Saturday, April, 4, 2015
Topic: *“Do you love your existence?”*

* We have to use our senses to love God.
* Without loving our existence, we cannot love God.
* By ignoring our existence we cannot relate ourselves to the One who gave us existence.
* When we love the existence of all our qualities, only then can we love God.
* In this way, we relate the existence of the qualities to God.
* Human beings are hardwired to connect existence to something. Attaching our being to objects/events will lead to disappointment because this world is transient. We need to attach our being to something permanent which is the Source.
* If something exists, human nature asks for the Source of its existence. Example: if we have a sense of love, we ask: *how does it exist?*
* This sense of love exists and we have to relate this sense to the One who gave it to us.
* Question the Source of existence of the feelings, including your fears. Find the Creator of the sense of the feelings in yourself. **The presence of the Creator is within us, although we cannot define His Essence.**
* We have to see the presence of the Creator of our senses in our being.
* If we observe our being with heed, we can feel the Creator’s presence within us. Example: just reflecting on how perfectly our eye balls are placed within our skull, we can find the signs of the Qualities of our Lord within ourselves.
* ***How can we be aware of the Creator’s Creatorship (khallaqeya) in our existence?***
* **Note:** *khaliq* is the adjective to the verbal noun *khallaqeya* which are universal. Example: at one time, we can see the manifestations of His Creatorship simultaneously.

Human beings are amazing creatures. In our own existence, we can see the Creator’s Creatorship, urging us to be aware of Him and acknowledge Him. Only then can we love our Creator. I love God, the Creator of my eyes, the Creator of my feelings, the One who created my thought of Him. In this way we can never claim as being the owner of our qualities. Our being becomes the property of our Creator through which He discloses Himself to us. That is how we find God in our existence.

A priori conclusions are innate conclusions, not acquired conclusions. Looking for the cause of existence of anything is innate to us. Whoever made us, made us with the capacity to know the Creator. We have to use this ability; otherwise we become obstinate. Not using our innate qualities in order to search for the cause of existence of particular things in the world but claiming that the universe has a Creator is dangerous. It may lead to denial when we start questioning who God is.

* Whoever made us, gave us the ability to acknowledge Him.
* We cannot create our qualities.
* We need to experience our feelings.
* Experience means to be aware of our own consciousness. It is in us, we do not acquire it.
* Without questioning the Source of existence of our feelings, we cannot experience.

Hadith Narration: A master wanted to free his slave girl. (When people at the time of the Prophet (pbuh) became aware of the fact we all are equal before the Creator, and are His worshipers, they were ashamed of keeping slaves. The Prophet (pbuh) also encouraged the masters to marry their slave girls.) The slave girl was a believer but could not express it. When the master took the slave girl to the Prophet (pbuh) to see whether she is a believer or not, the Prophet asked her: *where is God?* Because of being illiterate she could not utter a word and she pointed her finger to the sky. Prophet said that she is a believer, free her. As a result of interpreting this hadith, people think that it is permissible to say that God is in the heavens.

* Lesson: We should not limit our responsibilities to that of the slave girl because we are not illiterate. What we learn from this narration is that we have to see God within our capacities and we need to treat people according to their capacity.

When we are reading the Quran, our aim must be to universalize the message. Never extract lessons from historicizing the message except if you are a jurist looking to make some ruling out of it. Unlike the Quranic verses, Hadith narrations have to be seen within their own context.

When we say: I testify that there is no deity besides God (***ashadu an lailaha illallah***), I also witness that Muhammad is a worshipper of God and His messenger. (***wa ashadou anna Muhammadan ‘abduhu wa Rasooluhu***)

* Prophet (pbuh) as a human being had two missions:
1. ***uboodiya* (worshipper of God):** He was also a created being. No one can be a privileged person to believe in God without using his/her own human abilities.
2. ***rasool* (Messenger):** He was the Messenger of God.

Behind giving practical guidance, the *Rasool* is the Messenger of the Source. Universal message is the Prophetic message which means that the Messenger of God is teaching something to humanity. If we cannot universalize the message of the Quran, reading hadith may lead to imitation.

* Read the ***hadith*** (within its historical context), and then see the ***Sunnah*** (universal message).
* In the hadith above, the historical context is “the girl pointing to the sky”; the universal message is that “we need to treat people according to their capacity”.

The Quranic message is universal and cannot be historicized. Example: in the Quran if you see a verse that says to not befriend Christians and Jews; it does not refer to anyone identifying himself or herself with Judaism or Christianity. On the contrary, it means not to adopt the concepts i.e. whoever attaches importance to his/her lineage is a Jew. Whoever attaches Divine quality to a created being is a Christian. All the troubling comes from the approach of taking the lexicon meaning of the Quranic language. We have to bear in mind that dictionary defines words as they are understood by people of a certain epoch. We have to define the Quran as the Eternal Speech of the Absolutely Knowledgeable One Speaking to us

within our own context i.e. the Speaker is speaking to us and we need to look for the purpose in this speech in our own circumstances.

* Example: When we have the attitude of consumerism, we are “*Abu Lahab*” because we think that the things will satiate us. Instead, we should acknowledge that the things we receive are the blessings of the Will of the Creator of the order of the universe. That acknowledgement is “*uboodiya*”.
* Example: the owners of the elephant (***ashabu’l-feel*)** as mentioned in the Quran is for us to reflect on when we have the character similar to the owners of the elephant, who wanted to destroy the “House of Worship” in order to gain worldly prestige.

Prophets are not employed to exclude people. By definition Messengership means delivering the message to others who are not believers/not aware of the truth. The Messengership requires the Messenger to be an open individual without any labeling restrictions. Similarly, the Quran does not put any label on specific groups but the label is put towards the attitude that one takes.



***“The path of those upon whom you have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked your wrath or of those who have gone astray.” (1):7***

* In your own existence, do not be *Maghdoob* and *Daalleen* i.e. do not put yourself in a position that you feel cursed. *Maghdoob* (rejected, cursed) is the one who feels that God is torturing Him. *Daalleen* (going astray) means getting stuck in causal chain without realizing that the Will of the Creator is present in every step of the way.
* When you pray, you are asking: “**Please God, I do not want to be in this situation**”.

If someone does not understand belief in God, angels, revelations…, then practicing the practical side of religion i.e. rituals cannot be properly explained.

* Analogy: A person cannot become a surgeon by watching operation videos ten times. The person needs to go through a series of education to become a surgeon.
* Similarly, we cannot talk about rituals without establishing the proper base of belief i.e. the existence of God within ourselves. We need to go through a proper training ourselves before explaining rituals.

In conclusion, **we can love God, only if we love our existence and the existence of our human qualities.** We have to be in search of the truth. The Prophet (pbuh) died when he stopped receiving revelation which means that belief is an ongoing process in search of the truth. The process of learning for us is the measure of success which lies in our search for the Source of our existence.

* First verse of the Quran says: *“Read in the name of Your Lord who creates”*.
* If you are searching for the truth, you have to learn the creation of your Lord that He is exhibiting to you.