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| **Date** | Saturday, January 30 2016 |
| **Topic** | Prophet Jonah’s Prayer (The First Flash) |
| **Part** | 1 |

*How can I benefit from the Quranic teachings?*

Every individual human being must train themselves with the teachings of the Quran. One has to see it as speaking to them where the reader is being addressed. Only then can one establish a relationship with everything that is internal and external to their being (society, family…). Without being satisfied internally (within), I cannot establish any relationship with the rest of the universe.

Quran’s application of *Sharia* is only applicable to the conscious human being who knows who her/his Lord is. One can only apply the legislative principles if they are convinced. Example: One has to believe first that they should not steal. With that conviction they can make use of the principles mentioned in the Quran about stealing. The scripture teaches me not to steal in Its name i.e. I need to attribute the sense of “not stealing” to the One that gives me existence, God. Only then can my action be *uboodiya* (worshipping God). **I need to acknowledge the relationship with God as the Quran teaches me.** In order to follow God’s will, I must be aware of It, the One that gives me existence. My awareness of Its Sovereignty makes it Sharia (God willed order).

* Order in creation🡪God’s will🡪my awareness🡪Sharia
* Without this awareness, rules and regulations become secular law.
* **Sharia= Consciousness + Action**
* With consciousness of the Owner, I follow sharia.
* **Consciousness makes the law sharia, not the practice of the law.**
* As a result of the consciousness that everything in existence is God’s willed order, I practice sharia.

**The THIRD FLASH:** ***The supplication of Jonah (Peace be Upon our Prophet) is a most powerful supplication, a most effective means to obtaining answers to prayers.***

* Jonah is an example given to me by my Creator to understand supplication and prayers for myself.
* The answers to my petition/supplication come from within myself in my communication with the Creator. My expectation should not be some physical response for example I ask my friend to help me with something I need and this friend helps me with it. This is not how the relationship with our Creator is. My recognition of the Creator is the response to my need which is within my existence.

**The relationship between me and the Creator is as follows:**

1. The need in me is from my Creator.
2. The answer to the need is also from my Creator and again within me.
3. Thus, I will get the answer within myself.

The relationship between me and my Creator is not a physical one because we are not on the same status: **I am the created one and I experience my Creator within my being created.** I experience the response from my Creator within my being created. As I acknowledge and experience my Creator through my need, I will experience the response within me through my being created.

* Everything is within me because I experience my need through my given consciousness.

Scriptures educate me within my own being what my reality is. I have to establish communication with the scripture through myself otherwise it is an external relationship/information/knowledge. Within my being created, I have to know my Creator. I can know my Creator only as much as I am aware of my reality. **If I establish belief in God through my own being, the communication with my Creator (God) will be through my own being.**

**Human consciousness is mysterious and has two aspects functioning at the same time:**

1. My relationship with my given senses.
2. My relationship with the Giver of these senses.

Analogy: When I communicate with the machine, I conclude that it must have a Maker. My consciousness requires me to be aware that while communicating with the machine, it has a Maker. The machine is only a means for me to conclude that there must be a maker. As I use the machine with this Consciousness, I benefit from it. Furthermore, if I am the machine, I am in contact with my Maker through myself.

* Similarly, with the awareness of my existence, my consciousness makes is possible for me to be aware of the Existence Giver.
* My qualities cannot exist by themselves. If I am conscious of my existence, I am conscious of my existence Giver.
* The way I see myself comprises my belief foundation.

My Creator is in direct communication with me through **my senses that He has given me**. When I am ill, the Giver of illness gives me health. **The need for healing is given by my Maker.** I get the answers within the awareness of my reality as follows:

1. **When I am ill, I acknowledge the illness is from It and the need for seeking help is from It.**
2. **When I am ill, I acknowledge the dislike of the illness is from It.**
3. **When I am ill, I acknowledge that healing comes from It.**

Belief in God has nothing to do with getting/seeing a tangible response to prayer, kind of a miracle as in waiting for something to happen out there. This is escapism and an easy way out to our reality. Unfortunately religion has been externalized and mostly interpreted accordingly. Similar to the Torah, religion is becoming a historical/external set of rules. Prophet Jesus had come to revive externalized religion but as soon as he left we see that it has reverted back. Although the Quran and other scriptures address man and his being, they are being externalized by people, becoming more of a community culture. What is the point in having external historical information that has nothing to do with me? Why repeat the same historical mistake that the Quran keeps emphasizing, i.e. not to have the Bani-israel (Israelite) attitude/tradition towards the Torah and make it a set of rules. I need to benefit from the Quran where my God is teaching me right now. Without imitating the speaker I learn about the Creator through my being created.

It is easy to develop the correct methodology of reading the scriptures (much easier than learning Arabic) because it is within myself. If it assures my being, then it is satisfactory.   
  
For example, God says: “I am All Knowing”

External: “God knows everything.” This statement is external because it has nothing to do with me. This is not belief but information.  
Internalization: I am not the Creator of knowledge. I have been given knowledge by my Creator. The Creator of knowledge is the All Knowing One.

**Internalization of prayer is for me to communicate with my Creator through myself, my reality.** I get the response from my Creator through myself again in my consciousness. I need to practice my acknowledgment from within. Example: while eating, am I aware that I am eating? Externalization would be just saying “*Bismillah*” (In the name of God) at the beginning and being done with it. While eating I should experience the acknowledgment, that is my prayer and that is internalization of belief. Within myself I should realize that all these actions have been created for me to know who my Lord is. We need to establish the right methodology to read the Quran. Additionally, Sharia laws become meaningful to me when I consciously apply it within my life.

Quran says “…Whoever God has given wisdom is given good a lot…”. Baqara (2): 269

Ibn Abbas narrates: **Wisdom is to understand the Quran ( understand the Speech of God as opposed to knowing it).**  The more I become aware of Its Speech, the more I become wise.

Hence, answers to prayers are an internal experience where a revolution is taking place in my understanding.

***How do I understand miracles?***

* Miracles are signs that the one performing it has been employed by the Creator.
* Miracles are not the object of belief but are the means of belief.
* *What do the miracles as signs point to?* **The one demonstrating the miracles is being a representative of the Creator of the universe, employed by the Creator of this event.** Thus, I have to take this person seriously and hear what he has to say. My Creator is speaking to me through this person.

Side note- Since religion has become an external entity to most, our personal lives are practiced superficially as a result. External teaching of religion within a family does not work. Couples need to grow together in their sharia journey in this universe. Otherwise there will be no harmony between them. That is how to gain *“sakeenah”* (harmony) with marital/family relationships… **Without harmony, we are prone to lose respect with people we care about.**  Without respect, there is no family life. Never impose your views to your spouse/family as it may give rise to conflict. **One can only present religion by living by it.** After all, action speaks louder than words!