Halaqa: Saturday, June 28 2014

**Divest yourself of bad morals, the basis of worship of this world.**

Worship of this world:

Bad morals: It is not about the specific acts.

* Rather, as long as I use my human qualities for a purpose apart from that which they were created for, I am corrupting them
* It is important that we first define what is the purpose of my existence in this world; why have all my human qualities been given to me?
  + I should be concerned with finding out how I should use the qualities I have
  + Otherwise, how can I know whether I am using them appropriately?

Only after defining the purpose of my life (i.e. to know my Eternal Creator), can I be sure that I am using my human qualities correctly.

Example: Worrying about the future

* Am I using the sense towards being worried about my future in THIS WORLD
  + If so, I am corrupting my sense of worry (that was given to me) because I believe that something in this world will be able to satisfy me and ward off the anxiety.
* Rather, I should use the sense of worry to know the giver of the sense
  + While operating in this world, I should be aware that this world is only a training ground
  + All the emotions I experience ought to connect me to my Creator, the Source of existence of my emotions.

When I am hungry, I am inclined to eat

* But, while I eat I should contemplate:
  + Who is creating these feelings of hunger and satiation?
  + What is the purpose of these feelings?
    - To eat and enjoy (repeat): It would be futile to repeatedly experience these feelings only to eventually find myself dead one day
    - To know my Creator: By using these feelings to connect with the Source of creation, I am returning the feeling that has been given to me, back to its Creator. In doing so, each moment becomes meaningful because it draws me nearer to an end that I am consciously working towards.

Trials and tribulations of this world should not be thought of as a ‘struggle’

* Rather, they are means to know one’s Lord
* Hunger and the desire to satisfy one’s hunger have been given so that we may know and experience the giver of the sense of hunger AND the one who satisfies the hunger.

We have to consciously reject the false idea that food satisfies us

* Food, an unconscious entity CANNOT satisfy
* Think and ponder about the true satisfier

If I have never experienced the qualities of the Creator in my day-to-day experience, how can I truly know Him?

* It takes effort and time to be able to see the Creator in every emotion and interaction BUT that is what we need to train ourselves in

False logic: If there was no food, I would not be alive. Therefore food is satisfying me

* Overly simplistic
* Childish claims: ‘If you think God is satisfying you, then don’t eat. Let God satisfy you’

Correct methodology: Begin with positive questions

* Can the food have a sense of consciousness to know my specific bodily needs?
* Rather, through giving me food and the desire to eat food, my Creator is teaching me who He is
* We have to question the apparent ‘causes’ and seek to understand its own existence

The reason we fail to adopt this questioning methodology is due to the fact that we have taken religion for granted

* A taken-for-granted status is the cause of all diseases
* Why?
  + We will interact with the world under the pretext of a “believer”
  + BUT instead of worshipping the Creator, we may worship the world because we might have never connected the ‘world’ to its ‘creator’

Religiosity is NOT merely about praying, rituals, charity, etc

* **Religion is our constant state of presence**

Ramadan: A month of reflecting on the Quran so that we may be able to apply its methodology (to not worship the world) in our daily lives

A litmus test on belief: The level of sincerity in our belief is directly related to how much we are able to worship the ONLY true Creator.

**Divest yourself of bad morals, the basis of worship of this world. Be transitory! Sacrifice your goods and property in the way of the True Beloved. See the ends of beings, which point to non-existence, for the way leading to permanence in this world starts from transitoriness.**

What is the level of consciousness in each of my ‘mundane’ actions?

* Example: Washing dishes, cleaning, doing laundry are ALL a means of training
* The pleasure of cleanliness and tidiness has been given to me so that I may know the Creator of these values
* With this consciousness, I perform actions in His name (*bismillah)*
* Do not just utter *bismillah* (in the Name of God), rather it should remind you of being aware that the action you are performing is manifestation of His qualities

Do not make clean dishes the object of worship

* Rather, my desire for cleanliness is a sign from the Creator that He is the Absolutely Clean One
* While cleaning, I am performing an action that is a means of remembering my Creator

However, if we perform an action without connecting to the Creator BUT realize at a later time, we can recover these ‘lost moments’ by simply asking for forgiveness!

* O Lord, I seek your forgiveness from not remembering you in the actions I performed.
* At the point of *istighfar* (repentance,) we are with the Creator
* We have to acknowledge our negligence and shortcomings

Our Creator has given us a huge responsibility and He knows that we will not be able to carry it out

* All that we have to do is to ask for forgiveness

One of Shaytan’s ways:

* Keeps us away from focusing on our belief foundations
* That way, we can be distracted towards that which has no foundation

Realize that we are transitory beings who are here in this world for training

* It is within my capacity to know who my Lord is
* I have to practice it within my own life
  + I am constantly being given the opportunity within this training field to know who my Lord is
  + Unfortunately, we have failed to educate and train ourselves to know our Lord
  + We have to use our abilities as much as we can to know our Lord; that is what we are being trained for

**Sacrifice your goods and property in the way of the True Beloved.**

**Sacrifice:** Giving away a right that you have, in the way of the True Beloved

* While we are ‘giving/using’ things in this practical world, we have to realize who the true owner of these ‘things’ are
* I have to renounce my ‘false’ ownership of the object and acknowledge the true owner; the Creator of the Universe
* I have to sacrifice my apparent ownership

Example: I love my car

* I love my dad who gave me the car
* But we have to look beyond
* My dad gave me the car because of the feelings of compassion and love within Him
* These feelings of love and compassion belong to the True Beloved.

Example: I love helping others and being kind

* These values are GIVEN to you
* We have to renounce a false claim of ownership over them
* Sacrifice them by realizing who the True Owner of these qualities are
* My acknowledging the real owner is the sacrifice that we need to engage ourselves in

*There is no other option apart from living a life of sacrifice for otherwise we will be transgressing the rights that we have been given by claiming an ownership that has no reality.*

I will be using the qualities/objects that have been given to me regardless of whether I acknowledge the true Creator or not

* If I fail to acknowledge the Creator, I have not ‘gained’ any advancement in my training that I am here for

The action itself is important BUT if we fail to acknowledge the fact that the action is a ‘sacrifice’, I will act for myself (an ego booster)

* Trick of *shaytan*: Obsess over the actions without paying attention to the reason(awareness of the meanings that these actions represent) behind the action

Kindness is innate – It has been given to us by the Creator

* Instead of using it in the name of the true Owner, *shaytan* says: Use it so that you may claim that you are a good person
* But performing kind actions is not for the action itself
* Rather, we have to use the sense of kindness to know who the real owner it. Then, when we perform an action, we do it with the awareness that the quality of kindness belongs to Him and we will sacrifice the act in the name of the True Owner.

Only through doing good deeds can we train ourselves BUT the priority/foundation is belief

* Without belief, the actions are meaningless
* Every moment in this existence is an opportunity for training (to be connected to our Lord)

I am happy with my life MEANS I am happy with the One who give me life

* We have to look for the REAL owner of this world

I am happy with my mother, my caretaker. She is my beloved.

* But, we have to ask: Who is the True beloved One?
* The One who created my mother
* We have to sacrifice our actions for the True Beloved.

**See the ends of beings, which point to non-existence, for the way leading to permanence in this world starts from transitoriness.**

The moment that we realize that everything is transient, only then can we understand that nothing belongs to us (since we have no control over them)

* If nothing belongs to us, then to Whom does everything belong to?
* Realization of the transience opens us the door to the permanent Creator

Only by being aware that nothing in this world has the power to Create (to give existence to anything else) – *la ilaha –* can I come to the conclusion that there is an Absolute Creator – *illAllah*

We have to train ourselves to realize *la ilaha* because everything here is transient. Only then can I open up to the permanent One, the true Beloved One.

* In doing so, can I be protected from worshipping this world (bad morals)