Halaqa: Saturday, April 19, 2014

Topic: The Words, Pg 227

*Naseeha* needs to be given in the right place

* We need to stop adopting an imposing attitude
* We have to establish the basis and foundation of belief first and let people make their own decisions
* When people seek out advice, then give it
  + Don’t impose it

The implication of *sharia* is failing now, not because people do not know BUT because do not have the foundations of belief.

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What is the difference between choosing and creating?

The fixed universe is subject to continuous change

* When I decide to choose something, I do not create it
* I am only choosing between things that are created by the Absolute Creator
  + My choice gets CREATED by the Creator

Everything is created by the Absolute Creator

* Death and life
* ‘Good’ and ‘bad’
* The Absolute Source of Existence controls and creates everything at the same time

When we say that bad things are from *satan,* we are actually mistakenly assigning the authority to create to *satan*

* Can there be two creators?
* Everything, even the ‘bad’ is being created by the same, Absolute Creator

Fire is NOT bad

My choosing to put my hand in fire is a bad choice

* If there was no alternative, nothing to choose between, there is no point in having a power of choice. If we did not have any opportunity to exercise our power of choice there will be no point in living as a human being because there will be no learning

If there were no shade or darkness, I would never realize the existence of light.

To learn, I have to choose

* If I don’t have choices, my ability to choose will be in vain
* The creation of *satan* is good BUT to follow *satan* is bad for me (in terms of the purpose of my eternal existence)

Satan’s whispering’s have no reality

* Example: Just like how the equation 2+2 = 5 has no reality, except that it is a figment of my imagination, Satan’s whisperings do not have an external existence UNLESS I falsely confirm that it exists.
* There can be an infinite number of wrong 2+2 equations but the point is not about eradicating these infinite possibilities
  + Rather, my responsibility is to confirm that which is true
  + With each possibility that I am presented (2+2= 1, 2+2=3, 2+2=9…) I have to use my given faculty of intellect to decide which is true
  + If I choose to accept that 2+2 =1, that is when I have made a mistake.
  + The existence of the infinite (false) possibilities in and of themselves are not bad
    - In fact, they are good because they make evident to me that which is right.
    - Only by this possibility of a wrong conclusion can we confirm the right conclusion and be aware of it as the right answer.
* The creation of anything is not bad; to interpret its existence as bad is bad.
  + E.g. the creation of death is not bad, but to interpret it as bad is bad.
* We have been given the feeling that dislikes death.
* This feeling is a guide for us so that we may avoid death and avoid killing.
* But when the Creator of death deals it to humans, we are not ‘angry’ because we are aware of His state as our Owner.

Analogy: Cells reproduce themselves VS cells are being created

I have to choose between these two statements.

Cells reproduce themselves: *satanic* whispering

* The statement is illogical because nothing can give existence to itself
* If I defiantly choose to accept this statement, I am confusing my own understanding of existence because I would be contradicting myself
* How?
  + Because if the cells are reproducing themselves, it would mean that each cell is a conscious entity that has control over itself, the rest of cells in the human body and with the rest of universe.
  + A simple microscopic observation reveals that cells have no conscious will. They work according to a subjected order.

When I choose to attribute an independent existence to creation WITHOUT recognizing its Conscious Creator, I am inadvertently placing myself in a whirlpool of contradictions and confusion.

Science tells us the following:

Cell🡪 creates itself 🡪 sustains its own existence 🡪 controls human bodily functions

But if I study the process in reverse order:

Human bodily functions are controlled and regulated by cells.

This would necessitate the cells ‘know’ my body and be conscious entities.

Cells are alive.

[THERE IS A FUNDAMENTAL GAP]

But how did cells come to be? Who gave existence to the cell? The qualities in each and every cell are so unique, yet they are all so similar. How did the cells choose such a way?

I have to investigate the ‘whispering’

* If the investigation contradicts my own rationality, I reject it
  + That is the first step in my declaration (*la ilaha)*

Only after rejecting it, can I confirm that the only Creator is the Creator of the universe, God (*illAllah)*

The choices we make should be based on whether they are in harmony with my nature

* When we seek refuge from *satan*, we are asking our Creator to save us from listening to the whisperings
* In doing so, we are returning the property of the Creator back to the Creator
  + Everything is created by the Creator of the universe
  + I should not ascribe it to anything else
    - My abilities are created by the Creator NOT by myself

Is status/wealth really important for your ETERNAL existence OR is it more important to worship the Creator?

* We have to question the basis of our choices
* Don’t put one’s own artificial/made-up realities in front of the true reality (everything belongs to the Creator)

Example: Making *wu’dhu*

* Without “cleaning” oneself, we cannot establish a communication with the Speech of God. We cannot receive the message of the Eternal Knowledge if we have boundaries set up by our own prejudices obtained from the worldly concerns.
  + When we make *wu’dhu* it should mean that we are cleaning ourselves from any prejudice and bias that we hold
  + Only with that ‘cleanliness’ can we communicate with the Quran
  + If we do not rid ourselves of expectations imposed on us by society, we will be unable to understand the Quran because the Quran speaks to our **true** human nature

Why are we human beings? To accomplish our mission in this world so that we may know our Lord.

- Therefore, I should try to choose with respect to where I am headed

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**Arrogant man, who relies on himself and supposes he will live for ever, is doomed to die. He passes swiftly. The world, too, man’s house, tumbles into the darkness of non-existence. Hopes do not last, while pains endure in the spirit.**

**Since the reality is this, come, my wretched soul, which yearns for life, is enamored of the world and afflicted with endless hopes and pains! Awake and come to your senses! As the fire-fly relies on its own miniscule light and remains in the boundless darkness of the night, and since it does not rely on itself, the honey-bee finds the sun of daytime, and gazes on its friends, the flowers, gilded with the sunlight; if you rely on yourself and your being and your ego, you will resemble the fire-fly. Whereas if you sacrifice your transient being in the way of the Creator Who gave it to you, you will find an unending light of existence. So sacrifice it! For your being is a trust given to you for safekeeping.  
  
Moreover, it is His property, and it is He Who bestowed it. So do not scorn it, sacrifice it unhesitatingly. Sacrifice it so that it will be made permanent. For negation of a negation is an affirmation. That is, if non-being is not, there is being. If non-being is negated, existence comes into being.**

**The All-Generous Creator buys His own property from you, and gives you the high price of Paradise in return. Also, He looks after that property well for you, and increases its value. And He will return it to you in both enduring and perfect form. O my soul! Do not delay! Do this trade, which is profitable in five respects, and be saved from five losses; make a fivefold profit all at once!**

**Arrogant man**: The side of the human being that does not want to submit and chooses to only listen to his temporal whims and fancies.

**Relies on himself:** In doing so, I forget my creator, and attribute the existence of my being to myself

**Doomed to die:** As soon as I take an arrogant attitude to my being, my being leaves me.

* In everything, if we attribute it an independent existence, at the very next moment, the object (my life, events, etc) are leaving me, we cannot sustain our existence

We cannot keep the existence of MYSELF and of EVERYTHING within my control.

Do not limit our understanding of death to something that will happen at the end of one’s life. We cannot experience that moment UNTIL it happens.

* Such an understanding of death cannot really help me because it distances me away from my reality and the perceived separation will still make me amass objects while I am living
* The reality of the matter is that I cannot hold anything at all
  + Everything is transient and is passing from me

Death: The departure of every moment of existence

* Quran says: Every being will taste death

“I’m going to die, eventually, so let me enjoy now”

* Why is such a way of thinking flawed?
  + You cannot really enjoy BECAUSE everything is passing so you are not truly possessing anything
  + At every moment, the objects and existence are being given to me
  + Every breath that I have is given.
  + I am dependent
* You can deceive yourself into believing it BUT the truth of the matter will prevail soon enough

At every moment, whatever you have (breath, people, experiences) is being given

* With this awareness, we will always have God-consciousness, consciousness of the Real Giver.
* At every moment, we are experiencing our ‘last breath’
  + If we are aware of this, the final death is not scary
* When we see a man dead, we are aware that it was never him who was moving himself anyway.
* He was made to move when he was ‘alive’ AND now the same Creator is making his body exist in a ‘dead’ form.

**Unending light of existence:** A single moment of existence is sufficient to realize that the moment is given by the Absolute Creator

* Are we using every moment to connect ourselves to the Eternal Creator?
  + That is the best (eternal) use of each moment
  + When we attribute our existence to the Eternal Creator, we will no longer ‘own’ anything and have no pride or arrogance

We have to constantly challenge ourselves to ask:

* Who is giving existence to everything at any single moment?
* If we can connect ourselves to the Creator, then that moment (be it one of pain or pleasure) is no longer important in and of itself

We have been given a dislike for pain and for loss

* The sense is given to us and we have to act in accordance with the reality and make choices that we know will keep us away from it
* But when pain or loss happens, we are not attached to the ‘object’ itself BECAUSE we are aware that it belongs to the Creator

*Khalifa*: Acting in the name of the Creator

* I have no independent authority in any of my actions
* I am an *abd* as everyone else is
* Don’t own anything because nothing belongs to us, anyway.

**Sacrifice*:*** Whatever you have is being GIVEN to you and is a trust so we have to use it in the name of its Giver, Who is the real owner.