Halaqa: Saturday, May 24, 2014

Topic: Cryings of the Heart

As humans, we dislike parting and yearn for security.

Instead of seeking a truly secure source, we rely on the physical chain of sustenance.

Example:

* A child is taken care of by his mother
* The mother is taken care of by her husband
* The husband is taken care of by his wealth
* His wealth is taken care of by his job
* His job is taken care of by his education
* His education is taken care of by his intellectual capacity
* His intellectual capacity is taken care of by his brain
* His brain is taken care of by cells
* His cells are taken care of by chemicals….
  + The deeper we investigate these ‘causal’ chains of security, we’ll realize that everything leads back to a bunch of unconscious cells
  + NOTHING sustains its own existence and can secure you
  + “I love not that which sets”

We should not look for our sustainer in this universe because EVERYTHING in this universe is ephemeral and transient

* Everything needs to be sustained by an Absolute Sustainer

I am aware that my body will eventually deteriorate

* I have to search for the sustainer of eternal needs

Commonly heard: Material possessions do not satisfy me 🡪 God satisfies me

* Be careful not to jump directly to the conclusion
* Rather, think: What are you really seeking?
  + Eternal satisfaction; never ending pleasure
  + The only One who can provide eternal satisfaction is the Eternal One
* Otherwise, we risk setting up an imaginary idea of God in our head.

We live in a society that trains us to satisfy our eternal needs on a temporary basis

* As a result we look ways to satisfy our needs constantly as a way to numb ourselves
* We keep running from one thing to the next
  + I want a job so that I will be able to enjoy what I desire for a prolonged period
  + Rather: Your desire for enjoyment is given by the Creator. Nothing in this world is able to satisfy you in and of itself except that the Creator satisfies you through it.

We need to train ourselves to connect ourselves to the Eternal One through the transient objects

* We should not be deceived by the society we live in which calls us to keep finding satisfaction in the transient

Analogy: I desire for a marriage that will last happily forever.

* It is a sign from my Creator that says: Only I can sustain the love between husband and wife
* Rather than depending on your spouse for the ‘happy marriage’ desired, this consciousness should lead you to depending on the Creator, the only One who sustains anything.

Everything in this world is a means of pleasure. It is not a goal in and of itself

* Ask: Who is the permanent source of this pleasure?
* Then, every pleasure experienced in this world is a window to eternal pleasure

Even if something turns our negatively, you do not get upset

* You are aware that everything is only a means to remind you of the Creator
* Everything transient is only a door to the Eternal
* It has no reality apart from that which is given by Creator of the objects itself

There is nothing in this world that does not set

* We need to stop cheating ourselves by seeking permanence in the transient
* Our desire for eternal happiness (within us) is a sign that reminds us about what we should be really seeking

**A desired one who is doomed to be lost on setting; such a one is not worthy of heart’s attachment, the mind’s preoccupation. It may not the object of desires. It is not worthy of being regretting with the sorrow of grief that follows. So why should the heart worship such a one and be bound to it?**

We are innately hardwired to seek the Creator and to trust Him

* I find myself in need of security
* But nothing in this world provides me with that security
* This world is only a sign of His Creatorship
  + My human mind demands that this world must have a Creator
  + So, I place my trust in the Creator NOT in this world itself.

**One sought that is lost in ephemerality; I do not want such a one. For I am ephemeral, I do not want one that is thus. What should I do with it?**

**A worshipped one that is buried in death; I shall not call upon it, I shall not seek refuge with it. For I myself an infinitely needy and impotent. One that is impotent can find no cure for my boundless ills. It can spread no salve on my eternal wounds. How can one that cannot save itself from death be an object of worship?**

What we tend to so: Worship that which provides me with satisfaction

* We should not materialize worship and restrict it to a place or an object
* Worship is a state of mind/consciousness
* Going to the mosque/church/synagogue must be the result of being in a state of consciousness

Only the eternal one can be worshipped, so what tends to happen is that people begin eternalizing transient people/objects

* By forgetting the real source of happiness, we turn to objects in this world that can satisfy my eternal need for satisfaction
* It may provide temporary gratification BUT if we think about it deeply, our nature cannot be fooled by the transience
* I have to teach myself the truth, that there is no satisfaction in this created world
  + We have to orientate ourselves to the cause of existence of everything because nothing apart from Him can satisfy us

Practically, if I do not think about the Creator and Sustainer of the food while I am eating, then in essence I am worshipping the food because I attribute satisfaction to it.

Everything in this world (created transience) is a means to an end (Eternal happiness)

* Depriving myself of the means is not the solution
* I have to seek the means because the means will lead me to the end

We have to turn our temporary pleasures into a means of realizing that they are only signs pointing to the Creator.

* If people choose to ignore it, then that is their choice
* We have to read the Quran as a solution and guide to our existential problems

My perception of the world depends on my perception of myself

* We have to first be aware of WHO AM I?
* Only then can my actions/perceptions have meaning
  + When I am aware that I am nothing but a created being, I will seek out my Creator’s guide to action for me and act in accordance (i.e worship Him by seeing His qualities in everything and proclaiming them)

The culture that we live in tells us: There is no eternal happiness so fill yourself with this world

* But all scriptures call people to seek for eternal happiness in the eternal life
* We have to look for the eternal life in this transient life because everything is an *ayah* (sign) that points to eternity
* Everything in this world is created to function as a means that guides towards it Eternal Source

My purpose: I am here to seek Eternal Happiness

* To reach this, we have to focus on who we really are and what we really desire
* I am here to submit to my cause of existence because nothing has an independent existence and nothing can rebel the Creator
* He is constantly speaking to me through letters of this universe
* Everything in this universe guides me to the reality of creation that nothing, except the Creator is eternal

When Abraham speaks in the Quran (*la uhhibul afaylin)*, is it a parallel of our human nature that is speaking

* We should approach the Quran with the perspective that everything *ayah* guides to your reality

Everything is a sign that tells us: I am taking care of you

* When you receive a phone call during sad times and it makes you feel better, that is a sign from the Creator
* When you receive a check in the mailbox, it a sign from your Creator