Saturday, February 14, 2015
Topic: Quranic Wisdom concerning Social life (*What is wisdom part 8*)

The Twelfth Word: page 146, Third Principle-

In general, philosophy (mostly described as secularism, materialist philosophy) does not acknowledge the Creator and the purpose of existence. Philosophy (not the discipline) means human beings trying to understand the meaning of life and existence within the universe without connecting it to the Source.

*Is secular understanding bound to be “individualistic”?* Most likely, yes because any organization or community working for a “good cause” does well for human beings. In order to live a healthy life, we become self-centric because we do not tie the “good cause” to a Creator. Example: The Ecosystem tells us that saving wild life preserves the environment which in turns benefits us. And so, if we harm wild life, it harms us. Again, this is “individualistic”.

* Example: Whales are created for a purpose. This means that the Creator is manifesting Himself through the act of the whales.
* We need to preserve the “whales” as the sign pointing to the Creator so we can understand our Creator. With this awareness, an individual goes beyond the universe i.e. what the universe is pointing to. According to the purpose of our creation, when we relate “every good cause” to our Creator, ultimately, it benefits us.
* The purpose of creation (including our existence) is to have the Creator’s will prevail over everything.
* In the example above, attaching our existence to the Creator may seem individualistic but I am giving the right of Lordship to the right Owner. I am acknowledging the purpose in creation, as far as the Creator is concerned.
* When we refer meaning to something other than the object itself, it is the field of religion.
* Following or fulfilling our own whims and desires is meaningless, extracting meaning from these desires and connecting it to the Creator is meaningful.
* My life is “sacred”. *Why?* Because it has a purpose. *How?* Because it has a conscious Creator and I have to accept the real Owner of my life. My enjoyment also has a purpose appointed by the Creator, so I have to refer everything as coming from the Creator and going back to the Creator.

The word “miracle” (*aya*) in the Quran refers to a sign/event/sentence and is mixed with three components:

1. Universe i.e. creation.
2. Anything created, including your own consciousness, senses.
3. Any narrations of the miracles attributed to Prophets i.e. the revelation/message of a person.

Miracles performed by the Prophets cannot be the backbone of our belief. For centuries, this has been the debate among different theologians. “Miracles” mean that something extraordinary happened because what we observe always seems ordinary. Example: If Jesus (pbuh) is disassociated from his miracles, the whole Christianity would collapse. Similarly, if you eviscerate Muhammad (pbuh) from Islam, the Oneness of God still remains in the religion but without the Messenger. Therefore, we need to question every word/concept we read from the scripture and we need to apply it to our human logic.

* Analogy: A farmer follows the set order to present chicks that hatches out of a shell in 28 days. At the same token, person A presents a chick right away through a miracle which he claims has been given to him by His Creator.
1. The farmer says that he did not create the chick and that he is following the observable/regular order set by the Creator of the universe. We observe this order as well which is an ordinary way of creating chicks (the way of creation that we are accustomed with).
2. Person A also says that he did not produce the chick; the Creator of the universe changed His order of creating that we are accustomed with. We observe the creation of the chick by Person A through his given miracle.
* In the Scripture, the Creator encourages us to investigate everything we see/hear. We believe in the Creator through His regular order that we observe. We do not have to believe in **the existence** of the Creator because Person A displayed a miracle.”
* You cannot believe in God because of someone’s demonstrations of miracles, but we have to consider the coming into existence of both chicks, *who can give existence to them?*
* Both chicks’ coming into existence is a miracle; they are equally signs of the Creator.
* Person A claims that he is employed by God to demonstrate His act of creation. *How do we know?* Our conclusion is based on studying the way the chick comes into existence through the regular order that we are accustomed with. We need to understand that the order itself is not “the Conscious Source of existence” to give birth to the chicks.
* **Miracles occur to take the envoy seriously as the messenger of God. We need to confirm: Yes, you must be employed by the One who changes the order of the universe**.

The necessity of the “law of creations” is still being argued about among philosophers. The order in the universe is what we experience or are accustomed with on a regular basis. This “regularity” is not the cause to give existence to anything. The regularity itself consists of accidents, occurrences, and dependent beings. Example: Water coming down a stream and meeting a plant is “contingent”. Here, **“contingent”** means not necessitated by the water itself/not the result of the water’s choice or decision. According to the capacity of the water molecule, water is “contingent” because it is subject to other rules (i.e. bound to go a certain way, e.g., the soil should suck certain amount of water and the water cannot resist it...). The order is in existence and water is just following a created order. If water encounters with the plant, the relationship starts working; but water is not the reason of the existence of the plant.

As a result of a dependent/contingent object, we cannot conclude that this object is the cause of existence of another object/event because it itself is contingent, its existence is not **essential**. Motion of the water is “contingent” as well. It means that water molecules are dependent on the order of the universe. They are occurrences (***haadisat)***. They happen to be according to the will of something else other than themselves. Any occurrent thing cannot claim that it owns its existence by itself; “**occurrent”** means that it happens by some other source/cause.

Similarly, in the farmer analogy (above), the regularity we observe is contingent i.e. everything which is related to the process of the chick coming into existence in the farm is “contingent”. Everything is the result of a “Conscious Source/Cause” Whose existence must be “Essential to Himself”, which controls or gives existence to the whole order of the universe. We just experience the regularity of the created order and therefore, the miracles we observe should attract us to the “envoy/messenger” only.

Belief means studying the regularity within the universe and being convinced with the manifestation of an Absolute Conscious Will that is operating in the universe. “Seeing” something out of “regularity” is not “belief”. We are not responsible to search for the Creator of an event which we have not experienced. We are only responsible to conclude that which we experience. For example: If the sun does not rise one day, we must conclude that this occurence is the result of a Conscious Will. Because I observed such, I conclude that the Creator created this event and so this is part of His order which I am not accustomed with or He changed His rule in creation.

* “Seeing” and “hearing” is the same because at the end, everything needs to be interpreted. Either way, my responsibility is to investigate and come to my own conclusion as a result of my own research. I need to define my being in terms of the One who creates me.
* We have to study the Quran to follow the Prophetic teachings, which is how we become the companions/students of the Prophet (pbuh). We cannot believe in God because of the miracles. Everything is based on our own investigation of the creation.
* If I benefit from my experience, I can share it with my friends.
* The purpose of sending the messengers/envoys is accomplished when the people understand the “message”.
* “Natural” means that something is coming into existence from its own nature. Nothing can be the Source of its own existence in this universe because they themselves all are contingent. Natural laws (order) that we observe in the universe are “regularities”. Example: sunrise and sunset, night and day, childhood to adulthood…
* *Is the “regularity” the result of its conscious choice?* No,the “regularity” itself needs a cause of existence. Therefore, natural laws are not the source of their own existence. They represent only the “regularities” that we observe in the order that the universe with its constituents being is given existence.

In conclusions, a secular worldview makes us ultimately individualistic where we live in a closed universe that turns around us. Example: we may do a good action to help someone; this someone’s happiness makes us happy. The worldview as presented in the scripture is that our every action should be done to acknowledge Him; we need to ultimately attribute every case to Him solely. In the example above, through the action, we should experience the Creator of our “sense of happiness”.

* The Creator reveals that “helping” is His characteristic.

Question: *Is there a specific age that we become God conscious?*

We start experiencing our existence as soon as we are in the womb of our mother. We are responsible for our effort to understand our reality. There is no end point to the expansion of our awareness.

* Our responsibility to become aware of our reality starts “now”.