Halaqa: Saturday, February 15, 2014

Topic: 17th Word, Pg 226

Differentiate between being a believer AND putting your belief into perspective all the time.

* We should strive to live in the world with the consciousness of belief in every action
* Belief is how you put your actions into practice and is not about an identity!

In the view of unbelief: **Thus, rather than receiving consolation and a feeling of familiarity, I felt only horror and fear at these six aspects (covered previously). And apart from the faculty of will I had nothing in my hand with which to withstand them and act in the face of them**

*Recap- The six aspects are:*

1. *Past (Years gone by)*

* *Without belief: The past appears as the huge tomb of all those who passed before me*
* *With belief: The past is a familiar and enlightened meeting*

1. *Future (Years to come)*

* *Without belief: The future appears to be the tomb of my own and of the forthcoming generations*
* *With belief: The grave is in fact a feast of the Most Merciful in delightful palaces of bliss*

1. *Top of the tree of life (End of life)*

* *Without belief: The single ‘fruit’ of my tree was my corpse, the result of an impending death*
* *With belief: While the fruit of my tree is death (for we will all eventually die), the fruit is just the home of my spirit that will manifest eternal life.*

1. *Dust of Creation (Beginning of life)*

* *Without belief: The ground that I am standing on is made of the same dust that I am. The interconnectedness of everything confuses me.*
* *With belief: The common denominator, dust, is in fact a door that connects me to the Eternally Merciful One who created everything.*

1. *Behind (Moments that I just left)*

* *Without belief: Each moment disappears into nothingness and ceases to exist from one moment to the next. There is nothing permanent in each moment.*
* *With belief: Each moment offers me a chance to connect with the Eternally Besought One. Upon completing its duty of offering me a chance to connect, it passes on.*

1. *Before (Moments that await)*

* *Without belief: Every moment that is to come will eventually lead me to my grave. Beyond the grave lies eternity.*
* *With belief: The grave is not the end all of my life but rather a door that opens to the world of light and the road to eternal happiness*

The nature of the power of choice:

* *Al-irada-al-juziya* : The particularity (*juziya)* of the faculty of will (*irada)*

What does means is that we should not be concerned with the quantity of that we have been given

* It does not matter whether we have wide field of influence with respect to our free will OR a narrow field of influence but rather how we use our faculty of will in each instance.

Analogy: It does not matter whether you are able to lift 500 pounds or 5 pounds.

* You are not able to create anything
* The nature of the object (and its weight) is created and the ability to lift something cannot sustain its own existence.
* If you have been given the ability to lift 5 pounds, your responsibility is having to return that ‘5 pound lifting ability’ to its creator. Similarly, if you have been given the ability to lift 500 pounds, your responsibility is having to return that ‘500 pound lifting ability’ to its creator.

Being limited means nothing; being created is all that matters.

* We should stop misleading ourselves by belittling that which we have and hence absolving our sense of responsibility.
* Whether you have a speck of knowledge or a whole ocean of knowledge, you will still be unable to CREATE anything

Hence we should always concentrate on the nature of things and the nature of the Creator

* The Creator gives existence to that which did not exist previously and is the only One who sustains everything
* I am completely dependent

In today’s reading we see how even the unbeliever realizes that he cannot save himself from falling into annihilation and has no control over anything. The only thing he has is his free will. But where the believer differs from the unbeliever is in his awareness of whom he relies on.

**\*Belief gives a document for relying on an infinite power in place of the power of choice, which is like the smallest indivisible particle; indeed, belief itself is a document.**

For an unbeliever (in the view of unbelief), there is nothing for his existence to hold on to.

* He may know that he cannot sustain his own existence for even a millisecond BUT he does not have a source that he can attribute his existence to. As a result he subjects himself to a state of horror and fear.

For the unbeliever, it is as though he is falling into a bottomless pit

* + While he has free will to chose, everything he chooses to grasp onto disappears because he has no ability to control anything in this temporal universe
  + He is subject to obey the order that this universe is but merely a passing delight.

For the believer on the other hand,

* Source of the universe is Absolute
* The Absolute One has control of all qualities and everything comes from Him
* This person uses his free will to attribute existence of everything to the Absolute One
* When he chooses, he recognizes that the objects being chosen all belong to the Creator and connects himself to the Creator.

Example: Scientists can study sequence changes in a gene only because the order allows for scientists to play with the genes.

* They are subject to the order of the Creation
* As believers, we have to be aware of this and subject ourselves to the Order

*How to establish belief?*

*Observe creation.*

*See the qualities in creation.*

*Recognize that the qualities point to the Creator.*

*The One who gives existence to creation must be Absolute.*

* *Everything in creation points to the fact that it has been brought into existence by the Creator because the object itself cannot possibly create or sustain itself.*

When you attribute qualities to the Absolute Creator (using your free will), you will detach yourself from creation and connect yourself to the Creator

* This is the only way you can connect yourself to the Creator
* You have to interact with Creation in order to be able to connect with the Creator
  + Imagining what the Creator is and tying to connect with him through imaginations cannot lead to convicted belief
  + It will only be imaginary

You are attached to the Creator through Creation – in the view of belief by using your free will – and are secure in your existence.

In contrast, the unbeliever is cutting of his relationship with the One who controls everything and hence leaves him with nothing.

Belief – connecting your free will to the Source (with awareness); completing the circle by returning your emotions and qualities in creation back to the Creator

Unbelief – free will that leads to NOTHING

Analogy:

* A room is lit
  + Belief: Using your free will, you choose to acknowledge that the Source of light is the Absolute Creator and return the ownership of light to Him.
  + Unbelief: Using your free will, you turn the switch off and cut yourself off from the Creator. You end up in a room filled darkness.
* In reality, the light can only come from the Absolute Creator because only He has the power to create.

We can either choose to confirm this with our free will OR choose a ‘cause’.

Completing the circle of belief: What is the Source of light?

Physical interaction

Light

You (free will)

**Believer**

Absolute Creator

Fossil fuels

The light bulb

The switch

The only Creator and the One who wills everything

No conscious will or power to create

No conscious will or power to create

No conscious will or power to create

If we attribute the source of light to anything apart from the Creator, we are setting ourselves up for darkness because nothing apart from the Absolute One can give existence to anything in this universe.

Unbelief only causes us harm. Nothing affects the Creator because regardless of what we choose, He still remains the Absolute Creator.

* It is up to us to gain the support of the Creator OR to deny ourselves a relationship with Him (and hence rendering us orphans with no REAL protector, guardian)

One of the ways unbelief is manifested in our day-to-day interactions;

* We say: We are under the command of merciless rules (natural laws)
  + This means that we are just waiting for execution and live in a state of anxiety for the end to arrive
* In the eye of the unbeliever, the whole universe is sentenced to death and we are all prisoners because there is no way to escape from it all
  + This is a result of attributing one’s existence as an accident

But if we live with belief, we interpret creation, our feelings and the whole order with respect to the Absolute Creator.

* We connect yourselves to Him
* He is the One who gives us the sense of desiring eternal happiness
  + Through that He is informing us that He is the only One capable of giving us eternal happiness

**Belief gives a document for relying on an infinite power in place of the power of choice**

* We use our power of choice to CHOOSE to rely on the owner

With belief we automatically become at peace. Belief results in instant gratification, not delayed gratification.

* If you believe, you will automatically have a comfortable life
* If the results are not automatic, your belief is just imitation because belief includes serenity within itself

Every moment becomes the sign of your Creator speaking to you. He reveals Himself to you and is speaking to you (your spirit)

* Belief connects you back to your origin.

*Ta’be:* Return what you misappropriated back to God

*Ra’ja*: Returning back to God

Clarifications?

Analogy: What you going to choose? A book, bag or pencil?

* Yes, you are using your free will to chose between the objects BUT the real purpose of our free will is to choose from amongst our attitudes with respect to the object
* The object itself has a temporary existence and concerning ourselves with it leads to nothing at the end.

The objects are not of our REAL concern.

* Whether I chose the book or the pencil does not matter
* I have to use my free will to connect the existence of the book AND the pencil to the Creator
* By engaging my free will and my human qualities, I enter the eternal realm; the realm which really matters because it is ETERNAL

Your free will is about how YOU, *the subject*, choose to understand the physical world. It is not about objects that you are choosing.

* I am given the free will to attribute the changing seasons to the Creator
* While I may dislike the winter season, in comparison to spring, I have no control in creating winter or spring.
* My feelings in response to creation, has been given to me so that I may communicate with the Creator
  + *Don’t get caught up in the creation itself. It is beyond your control. Use your time and effort purposefully.*

The objects in Creation do not affect you.

It is you who is your affecting the world (through your belief)

* “**When a believer dies, the heavens, angels and objects around you cry on their death (because the universe has lost a meaning-giver).”**
* **The objects have as much meaning in relation to the subject.**
* **It is not the world around us that give us meaning BUT us (the subjects) who give meaning to the world around us.**

I know where I came from and where I am headed:

* Everything is within His will and operates according to His action
* The universe is as He willed.

How can you explain your existence?

* I exist as I am now as the Creator willed me to be.

**Unbelief perspective: But the human weapon, called the faculty of will both lacks power and its range is short. And it is inaccurate. It cannot create, and apart from ‘acquiring’ can do nothing.**

**Inaccurate:** I have no power to look even a second ahead. We have no ability to make an accurate calculation.

* We can expect, guess and hope BUT we cannot guarantee
  + We cannot say with complete certainty that the sun will rise tomorrow
  + We can only expect that it will rise tomorrow at a specified time according to the law we observe
  + But the laws do not have an independent existence

\*His law

Have you attributed the knowledge you have learnt back to your Creator?

* Free will has been given to us so that we may return the objects we have been given to the Creator
* We don’t need to train ourselves to gain knowledge
  + We will seek it out. It is the way we have been created
  + But where we fail is to attribute that which we have to HIM.
    - Hence why the Quran reminds us to do that.

Am I returning the existence of my feeling and the object in creation to the Creator?

* The Creator of both events has created the world as it is so that I may experience who the Creator is
* We are being given the opportunity to experience the desire that will only be fulfilled by the Creator

Your Creator can give you everything that He is making you wish for.

* This world is just a training ground
* The purpose of my existence is to know the existence of my Creator

We forget that the Creator is Absolute

* My desires are Created by Him
* My spirit is only a prism in this world
  + If there is no eternal life, what is the point of this world?
    - It will be a torture for my spirit
  + But, when you realize that the Source is Absolute, you are at peace.

Example: You dislike child trafficking.

Your dislike for child trafficking is given to you by your Lord

* He is training you to be unsupportive of such action
* If you attribute your sense of dislike to your Lord, you will automatically say that it is your Lord who also dislikes the same
  + Our senses belong to Him

The source of misunderstanding comes from attributing our feelings to ourselves

* Don’t give an independent existence to your own feelings
* This is the pitfall we all succumb to
* Such thoughts will never produce any solution to human problems

Prince versus Disabled person versus trafficked child

* Are they all equal?
* In as much as their relationship with their Creator is concerned, yes!
  + But if they do not return their soul to the Creator, they will be in loss eternally
* The quantitative amount does not matter! Regardless of what we have, we have to attribute it to our Creator

If we dislike something, we have to attribute our ability to dislike to Him and act accordingly in His name.

If you don’t acknowledge your Creator, you cut off your relationship with the Creator and you are in darkness

* Unbelief is the Source of all unhappiness for human beings
* Unbelief is the worst disability which we CHOOSE for ourselves

We need to revisit our understanding of disability. What does disability really mean?

* We tend to be most concerned with physical disabilities
* But have we even considered what it means to be spiritual disabled?