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| **Date** | Saturday, December 12 2015 |
| **Topic** | Ninth Word |
| **Part** | 14 |

***(Ninth Word, continuation, page 56) “And with the remaining works of the departed beings erased from this world with the passage of time, it recalls the Divine acts of the Creator and Life and Death in their passage to another, quite different world. It is a time that calls to mind the disposals of the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth’s awesomeness and the manifestations of His beauty in the utter destruction of this narrow, fleeting and lowly world, the terrible death-agonies of its decease, and in the unfolding of the broad, eternal and majestic world of the hereafter. And the universe’s Owner, its Ture Disposer, its True Beloved and Object of Worship can only be the One Who with ease turns night into day, winter into spring, and this world into the hereafter like the pages of a book; Who writes and erases them, and changes them.”***

With our every interaction with the universe, we experience certain feelings. For example, as day goes through darkness, I go through darkness as well. The day experiences its death, I experience death as well. This experiencing death is the sign of the death of the whole universe. I want my life to be felicitous but at nightfall, the reality shows me that everything is disappearing. In the universe every thing is given and taken. It may seem not a loving relationship. Additionally, I am made with a desire to always take pleasure in my existence. There is a contradiction between my expectations and my experiences. *How do I find a solution to my needs?* It is not hard to find a solution: reason🡪deduce. Example: If I am made thirsty, there must be water. If I am made hungry, there must be food.

* If the universe is meaningful, then there must be a Conscious Will behind it.

Everything in creation is encoded with solutions to their problems. Just as plants attract moisture for its nourishment, I must be able to find solutions to my problems. I see that the universe is purposefully designed, yet the universe and its elements cannot satisfy me. **I am put in a meaningful situation by a Conscious Maker. I have to search for the solution!!!** **Instead of falling into despair, I should find the reality of life for me.**

I have the capacity to relate to the whole universe, i.e. the universe manifests itself in me. Simply put, I can comprehend the universe and I am the center of my universe. Example: in my interaction with the universe, I may perceive object A to be a significant element of my universe because the meaning I deduce from it is essential to my being. Similarly, object A may perceive me as a significant element of its universe. The choice is left to the object/individual.

Some scientists find the universe to be full of meaning and yet they see meaninglessness in its meaningful existence. The universe cannot be meaningful for nothing. My being disappointed at the meaninglessness of the meaningful existence of the universe lacks wisdom. **If I perceive the messages from the universe to be meaningful yet meaningless to what they point to, this perceived deduction goes against my nature. Perhaps seeing meaninglessness in a meaningful universe may be a call for me to deduce something from this feeling**:

1. I need to attribute my existence to the Source that gives existence.
2. This Source is introducing itself to me through my experiencing meaningfulness of the universe.
3. This Source is letting me know that the universe itself cannot help me

***What do I do now?***

* I should start paying attention to the message from the Messenger (verbal speech) as it is a call for me to look into the “meaning” of the existence of the universe (functional speech). Altogether it should help connect my existence, my expectations and my feelings to the Source of my being. This should constitute the “spirit” of my actions.

I may carry on a monotonous religious routine lacking spirit in it. If the spirit exists, then there must be a body to accompany it. Without spirit, the body means nothing. In a sense the spirit is immortal but body is mortal (it loses its life). If a meaningful sentence is heard, the sound waves disappear but the meaning remains with us. Without the sound waves we do not get the meaning. **In this universe, my spirit does not function without the body.** I need to use my body in order to nurture my spirit, and use my body according to the requirements of my spirit. Similarly, I need to keep the ritualistic prayers alive through my spirit.

***How can I make my own existence meaningful for myself?***

Every day, we are given the opportunity to experience nightfall, which reminds me the transience of this universe. It is a sign letting me know to find out the Source that I can relate my existence to. In order to feel secure in my existence, I need to associate my existence to a secure and permanent Source, which can only be found by the Owner of the universe. As a result of this security within myself, I can comfortably say that I belong to the Owner of the universe.

* ***Allahu Akbar*:** The Owner of the universe is the Greatest! I glorify It only, nothing else!
* ***Allahmdolillah*:** Everything worthy of praise is because of It.
* This awareness is the essence of any actions (including prayers!)

***Why does the author refer to this universe as a lowly world****?*

In and of itself, this world has no value. It becomes valuable if and only if I deduce meaning from it that points to its Source. Just as we eat food, which (in and of itself) does not have any value. Although, we want to preserve its taste, it goes away. Through its existence, we should be able to get the message that the pleasure we experience from the taste of the food is in fact pointing to the Source. Food says “I am not the one satisfying you”. Therefore, only by connecting the existence of the universe to its Source do we extract value from it. That is the spirit of any action: get the message and live with the message.

* Life of this world can only become valuable when I take heed to the messages it carries.

Analogy: Email has a message; you read it and delete the message. Be respectful to the email because it served you i.e. transferred message to you. Now you live with the “content of the message”.

* Similarly, the universe is a text that carries the message; we need to live with the content of this message. I need to respect the universe because it carries valuable meaning pertaining to my existence.

Only when I turn my “consciousness on” and start reflecting on the messages I receive from the universe do I start unfolding the secret in the existence of this universe. We are wrong to reason that reality lies within the Quran alone. In fact, if read under the light of the Quran, the reality lies with creation in the universe. The Speaker in the Quran says that I will guide you on how to use creation in the universe and get the message. There are only two options:

1. Treating the Quran as the Speech of the Creator of the universe guiding me on how to extract meaning from the act of creation (universe).
2. Reducing the universe and claiming the Quran to be the only source of truth, which in turn, lead me to imitating its guiding speech without ever experiencing it through the universe.

Option #1 seems to be always encouraging me to extract meaning from creation in the right way (how to use my human qualities to get meaning). As a result, **real truth manifests itself in “existence”.** **Existence is the way the Creator demonstrates its reality.** Some scholars claim that the universe consists of nothing but all the qualities of the Creator. These qualities are the beautiful names of God (referred to as *al asma al husna*). In reality, the universe contrives only of the qualities of its Creator being revealed to us in a physical world. The Word of God (Quran) comes in letting me know how to use my existence by relating it to the existence of the universe. Without reading the universe, no one can ever get satisfaction in his/her belief. Similarly, without reading the Quran, no one can come to a convinced conclusion about existence. We should notice that the spirit is created in this universe to live and operate in a body. We cannot get any meaning without an intermediary in this world. Likewise, we cannot receive the Speech of the Creator without the intermediary of a messenger who lives in a body.

* Only through my existence can I establish connection with the Creator of the universe.
* While interacting with the universe, I am only extracting the already existing meaning. i.e. we learn the beautiful names of God from experiencing the universe. Otherwise, learning the names of God from the Scripture will remain with us only in the form of “words” without any substantiated base for me to confirm their reality. (The universe includes human existence as well.) Confirmation of their reality is possible if human beings engage in a reciprocal interaction with the universe.
* That is how I define God, through the qualities I observe in the universe.

Within the universe I cannot find anything that would have a quality to create but every thing within it needs to be created. That is why I can only define God through negation:

1. **The universe is created; the Creator cannot be created.**
2. **The universe is subject to rule; the Creator cannot be subject to rule.**
3. **The universe is continuously made; the Creator cannot be made at all etc.**

My human qualities remind me that there must be a Cause behind the existence of this universe.

* *What is that Cause?*
* *Not of this universe.*
* **As a result, I conclude *lailaha***: the Merciful God cannot be of the nature of the universe.
* Anything within the universe must come to an end.
* **Allah=lailaha illahu=there is no Creator within this universe= the Creator is not of the nature of this universe.**
* Therefore, if I am looking for the Source of the existence of this transient universe. This Source must have an Essential existence. Every thing in the universe disappears from its existence the moment it appears in existence. That means the equation of its existence becomes equal to zero. ANY EQUATION THAT EQUALS TO ZERO IS A DEAD END!

The Creator is described through its qualities in the universe. No one can ever try to define the nature or the essence of the Creator. Only when I use the universe as a signboard in my reasoning do I find the Creator. Furthermore, I need to define myself through my human qualities (example: what is the Maker of my power of sight?) Even my existence right now is a sign of Its existence. My consciousness can grasp it. Therefore, I must work on my awareness (belief) that is the only way I will find satisfaction in my existence. My existence must be real for me.

* How do I explain my existence?
* Any religious activities (prayers) must be done with this awareness.
* That is the spirit of belief! Example: *Allahu Lailaha* *illah Hu* (I exist right now, this existence is the sign of the existence Giver, my Maker)

We cannot know the essence of the reality of anything but the existence of the reality can be known. The universe is transient and in its transience it enables me to communicate with the meaning transferred to me. In reality what makes me a human being is my spirit. My spirit experiences that the universe has a Creator and this Creator is not of the nature of this universe.

In summary:

* My duty is to be aware of my existence.
* The meaning of my existence is everything.
* My perception of the existence of the Creator is what matters, that is called “belief”.
* Make it real for yourself!

***How can I make religion into a living reality for me?***

We need to work on reflecting on our existence. The process must take place within myself. Reality is not knowledge; it is my own awareness of myself. Without personally experiencing reality, I cannot share it with others. If the message bearer (Prophet pbuh) did not convey exactly what he experienced, he would be a hypocrite. My own experience is what matters. Get the fruit and eat it (experience). Reward is within my life right now because I belong to the Eternal Source.