). Based on this verse, some Quranic exegetes attribute the arrogance and disobedience of hypocrites to the existence of internal disbelief and ignorance, which has infiltrated their hearts, leading them to deny what is good and enjoin what is evil (Fakhr Rāzī 1999, 15:348). Certainly, they will not have any outcome except degradation and humiliation in this world and the hereafter. For this reason, Quranic exegetes, based on divine verses, consider the two-faced outcome as humiliation in both this world and the hereafter because the exposure of their lies in this worldly life causes their disgrace, and on the other hand, being condemned to hell and being treated worse than disbelievers lead to their humiliation in the hereafter (Ṭabrasī 1993, 3:320).

From the implications of verses such as verse 206 of *Sūrat al-Baqarah* and the statements of exegetes, it is inferred that hypocrites in this world

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<sup>16</sup>. ﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ﴾ (البقرة/٢٠٦)



attempt to consider matters contrary to humanity and the human spiritual essence as a source of honor (Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1996, 2:97; Fakhr Rāzī 1999, 5:349). Therefore, they may perceive illegitimate sexual activities such as adultery, illegitimate relationships, homosexuality, and nudity as signs of progress and advancement, whereas these are contrary to human modesty and chastity.

### 8.1.2. Negligence of Valuable and Human Affairs

According to verse 179 of *Sūrat al-A'raf*, “*Certainly We have winnowed out for hell many of the jinn and humans: they have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, they have ears with which they do not hear. They are like cattle; indeed, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless*”<sup>17</sup> (Quran 7:179), polytheists, instead of utilizing their faculties to navigate the path towards happiness and perfection, only strive for sensual pleasures and, like animals, use their faculties of cognition for indulgence in pleasures and delights. Even considering the presence of intellect in humans and its absence in animals, they fall to a level lower than animals (Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1996, 8:334).

## 8.2. Psychological damages in turning away from the divine dignity of humans

### 8.2.1. Degradation and Bewilderment

In verse 22 of *Sūrat al-Isrā'*, “*Do not set up another god besides Allah, or you will sit blameworthy, forsaken*”<sup>18</sup> (Quran 17:22), the word “فَتَقَعَّدُ” (*you will sit*) has been interpreted as “*blameworthy, forsaken,*” implying meanings of humiliation, helplessness, disgrace, and distancing from the

<sup>17</sup>. ﴿وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَ لَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ﴾ (الأعراف/ ١٧٩)

<sup>18</sup>. ﴿لَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَتَقَعَّدَ مَذْمُومًا مَّخْذُولًا﴾ (الإسراء/ ٢٢)

path towards Allah (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1997, 1:675; Ālūsī 1994, 8:52; Ṭabāṭabā’ī 1996, 13:70). This humiliation occurs because polytheists, through idol worship, turn to things that human reason reproaches and condemns. As such, God abandons them to their idols, withdrawing the hand of support and grace from them. Consequently, they become debased and humiliated (Sharī’atī Sabzivārī 2011, 64).

Similarly, in verse 41 of *Sūrat al-‘Ankabūt*, Allah likens accepting anything other than His authority to dwelling in a spider’s home, indicative of weakness and lack of stability, encompassing any reliance on individuals, groups, or governments in general (Quṭb 2004, 5:2736).

### 8.2.2. Depression and Boredom

According to verse 29 of *Sūrat al-Zumar*, “Allah draws an example: a man jointly owned by several contending masters, and a man belonging entirely to one man: are the two equal in comparison? All praise belongs to Allah! But most of them do not know”<sup>19</sup> (Quran 39:29), a person who worships idols is caught in wandering between different obedience, as each of the idols and satanic allies demands that he follows them. However, a monotheistic individual in his life only follows God, not multiple deities. According to ‘Allāma, the term “*mutashākis*” derives from the root “*shaks*,” meaning a person of bad temperament. “*Mutashākis*” refers to individuals involved in different and conflicting matters (Ṭabāṭabā’ī 1996, 17:258). From this noble verse, it becomes clear that an idol worshiper does not actually refer to his reason, because reason dictates that a person should not obey multiple individuals with different demands, which leads to corruption and inconsistency in his life (Fakhr Rāzī 1999, 26:450; Qarā’atī 2004, 7:38).

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<sup>19</sup>. ﴿صَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَجُلًا فِيهِ شُرَكَاءُ مُتَشَاكِسُونَ وَ رَجُلًا سَلَمًا لِرَجُلٍ هَلْ يَسْتَوِيَانِ مَثَلًا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (الزمر/ ٢٩)



### 8.2.3. Destruction of Human Identity

By disregarding Allah and being heedless of Him, a person essentially exposes his humanity to destruction. The expression “أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيحٍ” (*blown away by the wind far and wide*) in verse 31 of *Sūrat al-Ḥajj*, “Whoever ascribes partners to Allah is as though he had fallen from a height, then [his corpse] is devoured by vultures, or [his remains are] blown away by the wind far and wide”<sup>20</sup> (Quran 22:31) is a metaphor for the fact that believing in polytheism regarding Divine exalting attributes destructs personality and humanity and deprives one of the exalted position and the light of innate nature, which is the highest level of human dignity and capability (Ḥusaynī Hamidānī 1983, 11:170; Kāshānī 1957, 6:151).

The issue of losing one’s personality and humanity is exactly what verse 24 of *Sūrat al-Anfāl* refers to, “Know that Allah intervenes between a man and his heart and that toward Him you will be mustered”<sup>21</sup> (Quran 8:24). One of the meanings of the intervention of Allah between a person and his heart is that the human heart has no solution for achieving its humanity except clinging to Allah (Ma‘rifat 1994, 3:250). In other words, this expression is a metaphor for the closeness of Allah to humans, so that humans should not feel distant from Him (Bayḍāwī 1997, 3:55).

They are likened, according to verse 171 of *Sūrat al-Baqarah*, “The parable of the faithless is that of someone who shouts after that which does not hear [anything] except a call and cry: deaf, dumb, and blind, they do not exercise their reason”<sup>22</sup> (Quran 2:171), to someone who calls upon those who cannot hear, like one who is deaf, dumb, and blind, so they do

<sup>20</sup>. ﴿... وَ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيحٍ﴾ (سورة الحج/ ٣١)

<sup>21</sup>. ﴿... وَ اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَ أَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُخْشَرُونَ﴾ (الانفال/ ٢٤)

<sup>22</sup>. ﴿... وَ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَ نِدَاءً صُمُّ بِكُمْ عَمِي فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ﴾ (البقرة/ ١٧١)

not understand like the herd against the shepherd's shouting (Ṭabrasī 1993, 1:463).

### 8.3. Behavioral Consequences of Turning Away from Divine Dignity

#### 8.3.1. Social Norm Violators

The term “*sharr*” (evil) is sometimes used in contrast to “*khayr*” (good) as in verse 180 of *Sūrah Āl-i ‘Imrān*, where it means harm and loss as opposed to benefit. Based on this, “*sharr al-bariyya*” (the worst of creatures) in verse 6 of *Sūrat al-Bayyinah*, “*Indeed the faithless from among the People of the Book and the polytheists will be in the fire of hell, to remain in it [forever]. It is they who are the worst of creatures*”<sup>23</sup> (Quran 98:6), refers to the most harmful in terms of actions (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 3:190). Indeed, this harmfulness is identified as the reason for enduring in the fire of Hell because, in the next verse, Allah describes the righteous believers as “*khayr al-bariyya*” (the best of creatures) (Ālūsī 1994, 15:430).

#### 8.3.2. Emergence of Multi-Personality Figures

Belief in monotheism implies reliance on Allah and tireless effort to uphold divine teachings and benefit as much as possible from these teachings to attain dignity, happiness, and divine rewards. But those who turn away from God and turn to others have no recourse but to resort to vile traits like hypocrisy to achieve their goals since they do not believe in the Unity of God. Therefore, to achieve their goals, they always resort to the enemies of God, sin, etc., instead of relying on and trusting in Allah. Ultimately, they bring nothing but humiliation and degradation upon themselves, tarnishing their own dignity and that of their followers. For this reason, hypocrites, due to their disbelief in divine dignity and reliance

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<sup>23</sup>. ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ﴾ (البينة/٦)



on imaginary means and support from enemies of God, always suffer from numerous psychological and behavioral problems, such as:

### 8.3.3. Submission to the Demands of the Enemy

When someone replaces their love for Allah with love for others, they become dependent on others. This kind of dependency brings various damages and challenges in different political, cultural, and social spheres. The desire for independence is innate among human beings, and various societies and states pursue their identity and practical independence. The independence is considered an authentic human value and a factor in the dignity and pride of societies. Its absence indicates their degradation and subservience (Fārsī 1995, pp.108-109). Many scholars attribute all the backwardness of societies and nations to colonialism and consider independence as the key to solving all problems (Ranjbar 2002, 62).

Indeed, although the terms “dependency” and “lack of independence” are not explicitly mentioned in the Quran, under Quranic principles such as the rule of dignity for Muslims (*Sūrah al-Munāfiqūn/63*, *Yūnus/65*), rejection of the path of disbelievers (*Sūrat al-Nisā’/141*), refusal to accept the authority and leadership of disbelievers (*Sūrat al-Mā'idah/51-52*), standing firmly on one’s own feet (*Sūrat al-Fath/48*), and refraining from sincere friendship with polytheists (*Sūrahs Āl-i 'Imrān/118-119*, *al-Mā'idah/57*), one can derive their implications.

Hence, hypocrites, due to their distance from the divine path and doubt in faith, always perceive power and a sense of dignity and honor in aligning with the enemies of God. Therefore, Allah says, “*Inform the hypocrites that there is a painful punishment for them \* those who take the faithless for allies instead of the faithful. Do they seek honour with them? [If so,] indeed all honour belongs to Allah*”<sup>24</sup> (Quran 4:138-139). Based on these

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<sup>24</sup>. ﴿بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا \* الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلِيتُّنَهُمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِرَّةَ



verses, political hypocrisy arises from their ideological hypocrisy because, in their view, hypocrites perceive achieving dignity and honor in friendship and loving the enemies of God (Ṭabrasī 1993, 1:193).

While the Quran enjoins believers to maintain their dignity and superiority over disbelievers and to preserve and safeguard this position, it obliges believers to refrain from any action that leads to the dominance and control of disbelievers and pulls Muslims into dependency (Jaṣṣāṣ 1983, 2: 406 & 410). Allah has legislated the least authority for disbelievers over believers in the verse: “*and Allah will never provide the faithless any way [to prevail] over the faithful*”<sup>25</sup> (Quran 4:141), declaring any cultural, political, or economic treaties that lead to the dominance of disbelievers and dependency of Muslims as forbidden and invalid (Bujnūrdī 1998, 1:189-190). According to some scholars, the verse “rejecting the dominance” reflects both positive and negative aspects: its positive aspect signifies the duty of the Islamic community and its rulers to preserve independence and remove the grounds of dependency, while its negative aspect relates to rejecting the foreign domination over the political and social destiny of Muslims (Bujnūrdī 1998, 1:190).

Without a doubt, loyalty to enemies and reliance on them stem from disbelief in divine and human values within oneself and distrust in the support of Allah. It is self-deprecation and ignoring one’s own faith and material assets in the face of enemies. Studying human life in individual and collective dimensions indicates that whenever individuals in their individual and group dimensions become entangled in the necessity of engaging with enemies and the necessity of befriending strangers, not only have they lagged behind in their material and spiritual growth and

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فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿النساء/ ١٣٨-١٣٩﴾

25. ﴿... وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا﴾ (النساء/ ١٤١)



progress, but they have also gradually lost their material and spiritual assets over time.

## Conclusion

From the aforementioned points, it can be concluded that:

1- The true dignity of a human being is only achievable through the path of monotheism and piety, which bears the fruit of righteous deeds. According to Quranic verses and Islamic narrations, belief in dignity and a sense of honor has a direct impact on human upbringing and proper behavior.

2- The harms and afflictions of disbelief in the divine worth of humanity can manifest in various areas and domains, but overall, they surface in intellectual, psychological, and behavioral dimensions.

3- Disbelief in God brings about various harms, such as idolatry, the emergence of multiple-personality individuals, the rise of oppressive rulers, and ultimately, disillusionment with divine support in defending human and religious values. Each of these has significant negative educational consequences, striking at the dignity of humans with irreparable damage.

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