153808 - Ruling on saying “I am in charge of my destiny”

the question

What is the ruling on saying “I am in charge of my destiny”?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Belief in the divine decree or predestination (al-qadar) is one of the pillars of faith, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said, in his answer to Jibreel (peace be upon him) when he asked him about faith: “It is to believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, and to believe in the divine decree (predestination), both good and bad.”

What is meant by the divine decree is what Allah has decreed for all things from eternity, and His knowledge that they will happen at times that are known to Him, in specific ways; He, may He be glorified, has written that and willed it, and these things will happen in accordance with the way He has decreed and in accordance with they way He has created them.

See: *al-Qada’ wa’l-Qadar* by Dr. ‘Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Saalih al-Mahmood, p. 39.

Belief in the divine decree (predestination) is based on four things:

1.. Knowledge, which means that Allah knows what people will do, on the basis of His prior knowledge from eternity.

2.. Writing, which means that Allah has written the fates of all people in al-Lawh al-Mahfooz.

3.. Will, meaning that whatever Allah wills happens, and whatever He does not will does not happen. Hence there is nothing in the heavens or on earth that happens or does not happen

except it is by His will.

4.. Creating and bringing into existence, meaning that Allah is the Creator of all things, including people's actions. So they do their actions in a real sense, and He is their Creator and the Creator of their actions.

Whoever believes in these four things believes in the divine decree.

The Qur'an confirms these things in a number of verses, including the following:

{Indeed, all things We created with predestination} [al-Qamar 54:49]

{And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it. And no grain is there within the darknesses of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that it is [written] in a clear record} [al-An'aam 6:59]

{No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register before We bring it into being - indeed that, for Allah, is easy } [al-Hadeed 57:22]

{And you do not will except that Allah wills - Lord of the worlds} [at-Takweer 81:29].

Muslim (2653) narrated that 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas said: "Allah decided and wrote down the decrees of creation fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth." He said: "And His Throne is above the water."

It is clear that no one can evade this divine decree, let alone be in in charge of it. However, man has free will and choice, hence he will be rewarded and punished, but his will is subject to the will of Allah, may He be exalted. So nothing happens in this universe except that Allah wills it, as He, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And you do not will except that Allah wills - Lord of the worlds} [at-Takweer 81:29].

This verse affirms that humans have free will, but their will is subject to the will of Allah, may He

be exalted.

Based on that, whoever says “I am in charge of my destiny,” meaning that he does not submit to the decree of Allah, or that he is able to change or evade what has been decreed, or he means that he does not believe in the divine decree, then undoubtedly this is wrong and it is clear misguidance, because it is contrary to belief in this important pillar of faith.

But if he is referring to free will and choice, and means that he does whatever he wants, and does not feel that he is compelled to do a particular deed, or that he does not depend or rely on what is written, which is unknown to him – rather he works and strives to the best of his ability – then this is true, as Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): *{And say, “The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve”} [al-Kahf 18:29]* and *{And [We] have shown him the two ways} [al-Balad 90:10]* – that is, We have shown him the path of good and of evil.

But the one who says this is wrong in the way he expresses it, and is saying something that gives the impression that he does not believe in the divine decree. So he should refrain from that, and express the truth in sound words which clearly indicate belief in the divine decree.

See also the answer to question no. 154392 .

And Allah knows best.