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| **Date** | Saturday, April 9 2016 |
| **Topic** | Prophet Job’s supplication |
| **Part** | 6 |

Pre-class discussion: Jamie persistently presents something she deems true to her loved ones. They keep rejecting what she has to offer. Jamie gets very disappointed. Since they are family members, she wants to help out. She keeps her quest going but gets more and more disappointed because sometimes they listen and most of the time they do not. Should Jamie quit on her family? Well, this is a tricky situation pertaining to Jamie and her given conditions only. In principle, Jamie should mind her own business. As long as people’s rejection does not make her disappointed, she is free to keep going. Why is Jamie getting disappointed? Because she cannot stand the fact that people are not listening to her. She thinks that if only people can listen to her, all will be set. In other words, she thinks she is the governor of the house. Furthermore, she thinks that when her family accepts what she is presenting, she will be at peace because they will be happy. It means she is giving power to external causes, i.e. peace comes when her family accepts what she offers to them. Her family’s happiness will not occur as a result of her efforts. In the case her family accepts what she offers, she needs to be aware that she is just acting on behalf of the Source. This awareness is extremely important otherwise she falls into error by attributing the power to convincing someone to herself or to external factors where she feels that she or the external factor is bringing a phenomenon (making someone happy) into existence.

* If a person gets disturbed by anything, then there is something wrong with that person’s perception of the event.
* What should Jamie do? She needs to educate herself on how to change her attitude i.e. not to get annoyed or disappointed by the events/objects.
* Remember that in life people will not always listen to you. How can Jamie get people to listen to her?

When presenting the message of God, the Prophet (pbuh) once thought how is God going to forgive these people who keep rejecting the truth? The following verse was revealed that goes along:



***“It is no concern at all of you…”* Al-I Imran (3): 128**

Lesson: I have nothing to say in God’s decision. I only have to take care of my responsibility to convey the Truth I know and leave the result to God to create.

*Tawheed* (Oneness) 🡪*tasleem* (submit)🡪*tawakul* (trust in God) = salvation

**THIRD POINT**

**As we have pointed out in one or two of the Words, whenever one thinks of his past life, he will say in his heart or with his tongue either “Ah!” or “Oh!” That is he will either experience regret, or say “Thanks and praise be to God!” Regret is inspired by the pains arising from the cessation of former pleasures and separation from them. For the cessation of pleasure is a pain in itself. Sometimes a momentary pleasure will cause everlasting pain. To think upon it will be like lancing a wound, causing regret to gush forth.
As for the lasting spiritual pleasure that comes from the cessation of momentary pains experienced in the past, it inspires man to exclaim, “Thanks and praise be to God!” In addition to this innate tendency of man, if he thinks of the reward that results from misfortune and the requital that awaits him in the hereafter, if he realizes that his brief life will count as a long life because of misfortune, then instead of being merely patient he should be thankful. He should say: “Praise be to God for every state other than unbelief and misguidance.”
It is commonly said that misfortune is long lasting. Indeed it is, but not because it is troublesome and distressing as people customarily imagine, but rather because it yields vital results just like a long life.**

* One should neither get overjoyed with satisfaction nor disappointed with hunger.

***How can the experiences of unhappiness bring reward of hereafter (Eternity)?***

If we did not have any notion of darkness, we would not appreciate light. If we did not experience unhappiness, we would not realize the existence of happiness. Only through the misfortunes do we understand our reality. My reality is to acknowledge the Source of my existence: I am needy and I am being sustained.

Don’t ever criticize the misfortune which is making you unhappy! Since I am made not to like the situation, I can ask the Order Giver to set things correct. It is my misunderstanding to label the existence of the situation as a misfortune. Through the existential view, in creation there is no misfortune (bad). The situation (event) is a means to communicate with my Owner. If this event does not take place, how would I know that I have an Owner that takes care of my needs?

* Don’t mix up the feeling of unhappiness with the nature of the thing which you consider to be bad.
* The experience of unhappiness brings the call for Eternity.

Eternal happiness is realizing that you have a need that is given to you and the Entity that has given it to you must be the Source of it. The Entity is the Source that has created the universe. It is the Absolute One, the Eternal One. **This Source is introducing Itself to me through making me needy: If I were never needy or if the universe was not transient, I would never realize that I am made needy.** **If I were not complaining about anything, I would not know that I am needy.** Hence I would take everything for granted without even realizing their value.

Materialists see the universe as existing by itself. The universe is not extinct, it needs to be given existence, and it needs to be given perfect order. Although the things change continuously, they do not happen by themselves but they are being taken care of. **Only through pain, neediness or a calamity (all disliked events) do we realize that we cannot sustain our life.** We are dependent beings. That is why if you feel unhappy with your conditions, **the only way to take care of your situation is to benefit from this given condition and the feelings you experience and be THANKFUL to its Provider because only through this pain, neediness or calamity, you are able to realize that they are given to you so that you will reach out to their Eternal Source.**

* If I am aware that I belong to an Eternal Being, then the awareness of an Eternal life becomes inevitable for me.

**We are given love of life:** If there was no death, I would never know love of life. We all run away from death. Through death, I realize that the Source who makes me love life, makes me runaway from death. I should never complain about my existence because **THANKS to this type of existence I realize that I am needy and the Source that created me with this need is introducing itself to me**: It is the life Provider; it is the Eternal Source, the Absolute Source, not part of this universe. It created this universe with this order to make me realize that It is the Source of life and the qualities that It manifests in this universe are Eternal (hereafter). **Now that I found the Source, I put my trust in It, which is the solution to all problems.**

Each moment, the renewal of creation is another call to become aware of my reality, there is no end to this process. **There is no moment that there is no invitation to reconnect to the Source. We are weak, fallible but the solution is to keep the quest of tying up our being, expectations, qualities to the Eternal Source.** We are learning, we make mistakes and we have to use our freewill not to make the mistakes. **I am given freewill to apply the solution.**

* The Author of this text is reminding us that when one benefits from the misfortunes, one gets Eternity. Through losing one jewel, I realize that I have endless treasures. Again, **never criticize misfortune!**

In and of itself, evil does not exist in creation. But it does not mean that there is no evil in my choice. Evil in my choice lies when I perceive something to be bad. I may choose to harm myself and not take notice of the message. I harm myself by disconnecting myself from the Creator, an evil act indeed (i.e. negligence or not denying the truth without confirming it). The order in creation is in such a way that essentially everything is good. What I perceive to be negative energy is a call to attach my being to its Source of existence: ***Who am I? Am I the needy one or am I taking care of my needs?***

At every moment, I am given different options. If I did not have the option to deny, I would not realize that I have the opportunity to confirm. **If there was no choice, there would be no consciousness/awareness of the existence of anything.** If we did not have choices, we would never be able to realize who our Lord is. I never want to lose my power of choice. **Only when I lose something, do I realize that it was given to me, i.e. a Source has given it to me. *Are the particles giving existence to what I lost?* They themselves are in need to be given existence. *How can they be the Creators?* This is the fundamental argument in the Quran, the application of which is neglected in the mainstream religious culture!!!** In most religions, belief perspective of religion has not been under discussion. That is why our problems are left unsolved since religion is external.

All secular psychological analysis is false, and thus evil. That is, they may temporarily alleviate problems, but without a permanent solution human beings can never get satisfied. Analogy: If you take a cough syrup for pneumonia, it stops cough temporarily but does not solve the problem from the root. Similarly, secular solutions for attaining happiness and solving problems do not help me or anyone establish a permanent solution. Everything disliked by human beings is the best side of creation. For example, when you achieve failure through societal pressures such as career advancement, marital status and financial security etc., you understand your reality and recognize your actual position as a created being: I am needy and I am in need to be given existence.

Again, only through our needs or pain or suffering do we realize that we cannot sustain our lives. We are needy!!! If I do not like something which happens to me, **I OUGHT TO be SUPER THANKFUL** about it because **only through it I get to the Eternal Source.**

HOW TO SOLVE PROBLEMS:

1. Question the problem.
2. Utilize freewill.
3. Connect your being to the Eternal Source.

Some problems may have to do with biological factors without interference of one’s freewill. Due to biological factors, if a person cannot reason properly, this person is not responsible for his freewill because his act is out of his free choice within his conditions. This situation eliminates freewill because one cannot make interpretation freely. Free interpretation can only be made by using freewill.

*Kufur* (denial of God), on the other hand is the result of one’s obstinacy, which is his choice, and one is responsible for this choice. In creation, there are no idols. Human beings turned things into idols as a result of their choice. Taking both non-existence and existence of God for granted is very dangerous. Human beings cannot become unbelievers innocently. **Because of our wrong attitude we are being misled. Belief requires a conscious process; whereas, denial requires a deliberate negligence or rejection.**

By not closing the door to the possibility that something is made, human beings understand that it is made. When we choose to close that possibility, whatever conclusions we come up with are irrelevant. Although we may be confident in our findings but the fact that we closed the door to investigation blocks us from getting to the reality.That is why scientists speak confidently because they first decided not to believe in God. Best approach to research: **Let me see if the object exists by itself or the qualities happened to be accidental. If it happened to be accidental, then I would not refer the qualities to anything. The research stops and I have no way to progress to confirm the reality.**

Analogy: In a society, a certain action was outlawed for the past few years. Starting this year, it is not outlawed. Can the judge penalize you this year for something you did last year? No. Similarly, in the Quran it says that: We are not going to punish the people for whom we have not sent a messenger. Therefore, never pass a judgment on anyone (**including yourself**) because we do not know whether the person in question has received the message of the messenger.

* I am as I am now. Now you are like this and God promises you that It will treat you at your best.
* My being also acknowledges that I should appreciate a person according to his best performance.

***What do we mean by practicing a religion?*** Being part of a community does not mean being part of a religion. I have to make a clear distinction. Religion belongs to God. A community has its own culture irrespective of God. I have to identify myself with the religion of God i.e. I am in connection with God; I do not have to identify myself with a certain community. Human beings tend to identify themselves with people with whom their ideas coincide. Therefore, treat every one according to his quality, not according to his affiliation with a certain group of people.

***What is religion?*** In the language of the Quran, the difference between religion and belief in God is not the same. Religion is practicing belief in my life which also extends into rituals. In other words, religion is putting belief in God into my practical life. Without this awareness of God in my practical life, sheer belief in God just makes me a deist.

Religion further extends to having the concept of prophetic message. The prophets represent the practice of religion: **Without Prophets there is no religion.**

* Belief + rituals (including Prophetic dimensions)🡪Religion

Belief in Prophets is different from being convinced that Muhammad as a person is one of the Prophets. Many people who lived in Mecca did not know who Muhammad was in terms of what he represented. Muhammad (pbuh) is a messenger. You have to see the message in this man. The existence of the concept of belief in the messengership is different from saying that Muhammad is a Prophet. In order to make sense of my existence, a*m I convinced that there must be messengers in human form?* *Do I feel the need of messengership in my life?* The One that creates me must provide me with an instructor in human form. With this intense need for guidance do I seek a messenger and thus see the qualities of messengership. With this understanding will I be able to interpret the narrations about what the prophet did and said. Whether I lived at the time of the Prophet or not is not the point but do I really seek guidance in human form?

Analogy: A person claiming to be an engineer gives me a prescription to fix my laptop. I apply the prescription, my laptop works and I conclude that the prescription comes from an engineer. That is the value of narration I derive which is based on applicability to my condition/situation now. When I hear a prophetic narration, I need to seek the belief element, one that connects me to my Creator that this instructor is conveying. That is how I confirm *Muhammadun Abduhu wa Rasuluhu* i.e. indeed, Muhammad (pbuh) is a worshiper and messenger of God.This is how I establish my religion. Without living with the Messenger, without having the concept of messengership, there is no religion. Religion is a never ending process.

Identifying myself with a community is irrelevant, identifying myself with a religion has to do with believing in messengership. When we share common values, we are in agreement, when we do not agree on something, we disassociate ourselves.

Establishing religion has many steps:

1. There must be instructors in this creation.
2. A narration comes to you which is the sign that this is an instructor whom I agree with and thus confirm.
3. Then, I identify myself with this instruction, absorb it and live by it.
4. If I am convinced and if someone wants, I can share the instruction with them.
5. I can be a part of a community only when I share the common thing in practical life at that moment.