Wednesday, December 17, 2014
Topic: Divine Determining (Conclusion part 1)

**“Even the greatest pleasure is reduced to nothing by monotony.”
“We do not like ignorance. But only through the existence of ignorance that we realize the beauty in learning.”**

* We need to use our freewill to get pleasure from the awareness of our existence.
* If we do not exercise our freewill with utmost consciousness, then our interaction with the universe will be meaningless.
* Without the awareness of our reality, we can never attain pleasure in our actions.
* “Ignorance” is not within us but “learning that we are ignorant” is innate in us.
* When we learn something, we get pleasure from learning.
* Since I am aware that I have been ignorant, now I will learn “not to be ignorant”.
* If there was no “existence” of ignorance, then we would not learn anything.
* Similarly, if there was no “possibility” to sin (deny God), how would we experience the pleasure to get to know the existence of an Absolute Source.
* The universe exists as it is and human beings are created as they are.
* It is beautiful to be aware of our vulnerability to sin. As a result of which, we exercise our freewill effectively.
* The way we are created, we cannot accept the existence of the possibility of “not sinning”.
* The pleasure that we experience from choosing that which is “right” is linked to our awareness of the different options available to us.
* Example: we may complain about *why is that “bad” option available to us?*
* Only with the option of choosing “bad” do we get the pleasure of learning and improving our abilities.
* The existence of the option to choose that which is “bad” is good.
* The language in the Quran by no means is used to threaten human beings.
* Quran speaks to our existence right now.
* When the Quran mentions “ending in Hell’ as a consequence of making the wrong choice, it is not a threat. **It is just a statement of the reality of the order of creation.**
* This awareness helps us to understand the language of the Quran.
* The existence of “Hell” is also good because it teaches us to always be on guard with our actions.
* In denying the Creator, human beings experience the existence of Hell.
* When we attribute our existence and the existence of the universe to random happenings, we experience meaninglessness.
* If you run away from denying any existence, then you are detaching yourself from the Creator.
* Only by attributing our existence to an Absolute Divine Source, do we realize our reality.
* Our consciousness urges us to make our life meaningful. As a result of which, we stay away from that choice which is bad and so we may avoid experiencing “Hell”.
* Analogy: The closer you put your hand to the fire, the more you feel the heat and so you will avoid touching the fire.
* Similarly, as we start to avoid the wrong choices, we start experiencing the taste of Paradise.
* We need to use our freewill to make our life meaningful.
* Having a “sense of guilt” is sacred.
* Guilt is a sign given to us to acknowledge our reality.
* This may lead to repentance and asking for forgiveness to our Creator.
* Repentance is an extension of worship.
* Weighing our actions based upon disobedience of God has no value.
* Example: I will not do xyz because if I do it, I will disobey God.
* We can only disobey our reality by contradicting ourselves. This reality goes back to disobeying the order of creation.
* HE is the Creator of our “disobeying attitude” as well.
* Conclusion: We disobey God only when we contradict our reality.
* Our worldview shapes our conclusion of our reality.
* If I do something which is wrong and I do not feel a sense of guilt, then according to my worldview, this act is not wrong.
* You can only face a sense of guilt according to your worldview. We need to pay attention to our worldview before considering the correctness of our choices in action.
* Example: Student A did not know that food is not allowed in the classroom and she brought in her food.
* As far as her perception of the creation is concerned, she is not going against the nature of this creation.
* Continuation of the Example: The classmates apprise Student A that food is not allowed in the classroom.
* Now Student A realizes that she is doing an act which contradicts the nature of creation of the order of the universe.
* If belief includes a feeling that contradicts your reality, then you may experience a sense of guilt.
* Sense of guilt is subjective and so we need to work on our belief.

 **“In order to display the impresses of His most Beautiful Names, the All-Glorious Maker changes human life within very many situations rarely in the form of suffering and calamity. He shows the meaning of some of His names and the rays of Mercy within wisdom. For example, by creating “hunger” He let us realize that He is a Merciful Nourisher. By creating various illnesses, he makes us realize the value of our life, by creating death He calls us to search for eternity etc…”**

* HE has given us the sense of disliking “death” so we can attach our “being” to His Absoluteness.
* Only by connecting our existence to an Absolute Divine Source can we be on our way to searching for eternity.
* The purpose in the creation of death is for human beings to yearn for eternity.
* All our negative feelings that we experience are a means to search for eternity and connect our existence to the Absolute Source.
* Experiencing “hunger” is also a sign that points to “eternity”.
* If I experience hunger, I need to connect this feeling to its Source. Only by experiencing hunger will I get to know who my Lord is.
* Similarly, the creation of illness also has a purpose.
* The order of the universe and my order have been established in such a way that I have the ability to see the Divine Wisdom in the order of existence. This is belief in Divine Determining.
* I have to benefit from the existence of hunger, death, illness…as encapsulated in the existence of the order of the universe.
* Islamic tenet says that good and bad are from God. Thus, the **existence** of death, illness and hunger is all good.
* Evil is external to our creation; it is my perception.
* Example: What I see as bad in my perception, I label it as evil.
* If I label that “which I consider to be bad” as evil in its existence, that is my perception which is wrong.
* The existence of this possibility is not evil. I have to take notice of my choice i.e if I chose it, it may harm me.
* In creation, there is no evil.

* In the scripture” “I seek refuge with God” only carries a meaning when I know who my Lord is.
* If I have not established the proper base of my belief, asking The Protector to protect me would be meaningless.
* Everything in the universe is meaningful and that which I perceive to be harmful is given existence so that I may evaluate my overall perception of the universe.
* To “seek refuge in God from what He creates” means that we need to review our understanding of God.
* I ought to work on my “belief in God” so that I can find my reality.

You will see that this is appropriate for the purpose of our existence.

* For example: when we get ill, we feel miserable and we may perceive our illness to be “evil”.
* The One who has created the virus is the owner of the universe. *Is he creating it to harm me?*
* He is teaching me something: I have to seek refuge with my understanding of God.
* I do ask for help that I want to be healthy.
* **That is supplication** **which is the means of realizing our exact reality:** I am the one who is needy, I am helpless, I am the one expected to acknowledge who my Owner is.
* When I realize my reality, I obey His order in creation: **That is worship which is the means of acknowledging who my Owner is.**
* As a result, we may not fall into despair but on the contrary, we become very hopeful.
* For example: most incurable diseases can be combated with a positive attitude.
* Positive attitude means that I acknowledge my reality and I trust that whatever my Creator creates is the most appropriate for the purpose of my existence.
* When the scripture mentions God sending His soldier for help (*junudAllah*) refers to Him employing His Angels to work on our metabolism in fighting the cells. Everything is created to serve the purpose of existence which is to help conscious beings, like human beings, get to know who their Lord is.
* We ought to work on establishing our trust in Him.
* The message we receive from the universe guides us on how to interpret the universe.

**“The ultimate aim of life is to get to know who our Lord is otherwise life would have no meaning.”
“Anything which helps me know who my Lord is, is welcomed. What is not?”**

* From our awareness of existence, we have to go to a conclusion i.e. the universe has a Creator and I am a created being.
* As far as the purpose of your existence is concerned, you can come to a conclusion.
* Main Question: *Why do I exist?*
* All other questions follow from this question and our reasoning pattern is as follows: **induction->deduction->induction**
* We are created with the desire to engage with the world and exercise our freewill. We are given the opportunity to educate ourselves.
* Finding the answer to the question: “Who is my Lord” is my reality.
* As much as I understand my reality, that much I understand who my Lord is.
* Don’t confuse belief with your imagination.
* Belief is your reality: acknowledgment of the Creator.
* Investigate your reality by connecting with the universe. You may never reach the ultimate truth but in this journey, you will discover that human ability has no limit.
* My human ability is open ended. I will always be in search for the truth which is subjective.
* *ashhadu*: I witness; it is my subjective conclusion.
* Similarly, *amantu*: I confirm; it is my subjective conclusion.
* These conclusions that I draw from my observation of the universe are subjective to me: To exalt is my responsibility.
* The universe is the act of its Creator.
* When we study the universe, we find out that everything is meaningful.
* The message we get from the objects/events points to the One who made it meaningful for us.
* Our reality is also a choice we make. By default our reality has the ability to reject that which is “illogical”.
* Example: when we get sick, we do not like it.
* Our reality rejects this choice of being sick.
* Our interaction with the Creator will have no end and is continuous as follow:
* **conclusion->event->conclusion->event**
* From the example above, we conclude: **the Creator is not creating evil, by interpreting its existence as evil I am turning it into evil.**
* It is good for you as far as the purpose of your existence is concerned.
* Wrong choices cannot be reduced to “actions” only.
* Wrong choices may refer to our intellectual conclusions as well which may go against the conclusion of the universe.
* Example: If I think that my existence is confined to this world only and when I setup goals, my human expectations get disappointed if I do not achieve them.
* We need to define the purpose of our existence and connect our being to an Absolute Eternal Source.
* REMEMBER**:** The Creator’s order is as follows:
* **If I choose, He creates.**
* The word “allowed” should not be misused.
* Example: Why did God allow Person A to smash his glasses?
* This type of reasoning is illogical because the Creator acts according to His order.
* There is a set order in the universe.
* Whatever happens in the universe is a means to know who my Lord is.
* In the example above, Person A realizes his choosing to be that which is “wrong”.
* If there was no option of choosing bad, there would be no option of choosing good.
* There are always two alternatives in our choices.
* We are created to confirm the good choice.
* Whoever made me made me with a capacity to understand that whether I misused or not my freewill.
* Things are created with the ability for us to see the Creator’s Glory in it.
* Example: an atom is so powerful, we have to study it and prostrate.
* Everything is good for the purpose of my existence.
* The purpose of my existence is to be taken into account: ***Why do I exist?***