Halaqa: Saturday, March 15 2014

Topic: 17th Word, Pg 226

**The arena of the faculty of will is brief present time and the passing present instant.**

The faculty of will cannot penetrate the past or the future

* If our free will cannot penetrate the past of the future, what is left is the VERY BRIEF and FLEETING present moment
* The present moment, as we experience, is unstable
* There is no constant moment in the present because everything is subject to change
  + This constantly changing reality is a huge mercy for us because it compels us to believe in a Creator
    - If each moment could last longer than a moment, it would be easy for us to fall into an understanding that says: The things are sustaining themselves within that moment
  + But in our reality we see that at every moment, there is change. This evidently points to a change maker, the Creator.

Our accustomed way of seeing the order (that everything is coming as a sequence; once after the other), we end up creating an illusion for ourselves.

* Analogy: To boil water, I have to place it on fire
  + I cannot attribute the existence of heat to the fire itself
  + Fire is subject to continuous change
  + As Allah says in the Quran: God’s act of creation is in every moment, yet another form.
    - *Kulla yawmin huwa fi shai (55:29)*
* http://allahsquran.com/read/images/chapters/55/55_29.gif
* http://allahsquran.com/read/images/spacer.gif

Human free will operates in

**Thus, despite all my needs and weakness, want and poverty and my wrecked state induced by the horrors and terrors arising from the six aspects** (past, future, right, left, front, back)

* We have no hope from our future, our past, from the right and the left
* Things cannot sustain themselves or give existence to themselves
* Everything needs to be given existence

He is only left with human free will BUT will is not enough to bring anything into existence

* I am totally dependent on my Creator
* I am only choosing from among the created things and obeying the order

I cannot bring anything into existence by *will-ing*

The order of the universe, I am given.

* We cannot claim control over any aspect of universe

Human beings can only receive

* They produce nothing but their own *hawa (*whims)
* Unreal expectations or thoughts/imaginations
  + I may say that the universe is square
  + It does mean that the universe is square
    - My claim is nothing but *hawa*

Human free will is the source of NOTHING.

Whatever is happening here **is clearly written on the page of my being by the pen of power and included on my nature were desires stretching to eternity and hopes spreading to eternity.**

When I read a book, I don’t see a conscious being writing and transferring ideas through the pen. All I can do, is to see the book

* I am communicating with the book’s author NOT the ink on the paper
* The ink carries the meaning that the Conscious Will is transferring to me
* All the meaning I read in this world, belongs to the author of the universe (*asma-ul-husna)*

The Creator of the Univesre is drawing us to His qualities through our observations of the universe.

* When you are reading a book, you are receiving a message from the author.
* Similarly, when we observe the universe, we are getting to know who the author of it all is (i.e. knowing who God is)

One cannot be weak in faith, if it is really faith AND not imagination

* Observe Creation and see the Creator
* Faith is easy but we have to first observe/read

I observe:

This is a trace of ink.

The ink must have come from a pen.

The author transferred ideas from the pen.

The pen, the book, the ink ALL belong to Him.

**… and included on my nature were desires stretching to eternity and hopes spreading to eternity.**

We have to become aware of who we really are

* Do our desires really stretch to eternity?
* From my observation, I realize that it is true
  + I do not just want a meal for today
  + I want to secure my existence and desires eternally.

Only then can we appreciate that this universe has an Absolute Source and accordingly direct our needs and desires to Him

* Only the One who is Eternal and Absolute can address my eternal needs

We have to be convinced that this universe (in its totality) cannot fulfill my desires.

Yes, you desire to have a house to live in BUT would you say that you have been created to build a home and then to die?

* Having a house is NOT your main purpose here on earth
  + You only want a house for a temporary purpose, till you die
  + Even if you are offered the whole universe, you will not be satisfied BECAUSE everything is transient
  + Nothing can guarantee you eternal security
* What you really desire is a home for ETERNITY
  + Who can fulfill your eternal needs?

If we concentrate on our reality, we will understand that our free will does not provide a comfortable refuge

* As such, I have to search for a Source that will fulfill my eternal desires.

**Indeed, whatever is there in the world, there are samples of it in my being. I am connected to everything. It is for them, that I am caused to work.**

**This sphere of needs stretches as far as the eye can see.**

Our expectations recognizes no end

* The more you see, the more you want to see

My human expectations are open to eternity

* I am supposed to see eternity through the Eternal Source, not through the universe.
* What we tend to do: Concentrate on our animalistic tendencies
  + We may have tons of hospitals to care for our physical beings BUT what about our human deficiencies?
  + That is what the messengers were sent down to remind us about
    - Take care of your physical side as long as it is needed to be satisfied
      * It only has a temporal existence so don’t focus all your effort on it
    - Take care of your human side as long as you need to satisfy it
      * Our humanity needs eternity

We have to re-orient our focus to our human needs that are in search of eternity

The Prophet M

*Sa’na:* Hardship

*Aam:* Success

All my effort in calling people to know who they really are as human beings, only resulted in a meager response.

* There is no point for us to debate about the Prophet’s age
* The numbers are meant to teach us how much he preached and how much was actually accepted.

Whoever heeds the prophetic message, saves his humanity

* If we wait to get the best opportunities in this world, appreciation from other people, we are only striving for this life, which is temporary and will eventually end
* We have to hear the Prophet’s reminders as guiding us back to our origin
  + *Ina lilahi wa ina ilayhi rajeoon*
  + I can return to the Creator by paying attention to the qualities of the Creator that is manifested here in this universe

The Word of God is manifested in the form of the Book

* We have to read the book (pen of power) alongside the created universe

**In fact, wherever the imagination goes, the sphere of need extends that far. There is need there too. Whatever man lacks, he is in need of.**

* Whatever we don’t have, we are in need of it.
* Example: I need paradise but I don’t deserve it
  + When we say ‘I don’t deserve it’, I am setting up myself as an independent entity who is striving independently
    - But knowing that nothing I do can guarantee paradise, I end up being in despair
  + The very fact that I have the need should guide me to acknowledging that I am needy
    - The fact that I am needy means that I am promised it

I cannot guarantee anything for myself!

* We have to stop saying ‘ deserving paradise’
* The fact that I have a desire for it, means that it is promised
  + All I have to do is to submit my free will to Him
  + It is NOT me who is going to gain it

Paradise = Eternal Happiness

* I cannot deserve eternal happiness
* I have to perform my duties (acknowledge that my Lord can give me paradise)
  + We have to be with our Lord
  + Do not put our false claim of power against His

While we are drinking tea, be aware that we are in need of His sustenance, bounty and grace

* I am just experiencing my need when I am drinking
* With such an awareness, you can experience a vivid appreciation of God
  + We are entirely in need of Him

Walk away from the arrogance that we have trapped ourselves in

* I don’t want to obey His will; I am going to do it
  + Whenever I ignore Him, I start putting my ‘false power’ before His will

We are told: By doing good actions, I am gaining paradise

All our actions are merely responses from us to the Creator

* Example: When someone offers you candy, you say thank you
  + By saying thank you, you don’t get anymore candy
  + You were already given the candy

Our desire for eternal happiness has been given to us

* The desire is given
  + I thank the Creator by making me realize my reality
* I am merely responding to what I have been GIVEN

Those people who expect to go to paradise, are living in a contradiction

* We have to be able to experience paradise right now by realizing that the Source is Absolute

When I die, whatever is left is no longer of my concern. That is my *qiyamah*

As sure as I am of my *qiyamah*, and the fact that everything has its appointed time, the universe, too, has its appointed time.

* Everything that is subject to change, will have an appointed time

The day we die, our spirit will be removed from the constraints of space and time

We cannot gain paradise BUT we should not contradict out reality

* If we are happy with something, we should respond to it
* When I contradict myself, I go against my own nature and am going against the will of the Creator who created me with this nature

Analogy: A fetus goes through various transformations under the control of the Creator

* It shows us that we have no control over anything in this world
* But my desire for eternity is with me
  + When I see that the desire remains with me, I return it to the Source because I realize that ONLY He can provide it
  + In doing that, I am experiencing paradise

My human realization with my Creator remains even after I am dead

* I don’t acknowledge with my bones or the cells of my brain
* I acknowledge with my soul
  + Gaining eternity lies in my conviction of the Eternal Creator

When I chose not to perform my prayers, I am turning back to the message-bearer

* He guided me to the best human actions in order to express my response to my Creator who has given me everything
  + When I turn to pray, I am just acknowledging who and what I am
    - I am not doing anything extra (to gain)

If someone treats you well and you feel obliged to say thank you, but refrain from doing so, you are going against yourself

* Denial of God is simply contradicting yourself
* As long as we don’t contradict ourselves, we will find that we are following our reality as we ought to

We lose our paradise by contradicting ourselves.

* If there is no Creator, all my desires make no sense. I am subject to the merciless laws of nature BECAUSE nature has no conscious choice
  + I am torturing myself
* When we stop worshipping God, we send God away from our reality
  + In doing that, I am left with a random world
  + It is terribly cruel on my soul to know that

The Prophets exemplifies how I should make use of my bodily (physical) life so that my human qualities are satisfied

* The 5 times prescribed prayers are so that we may be reminded to worship our Lord and acknowledge His presence
* If you can live your life without acknowledging His presence, go ahead.
  + But you will find yourself in a contradiction because you will desire eternity and not find it in anything in this world.

**The extent of his power only extends as far as his short arm reaches. That means, my want and my needs are as great as the world whereas my capital is as infinitesimal as an indivisible particle.**

As a result of our merciful Creator, we are put in a position where we cannot claim ANYTHING at all

* Our needs stretch to eternity BUT our abilities are almost zero
* We need to learn that I have no claim to absolutely anything in this world
* We are just connecting ourselves to our Lord

Analogy: To charge my computer, I connect it to the power source

* When I pray, I do nothing more than to connect myself to the power outlet (Source)
  + I need power and I acknowledge it
  + I have no right to claim any power
  + By praying, I am just acknowledging my status in this world
    - If you don’t acknowledge it, you will be out of power
    - Your humanity will not work
  + Belief = connection
  + When we pray, we are acknowledging that I am in need and I connect myself to the Source
  + Hence, prayer saves us from any kind of transgression if we correctly connect ourselves to the Source
    - If my prayer is bargaining, I’m not really connecting.
    - Prayer is acknowledging my need.

I need eternity. I cannot do anything to achieve it.

* I cannot trust anyone to sustain my life
* Allah says: This universe is my mercy BECAUSE it is through the universe that I can understand the truth
  + There is no room for confusion
  + Everything points to Him
    - When we submit to the Creator, it is beautiful
    - When we pray, we refresh our connection with the Creator.

**So, of what us is the faculty of will worth two pennies in relation to my needs, which encompass the world and can only be obtained for millions of dollars?**

* Practically, we cannot buy an object worth millions with the pennies we (assume) we posses
* We have to just admit our neediness and ask the Creator and Absolute one.

**They cannot be bought with it and they cannot be gained by it. In which case, one has to search from another solution.**

I have eternal expectations and needs but I cannot fulfill them within myself (*lailaha)*

* Both this world, and I, cannot create anything