Halaqa: Saturday, September 20, 2014

Topic: Cryings of the Heart

**Reality of the world of the people of guidance, those with easy hearts = “*Illallah*”**

* A continuation from the study of those who are heedless

*“****La ilaha****”:* A rejection of anything that contradicts my human expectations

When you find the truth, your heart will be at peace

* However, if there is an incompatibility between your understanding of existence and the external reality, your heart will be in constant anxiety

**Then the heedlessness passed,-- And I saw the light of truth clearly.**

Core of heedlessness: Not accepting that we are created by a Conscious Will (i.e. rejecting my reality)

When heedlessness is removed, the light of truth ought to become clear.

People of guidance (*ahlul-hidayah)*: Those people who have an understanding of existence (a worldview) that is compatible with their own human expectation (not human whims and caprices)

* There should not be a contradiction between my human qualities and the world around me.
* I am guided when I make a connection between myself and the created world in a way that satisfies my human expectations.

If religion is supposed to be ‘guidance from my Creator’ it should not contradict the way I have been created.

Question : How can I be sure that my disappointment has to do with human expectations vs. my human whims

* You cannot be certain about the nature of your disappointment immediately**. It requires an introspection of how the disappointment measures up with the purpose of my existence (i.e. the way I perceive my existence).**
* My existence must be compatible with the rest of the universe; that’s the only way I will find peace.

Am I using my human capacities with their balanced approach or am I distorting it?

* + Our purpose is to clarify and distill which of our emotions are the result of true human expectations or whims
    - I can do so by introspecting with respect to the purpose of my existence
  + When you have reached the conclusions of belief with a sense of conviction, can you use the guidance provided from the Creator as a yardstick of measurement
    - But the first step requires that we analyze our own individual expectation.

**Existence became the proof of God; -- See, life is the mirror of God**

* If we want to become a people of guidance, existence SHOULD become a proof of God
* We should use existence as evidence that directs us to the Creator

What is the purpose of this universe?

* A training ground to get to know the Creator

The world seems disappointing; whenever you want something, you never really achieve what you want

* If it is disappointing, and the disappointment contradicts your human expectations to be happy, then it is because you are treading on a path of the heedless
* Everything in this universe is deliberately and consciously made
  + This deliberately made world is disappointing me and contradicting my nature; how odd!
  + The author proposes: See the world as a signboard, directing you to the Creator
  + With this revised way of approaching the universe, see if it still disappoints?

Do we see that this universe is BEING MADE?

* Everything is being made from a previous instance of ‘non-existence’
* The way it is being made ought to demonstrate the qualities of the maker

Example: The maker of the banana creates the fruit perfectly

* Its taste, smell, shape, color matches with my expectations
* There are signs in the banana’s existence that demonstrate qualities of the Creator.
* Perfection: Lack of any mistake in its design AND in the way the Creator creates.

I may want the banana to never decay BUT even in the process of decay (of the banana), there is perfection.

* The very process of decay is what allows it to ripen
* Decay is needed so that the peel can be used as a fertilizer

I may want the banana to have more potassium BUT I should ask, what for?

* We may want more potassium because we want to live healthier and longer
* BUT, what is the purpose of living healthier and longer?
  + We have to always remember the reason of our existence
  + I exist for a purpose; to know my reality and my creator.

1. Me; Source of my existence
2. Existence around me

* Connect #1 and #2
* Do not repeat terms you’ve read in religious scriptures
  + For example: The Creator is omnipotent
* Rather, investigate and confirm if the quality of omnipotence exists, based on your interactions with this universe
  + Otherwise, I cannot attribute the existence of this universe to the Omnipotent One.

This creation is based on truth.

* Reality is within this existence, itself.
* We have to train ourselves to discover the truth.
* By using our human qualities, we will be able to extract the truth.
* Don’t externalize the source.

If the universe is disappointing, that means it is contradicting my expectations.

* I have to reassess the way I perceive the universe

If we do not submit our existence to the Creator of the universe, we will never be able to attain peace.

* I belong to the Creator (who is called God)
  + That is the only way for me to be at peace
  + However, I can choose to remain in a state of constant anxiety, torment and fear.

**Existence became the proof of God; -- See, life is the mirror of God**

God: The Creator of EVERYTHING

* All the qualities we see in the creation, point to the qualities of the Creator
* I see a glimpse of mercy in the bounties I experience, and they must point to its Creator
  + The Creator is the Source of all mercy

I must be aware of the manifested qualities of the Creator in my being when I use my qualities

* My life is a mirror
  + I cannot be a living being if there was no universe to be living in
  + Therefore, my life consists of both #1 (my life) and #2 (the universe around me)
  + Our human qualities only function within the universe; we cannot isolate ourselves from the universe and expect to be in touch with the Creator
* Everything points to the Absolute qualities of the Creator
* We can only see the Creator, in the mirror of our existence.

Do I see my life as a platform upon which God manifests His qualities?

* As the Prophet SAW said: Whoever knows himself, knows the Creator.
* If you know yourself, only then will you be able to communicate with the Creator by using your human qualities. When you receive the guidance from His scriptures, you will be able to confirm them through your experience of your personal communication with the Creator.
  + Otherwise, the scriptures will just be imitated without being able to receive any benefit from it.

Everything has some level of sacredness in it, but when we use the word sacred, we tend to end up distancing ourselves from the ‘sacred object’ by establishing a form of religiosity towards it that is baseless.

Practical steps to know your reality: Use every quality within you as a sign to get to know your Creator

* Think about the One who is making you at this very moment
* My nature is one of createdness
  + Connect this created reality to the Creator
* Find the Creator in my own createdness (He is not alien)
  + There is no distance between you and your Creator.
* God is nearer to you than your jugular vein.

Hadith #1: There is no need to shout screams of *Allahu Akbar.* The One whom you are speaking to is not deaf.

* Lesson: Do not distance yourself from God

Hadith #2: I could not fit in anywhere, except in the heart of the believer

* Life is the mirror of God
* Example: How do I know that God is wise?
  + I can perceive wisdom within myself
  + This wisdom is a sign that points towards God.

Any action that we perform is a manifestation of the qualities of the Creator

* However, most of the time, we are not aware that our abilities are given to us by the Creator
* If we are aware, then we are exercising our free will in His Name
  + The action itself is not important
  + What matters is the awareness that our abilities do not belong to us
    - Rather, they are manifestation of the Creator’s qualities
* When I make a mistake in representing the qualities of the Creator, I repent
  + When I make a mistake, I have distorted the qualities of the Creator manifested within me
  + In doing so, I have acted in a way that was disloyal to myself and so when I ask for forgiveness, I am saying, to the One who created me: **I was disloyal to your trust within me.**
* Prayer: To respond back to the observed manifestations of the Creator
* I have to use the qualities within me in His name

When you are arrogant: You are misusing the trust that the Creator has instilled within you to be generous and have appropriated the bounties bestowed upon you, to yourself, without acknowledgement of the Creator.

* Being an *abd* means acknowledging the truth (i.e. that I am created)

What am I being ‘unappreciative’, ‘unkind’, ‘ungenerous’ for?

* Some may say: It is so that I can become more successful in this universe
* However, we have to be aware of our reality whenever we act
  + We are always using our free will in a way to achieve a certain goal
    - We have to be aware of our reality, and our subsequent goal in relation to that reality
  + Without having a true sense of your reality, your choices will be based on the perceived goal you are working towards.
  + Be aware of the ‘imagined reality’ that society has set up for us.

Truth exists. False does not have an external reality.

* False is an imagination.

Evil does not exist in human beings. Definitions of evil upon human beings are terms defined/conditioned by society.

* There is no real existence of evil