

majority of 'Ulamā' and take Rūḥ to be a refined physical entity, then breathing into it becomes evident by itself. And if we were to accept it to be pure essence, then breathing into it would mean establishing its connection to the body. (Bayān al-Qur'ān)

### **Rūḥ (spirit) and Nafs (self) :**

#### **The View of Qāḍī Thanā'ullah رحمه الله تعالى**

Leaving this long-winding debate aside, we consider it sufficient to refer the reader to a special research presented by Qāḍī Thanā'ullah Panīpatī رحمه الله تعالى in his Tafsīr Mazḥarī.

The respected commentator says that Rūḥ has two kinds: (1) Higher (*Ulwi*) and (2) Lower (*Sifli*). The higher Rūḥ is bereft of matter and is a creation of Allah Ta'ālā the comprehension of whose reality is difficult. The masters of insight by illumination (*ahl al-kashf*) see its real station to be above the Throne ('*Arsh*) because it is more refined than the 'Arsh. And this higher Rūḥ, as seen through illumination, is sensed in five degrees at upper and lower levels. Their number is five and they are: (1) The heart (*Qalb*) (2) The spirit (*Rūḥ*) (3) The mystery (*Sirr*) (4) The secret (*Khafī*) (5) The most secret (*Akhfā*). These are all from the refinements of the domain of Divine command towards which the Holy Qur'ān has hinted by declaring: قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي (Say, "The spirit is from the command of my Lord - 17:85).

As for the lower Rūḥ, it is a refined vapour which emerges from the combination of the four elements of the human body, that is, from fire, water, dust and air, and this lower Rūḥ is called the self (*nafs*).

Allah Ta'ālā has made this lower spirit called self a mirror of the higher spirits mentioned above. An illustration would make it clear. If we were to hold a mirror against the sun, then, despite that the sun is far far away, its reflection comes into the mirror. And because of the light, that too starts glowing like the sun. It even receives the heat of the sun in it which could burn a piece of cloth. The same thing applies to the higher spirits. Though they are, because of their purity and detachment, very high and elevated in station, and far distant too, yet their reflection appears in the mirror of the lower spirit and transfers the states and effects of the higher spirits into it. When these very effects take root in human selves, they become known as subordinate parts of each individual's spirit.

Then, this lower form of spirit which is identified as Nafs or self armed with the states and effects which it has acquired from the higher forms of spirits first gets connected with the heart muscle of the human body. This connection itself is another name for life. Once the lower spirit relates to the human heart, it infuses in it life and cognitions which it has acquired from the higher spirits. This lower spirit then starts circulating through the thin veins spread throughout the body and thus reaches every part of it.

It is this infusion of the lower spirit into the human body which has been called the 'blowing or breathing of the spirit' (نفخ الروح : the *nafkh* of *rūḥ*) because it bears close resemblance to blowing or breathing into something.

And, in the present verse, Allah Ta'ālā has attributed the spirit to Himself. He has said: 'مِنْ رُوحِي' (from My spirit) so that the superior status of the human spirit out of the entire creation becomes evident - because, it has come into existence, without any material substance, only under Divine command. In addition to that, it has a unique ability to accept and absorb the manifestations of Divine light, an ability which does not exist in the spirit of any other living creature other than that of the human person.

Though, dust is the dominant element in the creation of man - and that is why the creation of man has been attributed to clay - but, the reality is that man is a combination of ten elements out of which five belong to the universe of creation (عالم الخلق) while the other five to the universe of Divine command (عالم الأمر). The four elements of the universe of creation are fire, water, dust and air. The fifth is the refined vapour from these four which is called the lower spirit or *nafs*. As for the five elements of the universe of Divine command mentioned above, they are: (1) heart (*qalb*) (2) spirit (*rūḥ*) (3) mystery (*sirr*) (4) secret (*khafiy*) (5) totally hidden (*akhfa*).

It is because of this comprehensive making of the human model that man became deserving of Divine vice-regency, and very much capable of absorbing the light which helps him know his Lord and, of course, sustaining his own burning quest on the path of love and longing for Him. The outcome, though unspecified as to its actual state, is communion

with the Divine because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: 'الْمَرْءُ مَعَ مَنْ أَحَبَّ' (One shall be with whoever one loves).

And since human beings have the ability to absorb the manifestations of Divine light, and since they have been given the honour of being in communion with the Divine, it came to be the dictate of Divine wisdom that man be made the object of prostration by the angels. It was said: 'افْقَعُوا لَهُ سَجِدِينَ' (you fall down before him, prostrating - 29)

### The Command to Prostrate was Given to Angels - Iblīs was to Follow Suit

Addressing Iblīs in Sūrah Al-A'raf, it was said: مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ (What stopped you from prostrating when I ordered you? - 7:12). This shows that the command to prostrate was given, along with the angels, to Iblīs as well. However, the verses you have gone through a little earlier apparently give the sense that the command was particular to the angels. This could mean that the command was originally given to the angels but, as Iblīs too was present among the angels, therefore, he too was covered by this command as a corollary - because, when the command went forth for the most august creation of Allah Ta'ālā, that is, the angels, that they pay their homage to Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام, it was obvious that any other creation was bound to follow suit under this command. It was for this reason that Iblīs did not respond by saying that he was never asked to prostrate to begin with, so he could not be charged with the crime of non-compliance of the order. Perhaps, the words of the Qur'an here: 'أَبَى أَنْ يَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ' (He refused to be among those who prostrated - 30) may contain a hint in that direction. Rather than say: 'أَبَى أَنْ يَسْجُدَ' that is, 'he refused to prostrate', what was actually said was: 'أَبَى أَنْ يَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ' he refused to be among those who prostrated. This indicates that the main prostraters were after all the angels but Iblīs too, being present with them, was reason-bound to join the prostrating angels. So, the Divine wrath was against his failure to join.

### The Meaning of Shayṭān Having No Power over Special Servants of Allah

From the verse: إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ (My servants are such that you have no power over them - 42), we learn that there are special and chosen servants of Allah Ta'ālā who are not affected by Satanic deception. But, within this event relating to Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام, it has also been