Saturday, March 7, 2015
Topic: “God Suffices- *The Fourth Ray* (part 2)

Our “actions” (***amal***) fortify our belief. Quran encourages its reader to believe and do good actions. For an action to be *“****saleh****” (*good) i.e. meaningful, it must be based on “belief”. Prostrating before God can only be meaningful when we feel the awesome manifestation of an Absolute Source within us. In other words, “actions” need to emanate from our “belief”.

Fulfilling the requirements of religion i.e. mainly rituals such as fasting, praying… are external to us, they are not belief and so we cannot reduce our “actions” to outward forms of rituals only. When we practice an action, **it** **gains its value because of belief**. Action itself is a personal individual experience of a person’s belief.

Example: When I experience the universe, I should feel in admiration with the universe as being created by God. Here, I am the one perceiving creation and the Creator which leads me to question my own existence. When I analyze and reach a conclusion about the reality of events using my human qualities, I get to know my Creator. As a result, I see Mercy and Compassion in creation.

* **ASK YOURSELF:**
1. *How do I have these senses/qualities?*
2. *What am I going to do with them?*

Our qualities need to be explained. When we try to explain the existence of these qualities, we cannot attribute the Source of existence of these qualities to anything in this universe. Just as a particle cannot be the Source of its own existence, **I conclude that Whoever gives existence to these particles also gives existence to me and my qualities.** **By using my own qualities, I recognize the “Source of my own existence”.** By recognizing the ability to be intelligent, we understand that the Creator must be Wise. By using our human qualities, we get to know the Creator and we appreciate Wisdom.

* Analogy: Bricks and cement cannot make the building. Brick has no will of its own, cement has no will either, even when combined together.
* Similarly, any particle in the universe has no will of its own but is ever dependent on an Absolute Conscious will.
* If one closes his eyes (i.e. does not use his human qualities) to the possibility of the existence of an Absolute Source, he is bound to attribute “Conscious will” to objects/events in this universe without any valid evidence. Example: hydrogen and oxygen combine together to form water. The “combination” of the two elements is **NOT the Source** of existence of the water molecule. Water is the result of a perfect Order in creation.
* After observing a perfect Order in the universe, it enables us to realize that the objects/events “individually” or “altogether” demonstrate perfect Wisdom. This implies that **I have to use my human qualities to conclude that this universe has a Wise and Conscious Order Giver**.

Nothing in the universe can necessitate the existence of anything including its own being. Example: Our body cannot necessitate the existence of intelligence, power of sight or any of our qualities.

* We are using all our senses to observe His qualities manifested in the universe. Through our senses, we realize that nothing in the universe has the power to create anything (***lailaha***), there must be a Source giving existence to everything (***illallah***). This realization (preliminary conclusion) complements our “belief”.
* **My senses are tools given to me to know the Source of existence of the qualities I observe in this universe. If I observe that there is wisdom in creation, it means that my Creator is introducing Himself to me so that I know that only “my Creator is the Wise One”.**
* **The more I use my human qualities, the better my understanding of my Creator gets. As a result of this practice, my awareness of the Source of my wisdom further expands and I appreciate the wisdom in the creation far better than before.**
* As a consequence of this appreciation, I further confirm the Originator of the universe as being the Wise One.

Now that we understand that all our human qualities are given to us in order to know the Source of our existence, let us try to implement the (above mentioned realization) into practice.

* ***We all like to help others, don’t we?*** Well, through helping others, our Creator is teaching us that He is the “Loving One” who takes care of the needy. **The more we practice this belief, the further we confirm that this Creator is a “Loving One. When we are happy to see a smile on someone’s face, it means that the Creator loves us not once but infinitely.**
* We are made to acknowledge the Source of our actions. The more I do loving actions, the more I appreciate the Source of existence of this loving action. He is teaching Himself to me that He loves doing certain kind of actions. Example: if I like to clean my room, then I know that my Creator loves to put things in a tidy way.

We need to work on experiencing **His Greatness** by studying creation. If we are filled with His awesome qualities as manifested in the universe, then we appreciate Him. Even the sense of “appreciating” is given by Him. The more we appreciate Him, the more He will appreciate our good actions. He is teaching us which kind of God He is. Although, studying creation to comprehend the entirety of the Absolute is an “endless journey”, it is worth to put in the effort to confirm our belief.

* If I appreciate His Greatness, He will appreciate my acknowledgment accordingly. There is no limit to that and we will be appreciated in return according to His infinite capacity. This means that **we can only appreciate and expect His response as much as “we are aware of His capacity”**, which is the degree of certainty in one’s belief.
* The more effort we put in to experience His greatness, the more we appreciate Him and confirm our belief. Therefore, **we have to concentrate on expanding our certainty in our belief by using our human qualities with the expectation that He will return it back to us.** **That is why everyone has their own “Paradise” according to how much they have worked on utilizing their given human qualities.**

By practicing our human qualities, we are expected to strengthen/expand the scope of our belief i.e. “belief consciousness”. The Quran encourages us to exercise our belief by doing good actions.

* Analogy: Mother takes care of the child; the child appreciates his mother’s kindness as much as he is aware of his mother. Besides, some of the obvious tasks such as cooking, laundry…, the child does not realize many other things that are taken care of by his mother. The more he becomes aware of the mother’s compassion, the more he expands his certainty that his mom is taking care of him.
* Similarly, as far as our relationship with the universe is concerned, the more we expand the comprehension of our qualities in our creation, the higher our awareness about our Lord becomes and the stronger our belief gets.
* Our rituals (fasting, charity…) are to be practiced in order to acknowledge the relationship between us and our Creator. Action is the practice of one’s belief. Good action (***Amal-Saleh****)* is to be performed to acknowledge the Creator.

(Continuation: *The Fourth Ray*, last sentence of the first paragraph as below)

***“The insight of belief established that my essential being is the shadow of a Divine Name which is both enduring and eternal.”***

* *What does the author mean by “insight of belief” (****shu’oor****)?*
* Awareness/consciousness of one’s own existence, experiencing belief which can only be practiced by using our human qualities.
* We are here to experience our qualities to get to know who our Owner is. Even observing “death” of another person is an experience which makes us realize that we do not belong to ourselves.
* Our conclusion of “belief in God” needs to be internalized, therefore we need NOT TO BE LAZY; we have to use our human qualities.
* *What does the author mean by “shadow”?*
* “Shadow” is a sign that an external object exists, although we may not see the object.
* If the object does not exist, the shadow of the object can never exist.
* **The shadow demonstrates that an Absolute Source exists.** Note: *Human capacity cannot comprehend the essence of the Absolute and so we cannot describe the Absolute without using metaphors (****mithaal****). Reflection/Shadow/Manifestation is metaphoric explanation.*
* I do not have an essential existence by myself. My existence is totally dependent on an Absolute Source, which cannot be described. By examining the “shadow” I cannot describe the Essence of the “Real object” but I can make sure that that such an object definitely exists. The Creator reveals the existence of Himself and of His Attributes to us through His manifestation.
* What we experience in the universe is the shadow of His qualities.
* My human qualities are the shadow of the qualities of my Creator. The more I acknowledge this reality, the more I get to know the Creator.
* Most of the time we neglect this reality and therefore, we need to train ourselves.
* *What does the author mean by “Eternal”?*
* My existence is temporary and completely dependent on an Absolute Source. I am given a temporary existence to experience His shadow in this type of creation. My existence is not only temporal, it is transient. **The existence of the shadow that is subject to constant renewal is the sign of the existence of an Eternal Source.**
* The fact that I cannot sustain my existence is beautiful. *How?*
* My dependent existence demonstrates that the Giver of my existence is Absolute i.e. “self –existent”. That is why we conclude that my Source of existence must be “Eternal”.
* The One who gives us existence enabled us to acknowledge Him as the Eternal One. In this way, we are conscious of our “own consciousness”. We may get Eternity only by realizing that our existence belongs to a Conscious Eternal Source.

As human beings, we are created to worship God. Worship means acknowledging and submitting our being to Him alone. Worship cannot be reduced to only doing certain actions. We are not the Creator of our actions. For example: If a philanthropist gives out money and feels proud about his actions, *does that make him realize that he belongs to an Eternal Being?* No. In our every action, we need to acknowledge the Source of the qualities, appreciate Him and return it back to Him. We need to realize: “Yes, this sense has been given to me in order to know Him”.

* The more we confirm, the more we become aware of His Greatness.
* Worship is appreciation and acknowledging His Grandeur.
* **When we prostrate with this consciousness (i.e. I am nothing and you are everything), we are reminding ourselves that He is the Grandeur, that is how we respond back to Him and feel His Absolute Greatness (*Allahu Akbar*).**

We need to start our belief training from scratch. The Students/companions did not inherit any belief concept from their ancestors. The companions confirmed the truth as a result of their choice and reasoning. Similarly, our understanding of revelation should be universal. Just like the companions, we need to express our conclusions by using our emotions: “Yes, you are surely my Owner” (***Allahu Akbar****)*. When we pray, we just release our feeling through a language.

In various chapters of the Quran, we come across the following verse:



…”And those who believe and do good deeds...”

If we turn this verse into the “present progressive” tense, we get: “Those who believe while they are doing good actions”. It means that if one’s action is not performed as a reflection of one’s belief, then it is not a “good action” but on the contrary it turns into, if not “*hypocrisy*” but at least into a “wishful action.”

In conclusion, belief is one’s own personal conviction. After helping out a needy person, we feel happy. When we feel happy, it means that the Creator loves us infinitely. Without loving the Creator of our feelings, we cannot talk about the Loving Creator, God.