



587902 - Is provision (rizq) already decreed and not subject to change? Then how can it increase through supplication and striving and upholding ties of kinship?

the question

I read in *Majmu` Fatawa Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah* that provision (rizq) is of two types: 1. Provision that has already been decided and is connected to the decree of Allah; it is already determined and cannot be changed no matter what happens, and it is fixed. 2. Provision that is connected to the decree of Allah that is written down by the angels; it is provisional and depends on other factors, and it is connected to means and causes.

I hope that you can explain, because this matter is not clear to me, and it resulted in me feeling very frustrated and confused and not wanting to offer supplication, because no matter how hard I strive, I may not attain as much provision as other people.

Summary of answer

The divine decree that is decided is that which is part of the knowledge of Allah, which includes knowledge of provision and the means that lead to it. As for the provisional decree which is written in the records of the angels, this is what may be altered depending on whether a person takes measures. So there is an opportunity to change the decree, if he is willing to take the initiative, and it is up to him to take advantage of it. It is more appropriate for the one who is aware of this opportunity to put a great deal of trust in Allah, offer a great deal of supplication, strive hard and take the appropriate measures, whilst trusting in the wisdom of Allah, may He be Exalted, for it is He Who gives and withholds.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.



The fact that is explained by the religious texts and was explained by Allah, may He be exalted, and His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in a way that left no room for confusion is: supplication and striving in pursuit of provision (rizq) are part and parcel of what Allah has decreed.

So whoever realises that will believe in the divine decree as required, and he will realise that there is no contradiction between the divine decree and taking appropriate measures that lead to various types of provision, and some of the greatest of those measures are supplication and asking Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, for provision. Once he understands this, he will no longer be confused, in sha Allah.

So the divine decree is not an obstacle to supplication, nor is supplication separate from the divine decree; rather it is part of it.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Provision is of two types:

1. That which is part of Allah's knowledge from eternity that He will grant it to a person. This does not change.
2. What Allah decreed and informed the angels thereof. This may increase or decrease commensurate with the means and measures that a person takes.

For each person, Allah instructs the angels to write down a certain amount of provision, and if he upholds his ties of kinship, Allah will increase his provision, as it was soundly narrated in *As-Sahih* from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that he said: "Whoever would like his provision to be increased and his lifespan to be extended, let him uphold his ties of kinship..."

Similarly, `Umar said: O Allah, if You have written [decreed] that I am to be doomed, then erase it and write [decree] that I am to be blessed, for You erase or confirm whatever You will.

And Allah, may He be exalted, tells us that Nuh said: { worship Allah, fear Him and obey me, so



that He may forgive some of your sins and give you respite for an appointed term } [Nuh 71:3-4].
And there are many corroborating texts.

The measures that help one to attain provision are part of what Allah has decreed and written down, so if it is decreed that a person will attain provision by means of his striving and efforts, Allah will inspire him to strive and work hard.

End quote from *Majmu` al-Fatawa*, 8/540.

Thus Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) explained the means and measures that Allah, may He be Exalted, has ordained in order for people to attain provision; these measures themselves are part of the divine decree, for Allah, may He be Exalted, has decreed everything and He knows everything, so He has decreed provision and He has also decreed the means that lead to provision.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah and other scholars explained that the divine decree regarding provision and other matters is of two types:

1.The divine decree that is fixed and does not change:

This is part of the knowledge of Allah Whose knowledge encompasses everything that is going to happen. This includes the knowledge that a certain individual will take measures to attain provision, such as offering supplication and striving. It also includes His knowledge that He will respond to the supplication and grant that person provision, because he took the appropriate measures on the basis of which Allah decreed the provision that He granted him, for His has made these measures a means that leads to provision.

This type of the divine decree does not change or alter, because it is part of the knowledge of Allah, may He be Exalted, that nothing can escape and nothing is hidden from Him.

2.The divine decree that is subject to change and alteration:

This is what Allah, may He be Exalted, tells to the angels and the angel who is appointed over a



person writes it down. What is written in the records of the angel is what is subject to increase and decrease, erasing and confirming, based on the individual's actions, such as offering supplication, upholding ties of kinship and striving.

Allah, may He be Exalted, knows from eternity that the person will take measures that could lead to change in what is written in the records of the angels, so he upholds ties of kinship, or offers supplication, or takes other measures, and because of that Allah, may He be Exalted, instructs the angels to erase what is in their records and He orders that his provision be increased, because of the person's actions.

What is in the records of the angels is only what is written in their records when the individual is in his mother's womb, as was narrated by Muslim. (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 318; and Muslim, 2646).

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said:

Hence the scholars said that erasing and confirming are only applicable to what is written in the records of the angels. As for the knowledge of Allah, may He be Glorified, it does not change and no new knowledge appears to Him that He was not aware of before, so there can be no erasing or confirming.

End quote from *Majmu` al-Fatawa*, 14/492.

What is written in the records of the angels is dependent on means and measures, so if an individual takes the proper measures, his provision may increase.

The Sahabah asked the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): O Messenger of Allah, shouldn't we rely on our destiny and stop striving? He said: "Keep striving, for everyone will be helped." Then he recited the words:

{ As for he who gives and fears Allah

And believes in the best [reward]} [Al-Layl 92:5-6].

Narrated by al-Bukhari, 4945; and Muslim, 2647.



At-Tibi said: He did not allow them to give up striving, and he instructed them to do what people are required to do as they are slaves of Allah.

End quote from *Fat-h al-Bari*, 11/497.

Shaykh al-Islam (may Allah have mercy on him) quoted this hadith and similar hadiths, then he said:

Whoever fails to take the prescribed measures as enjoined, whether they are obligatory or recommended, for the purpose of attaining what is in one's best interest or to ward off harm, then he is going against Islamic teachings and against reason.

End quote from *Majmu` al-Fatawa*, 8/177.

The point is:

It is a grievous error for anyone to think that if he gives up offering supplication and asking of Allah, and putting his trust in Him, then the provision that is decreed for him will come to him. That is because Allah the Almighty, Who has decreed provision, has made supplication, putting one's trust in Him, striving, upholding ties of kinship and so on means of attaining provision.

As for the angels, they have no knowledge of a person's provision or the measures that could lead to him attaining it except what Allah, may He be Exalted, tells them about, so they write it down when the person is in his mother's womb, and all of that remains subject to being erased or confirmed, depending on whether the individual strives, offers supplication and puts his trust in Allah.

Shaykh al-Islam said:

Whoever says: "Whatever is decreed for me will reach me, whether I offer supplication or not, and whether I put my trust in Allah or not" is like one who says: "Whatever is decreed for me, whether I will be among the blessed or among the doomed, will happen to me, whether I believe or not, and whether I obey or disobey." It is well known that this is misguidance and disbelief.



End quote from *Majmu` al-Fatawa*, 8/176.

So you should understand that your supplication, your striving, your putting your trust in Allah and your asking of Him are all part of the decree of Allah, and these are the means that Allah, may He be Exalted, has ordained should lead to provision.

And you should understand that Allah, may He be Exalted, responds to the call of the caller if he calls on Him, and not before that or without it. Supplication is the means that leads to a response and the granting of provision, as Allah, may He be Exalted, says:

{And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided} [Al-Baqarah 2:186];

{Your Lord says: Call upon Me; I will answer your prayer. Verily, those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter hell in humiliation} [Ghafir 40:60].

There are many verses in the Qur'an which indicate that Allah, may He be Exalted, will respond to the supplicant after he calls upon Him in supplication and because of his supplication. So beware of the whispers of the Shaytan, for he wants to bar you from worshipping Allah, or he tells you to forego the means by which Allah grants provision to His slaves, gives to them and grants mercy to them.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said:

When Allah wills good for a person, He inspires him to call upon Him in supplication and seek His help, and He causes his seeking His help and his supplication to be a means of attaining the goodness that He has decreed for him. `Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I am not worried about the divine response; rather what I am worried about is whether I offer supplication, for if I am inspired to offer supplication, the response will come with it.

Similarly, when Allah, may He be Exalted, wants to grant His slave satisfying food and drink, He inspires him to eat or drink. And when Allah wants to turn His slave in mercy, He inspires him to



repent, then He accepts his repentance. And when He wants to bestow mercy upon him and admit him to Paradise, He makes it easy for him to do the deeds of the people of Paradise.

The divine will decreed that all these good things should be connected to the means that are decreed to lead to them, as Allah decreed that admittance to Paradise should be connected to righteous deeds, and having children should be connected to intercourse, and attaining knowledge should be connected to seeking knowledge.

End quote from *Iqtida' as-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 2/229.

Moreover, you should not compare yourself to others; rather you should trust and have certain faith in the wisdom of Allah, for He, may He be Exalted, gives for a reason and withholds for a reason. If you find that others have more provision than you, then perhaps one of the reasons for that is that they offer more supplication and ask of Allah more, and they strive harder, put more trust in Allah, and take more measures, and that happens for a reason that is known to Allah, may He be Exalted, for it is He alone Who grants abundant provision or gives it in scant measure, He does whatever He wills, and He decrees whatever He wills, may He be Glorified.

Moreover, this abundance of wealth does not necessarily mean that the person is honoured by Allah, may He be Exalted.

For more information, please see the answers to questions no. [11749](#), [112094](#), [213652](#) and [130499](#).

And Allah knows best.