Halaqa: Wednesday, April 9, 2014

Topic: Longing for Paradise (Part 2)

Re-cap from last week

Reference in the Quran: The two seas (sweet and salty) NEVER meet

**055.019**

http://allahsquran.com/read/images/chapters/55/55_19.gif

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**Sahih International:**He released the two seas, meeting [side by side];

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**055.020**

http://allahsquran.com/read/images/chapters/55/55_20.gif

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**Sahih International:**Between them is a barrier [so] neither of them transgresses.

An extension of the fact that the two sides, while connected, never merge can be seen through the Quran’s discussion of the bridge (*Sirat)*;

* It is described as being fine and sharp, like a blade of a knife
* You cannot stand on it
* You either are on the right side or on the left
  + While there is contact, there is NO space to be in the middle
* The separation between the two sides are extremely, acutely and sharply distinct

In belief, there is no ‘in-between’

* A thing is either CREATED or CREATES ITSELF
* If we investigate creation, we realize that NOTHING can create ANYTHING, let alone itself.

**112.003**

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**Sahih International:**He neither begets nor is born,

The creator is always in contact with creation BUT there is no ‘cross’

* The Creator cannot be defined in terms of the created things
* If something is created, it cannot be the creator
* CREATOR = The One who brings into existence that which previously did not exist
  + Analogy: You cannot find the quality of infinite within the limitations of a number; It is contradictory!

The aim of the Quran is to teach us how to **discern (a’raf)** between the clearly distinct right and wrong

* The Quran is very consistent in explaining the concept of God
  + He is the ONLY Creator (*la ilaha illAllah)*
  + And in this created world, nothing can have the quality of a deity
    - Investigate and see for yourself, we are told.

The current worldview and scientific approach tells us : Do not bother about existence itself. (Then, having taken existence for granted) science proceeds to make the claim that existence is creating itself.

* But it is a FLAWED approach

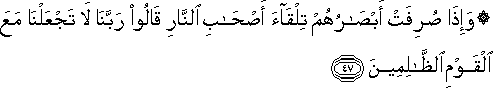
Analogy: The baby is growing

* Science proceeds to study how the bones, hair, fingers, head, etc are growing and concludes that all these elements is what makes the baby grow
  + BUT, the conclusions are entirely mistaken. The bones, hair, fingers, head etc. cannot grow by themselves; neither their constituent elements can be the source of growth because they have no qualities to be the causes of existence of anything, let alone being the cause of the perfectly functioning properties of all limbs and the harmony between them. Thus, the initial statement (baby is growing) IS wrong
    - We rationally conclude that the baby is MADE to grow

We are always in motion between TWO states

* We cannot be both right AND wrong at the same time
* In our practical lives, we are constantly in a state of tension/confusion between two options

**007.047**



**“And when their eyes are turned about towards the companions of the Fire, they will say, ‘Our Lord, do not make us among the wrongdoing people.”**

This verse is referring to our human reality

* Human reality is such that we are constantly encountering the two opposite ends of belief (complete submission VS persistent denial)
* We are being reminded that WE will encounter the option of unbelief (companions of the fire)BUT when we do, we should seek protection from our Creator not to choose that option.

Companions of the Fire = An idea or attitude which ascribes divine power to created beings by seeing them as an object of worship and possessing the quality of divinity.

Fire = We try and receive satisfaction from a created object but are unable to receive it because the object has no ability to create anything. We are engulfed in a burning desire (for eternal happiness, satisfaction, etc) BUT have no respite because the objects we turn to, have no power to fulfill us. The more we try and get respite from a created object, the more we realize that its existence is short-lived and the more we are in loss.

As humans, our main desire is to achieve eternal happiness.

* To satisfy our **physical** desires, we turn to an object that we are in need of (water/food/oxygen). But as soon as we consume it, it disappears. It cannot sustain its existence; it falls into nonexistence. It itself does not exist FOREVER and therefore, cannot fulfill our **human** desire for eternal satisfaction.
* The physical object cannot be the object of my worship because it does not give me eternal happiness

*An example of how we can put belief in practice:*

*The more we use our short-lived physical desires as directives towards fulfilling our infinite and eternal human desires, the more at peace we will be.*

*How?*

*I am hungry:*

* *I eat an apple.*
* *The apple has no consciousness and has no ability to know the functioning of my stomach.*
* *Similarly, my stomach is an unconscious organ.*
* *The fact that upon eating the apple I feel satiated only goes to show that the Creator of the apple and the Creator of my stomach are the same.*
  + *I conclude: I am being made to feel satiated by my Creator.*

*But what is the point of being satiated, when again in a few hours, I will experience the pangs of hunger?*

*Hungry 🡪 Eat 🡪 Satisfied 🡪 Hunger 🡪 Eat 🡪 Satisfied (repeat for X number of years)🡪 Death*

*If I act with awareness, every action becomes meaningful*

*I have been made to feel hungry by my Creator, my Owner.*

*I have been given provisions by my Creator, my Provider.*

*I have been made to feel satiated by my Creator, my Sustainer.*

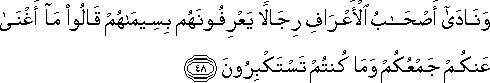
*I am being made to experience these various emotions and desire. I have no control over the existence of these desires.*

*If I only respond to these emotions and desires on a physical level, my existence is a joke. I am helpless (I cannot really control the existence of these emotions). I respond to them but the same emotion keeps returning after an interval period.*

*But if I respond to these emotions with the awareness that I have BEEN MADE to experience them, I consciously place myself in the realm of the Absolute Creator.*

* *When I am in His realm, I no longer feel helpless*
* *Rather, I feel empowered because my every action is returned to the Creator*
  + *I am no longer ‘independent’*
    - *My feelings/emotions/ experiences do not belong to me*
    - *I am not trapped in a world of my infinite but unsatisfied desires*
  + *I see my existence (and every action, from sleeping to eating) as part of the Eternal Owner’s creation* 
    - *When I take a sip of water, I am not SATISFYING MY THIRST. I realize that the Absolute Creator is making me experience satisfaction.*
    - *That moment (of me drinking water) will pass. But that moment is not lost in vain*
    - *I returned the moment to the Eternal Creator*
    - *Every proceeding moment of thirst is no longer just a moment that will soon pass*
      * *It is a connection to the Eternal*
  + *The more ‘eternal moments’ I have, the more eternally connected I am.*
  + *The more eternally connected I am, the more at peace I will be*
    - *Why?*
    - *Because, with every eternal connection, I am returning ownership of that experience/emotion/action and hence am no longer shackled by it.*

**007.048**



“**And they who have possessed this faculty of discernment will call out to those whom they recognize by their marks, saying: ‘what has your amassing availed you, and all the false pride, (cont’d)**

Why do we keep collecting money?

* To satisfy ourselves
  + But why do we need satisfaction?

The things we amass only satisfy our animalistic needs NOT our human needs

* All human beings want to get satisfaction for their human needs
* Human needs are looking for eternal satisfaction
  + We end up looking for ‘excuses’ (false gods) to satisfy ourselves
  + But if we investigate, NOTHING is eternal. Everything is subject to change.
* Anything that we search for as a substitute to the true Creator, is nothing but an empty amassment

What we (wrongly) do:

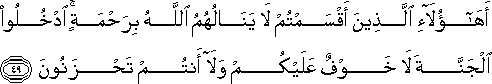
* Collect plenty of cash AND deceive ourselves into thinking that the cash will provide security
* Yes, cash buys food, cars, homes, etc BUT we will eventually die
  + No matter how much cash one has, it cannot secure an eternal life
  + We KNOW that we will eventually die
    - The human conscious is innately aware that at every moment, we are drawing nearer to the inevitable death

We think we have found something that will satisfy us in the physical world BUT what function does it have if it is going to disappear and we are going to die eventually?

* Nothing in this created world can satisfy our human needs EXCEPT the Absolute, Eternal Creator

**Recognize by their marks**: A conscious human being knows when a person is looking for excuses to not submit himself to the Creator

**007.049**



**“Are these they about whom you swore that God will not bestow mercy on them?’ [But unto them it has been said:] ‘Enter paradise. You shall have no fear, nor shall you grieve.”**

*Ghaib:* The origin of this universe, which cannot be described within the confines of this universe

When we say, ‘be realistic’ we are always referring to an action within this world

BUT the Quran says: Nothing in this world is real. As soon you gain something, you are in reality, losing it

* The people are who truly realistic are those who are aware of the Eternal Creator and who attach themselves to Him.

When we are hungry, we say: Be realistic, go and feed yourself with food

* But as you eat it, the food disappears
* My stomach may get filled but my humanity is still hungry
* Our humanity wants eternal happiness
  + Can the food be a source of satisfaction?
    - Only for my short-term existent stomach
    - It does not satisfy my eternal desires

We have to become aware of the nature of this universe

* In our understanding of existence, are we experiencing paradise?
  + That is what religion really is
* If we refer to paradise as something imaginary, that happens after our death, we are cheating ourselves

My faculty of discernment (consciousness) is constantly making me want to experience eternity HERE

* Don’t cheat yourself by postponing your experience of eternity to after you die
* After we die, there is no free will

I must be convinced, while I am alive, that I have NO FEAR and NO GRIEVE

* If we direct our attention to the physical objects itself, we will fear and grieve because our consciousness is aware that the food will end AND I will die, too
* But if we direct our attention to the Creator of the food, I will have no fear or grieve because I will be with my Creator, the One who is Absolute.

In this verse, the Quran is reminding us of our true nature.

* Yes, you will grieve and have fear
* But, if you are a believer (submit yourself to the Eternal Creator), you will no longer grieve or be in fear
  + Why?
  + Because, at every moment you consciously place yourself in the Eternal Realm

We only have peace in the acknowledgement that we are given existence as are our senses, by the One who is Absolute.

- Submit our existence to the Absolute Creator

Analogy: I am hungry. I eat a piece of cake

* I enjoy it, temporarily
* The enjoyment is only a SIGN that is telling me: Only the Creator of the food and the Creator of you, can satisfy you
  + All our worldly experiences are just a glimpses of His Eternal power over everything
  + We have to use them to connect ourselves to Him
  + ONLY when we truly connect AND submit, can we be at peace

When I acknowledge that I belong to the Eternal, I exist in a state of complete submission

* As soon as I attach myself to my Creator, all my desires are guaranteed
  + Some may say: But, what if He does not give me happiness? How can I be sure?
    - The happiness is NOT an ‘after effect’
    - The guarantee and satisfaction you experience is embedded within belief
      * As soon as you believe (i.e. submit) , you experience peace
    - I can only be at peace when I acknowledge my reality AND submit to the Creator
      * In my connection to the Absolute Source, I am with eternal, and am peace
      * Peace = Eternal Happiness

There is no other alternative that works in this universe

* Guarantee lies in our belief in God (*iman)*
* As soon as we are conscious and aware, we are guaranteed it
  + Belief is the source of happiness
  + As soon as I acknowledge my reality, eternity is guaranteed

We may have fears about losing our family and our jobs and our lives BUT in reality, at every moment we are losing our job and at every moment we are losing our life.

The Prophet experienced grief at the separation from his loved ones in this world BUT not grief at eternal separation BECAUSE he was aware of his eternal existence.

**The Quran is guiding US so that we may be reminded**

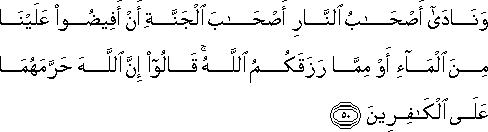
* **As humans, we will grieve BUT if we connect to the Creator, we will be free of grievance**

When we disconnect ourselves from the Source, and refer our origin to created things, I will grieve BECAUSE everything is in passing and is passing away from me.

Grief is given to me so that I may find a solution as to how not to be grieved.

- It is a mercy

**007.050**



**“And the companions of the fire will call out unto the companions of paradise: ‘Pour some water upon us, or some of the sustenance [of paradise] which God has provided for you!’ [ The companions of paradise] will reply: ‘Verily, God has denied both to those who have denied the truth;**

Unbeliever: Someone who denies the Creator.

- When they drink water, they refer the satisfaction they experience to the water itself NOT to the creator of water

When an unbeliever asks the believer: Give me water or something that God has provided you…

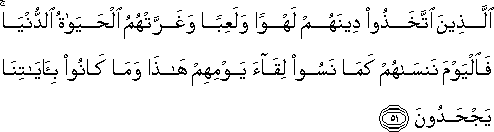
* Even if you give the whole ocean to them, the unbeliever cannot get satisfaction because the unbeliever is not attached to the source of the provision
* The believer is not being mean by not giving it to the unbeliever
  + The fight is going on within the unbeliever himself
  + If the unbeliever refuses to submit, there is no way he can get satisfaction, regardless of how much you give him

In denial of the Creator, there is ABSOLUTELY NO SATISFACTION

* The deniers distract themselves to run away from the dissatisfaction they experience

While I am living, I have to experience the truth in the Quranic verses. We have to confirm them here by being convinced.

**007.051**



**… who took amusement and play as their religion [their world-view] and whom the worldly life deluded.’ So today We will forget them just as they forgot the meeting of this day of theirs and for having rejected Our Signs.**

Religion: The way you describe your existence in every MOMENT (day)

* True religion = submitting yourself to your Creator (Islam)
* But everybody has their own view (their own religion)
* **109.006**
* http://allahsquran.com/read/images/chapters/109/109_6.gif

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* **Sahih International:**For you is your religion, and for me is my religion."

Worldview in essence means, how we treat and perceive ourselves in this world

* If we do not submit our existence to its Creator, we will be deluded by the worldly life
* We will end up keeping ourselves busy by trying to get satisfaction from this transient world
  + Don’t be lost in worldly actions. The acts will disappear
  + We have to see the Creator in each of them

As per our worldview, we will be treated.

We tend to distance ourselves from religion and only utilize it for rituals

* That is not religion
* It is only information

**‘We will forget them as they forgot’**

Silly understanding: God forgets me because I forgot Him

What it really means: He is teaching me that when I forget Him, He will be disconnected from me (because I chose to be disconnected from Him)

* As a result, as far as I am concerned, my existence has nothing to do with Him.
* Why?
  + In my understanding, I don’t see the Creator. I perceive myself as having an independent existence
  + I deprived myself of being connected to the Creator of my existence
    - As far as I am concerned (in my unbelief understanding), there is NO creator
    - I don’t see myself as being related to the Creator

The Quran is a reminder for me about my own reality.