Halaqa: Saturday, September 13, 2014

Topic: Cryings of the heart

**Union became parting itself; -- I saw the cure to be the ill**

An existential analysis on how we should understand the world

* Heedlessness(i.e. not paying attention to the aspect of this world that points to the Creator) results in feelings of suffering

Union – A connection (*wuslah)*

* When you get united with your expectations, a connection is established
* However, if a person is heedless, the union is in fact a parting
  + As soon as a heedless person ‘obtains’ what is being sought, a separation is experienced
  + Our human qualities are seeking eternity in each moment/event BUT each moment is transient
  + To obtain eternity, we have to find the Eternal Source in each moment

Analogy: Obtaining a job

* Two contradictory natures are coming together
  + As human beings, we desire eternity, security and permanence in our affairs
    - We are not satisfied with transience. Our consciousness envelopes a desire for eternity!
  + The job itself is temporary. It is subject to change and time and it is bound to disappear
    - Even if you may have the job for a prolonged period, it will still eventually pass away.

I want to obtain an object permanently but I know that it will not remain with me forever; a contradiction

* This contradiction is a call within us so that we may look for eternity
* Eternity is not a distant goal. It is within every object and moment BUT we have to be mindful conscious.
* Our Creator is constantly calling us to Him through the cues we experience in our own reality
  + Every object is a means to know the Creator, the only One who is Eternal
  + If you acknowledge the eternity of the object by acknowledging the Owner, you attach yourself to the Creator AND not to the transient object.

When we eventually leave this world, our spirit is free from the physicality of this world

* The better we train our spirit to acknowledge our Lord in this world, the closer we will be to our Lord (eternity) when we are no longer in this world.
* That is Jannah (paradise).

I belong to the Absolute One; we need to train our consciousness to be aware of this reality

* The Absolute One is eternal and I belong to the Eternal One
* My existence is as He wills
  + I am an eternal being – A false claim
    - We cannot make claims about a reality that can only be determined by the Creator. The essence of any object belongs solely to the Eternal and Absolute One.
    - We have to return the matter to the Creator
    - The Creator is Eternal and I belong to Him; That is sufficient!
    - My reality is not something that I can comprehend apart from the fact that I am created by the Eternal One.

We may say: Water is composed of atoms and molecules.

* While we may make claims, we will never really comprehend the ESSENCE of water
* What we can be sure of is that the objects have qualities which have been GIVEN and been created by a Creator.
  + We can dissect the component parts of matter BUT we cannot know the essence of the object and its reality APART from the fact that it is being given existence by the Absolute One

In union, there is parting.

* As humans, we are aware of this
* To overcome the pains of parting, we have to stay away from being heedless in our affairs.

**I saw the cure to be the ill**

Example: You want a job and you get it.

* But the moment you get it (the cure you were seeking), it causes you pain (the cure is contradictorily causing an illness because of heedlessness)

The human reality is aware that the job (or whatever you are seeking) is transient.

Being detached does not mean that we should not pursue objects or seek to fulfill that which we desire.

* Rather, we can strive (because the desire has been given)
* But we have to be aware of the reality that the object is transient and is not a source of ANYTHING
* The object ought to be used as a means of knowing the Source
  + Do not expect anything from the object (idolatry)
  + Expect only from the Creator

In Quranic teachings, detachment is not the goal.

* My reality is such that I desire attachment and security
* I have been created as such
  + But if I seek attachment in this world, I will realize that my needs are not satisfied
  + Do not lose yourself in creation. Use every object, moment and emotion as a *ayah* (sign) to be attached to the Creator
  + I have to be attached to that which is REAL (i.e. the Creator)

Ignoring our reality (for attachment) is NOT a cure

* That would be heedlessness
* Everything has been created so that we may be loyal to our nature

The **cure becomes the ill** because of our human nature and its desire for attachment

* Desiring attachment is not WRONG
* Being attached to this world is the problem.

We need to focus on ourselves and the way we perceive everything around us

* Do not look for change in the society
* The solution does not lie in the externalities
  + The permanent solution lies in changing your own world view
  + If you are with your Creator, the Absolute One, it does not matter where you are or what you do.

The companions of the Prophet, as we read, were resilient and persevered in the most challenging of times.

* It had nothing to do with the society
* Rather, they were able to withstand the conditions because of their own individual attitudes and world view (i.e. in constant connection to the Creator)

**These lights became darkness; -- I saw these friends to be orphans**

* You may think that you have obtained the ‘light’
* But because of your awareness that the light will eventually disappear, the light becomes dark.

**Orphans:** Not belonging to anyone nor having security

* Nothing has security in this world nor can it protect itself from anything
  + Security lies only with the Creator

We cannot stop time or control any single moment

* If we are heedless, our life is nothing but heading towards annihilation
* To prevent ourselves from being orphans, we need to make ourselves aware of the REAL PROTECTOR

**These voices became announcements of death; -- I saw the living to be dead.**

Analogy: A growing shoot or a growing baby

* From one aspect, it is promising because the shoot/baby is GROWING
* But on the other hand, we are aware that the shoot/baby is growing towards an inevitable DEATH

Everything and every moment is an announcement of death.

* To avoid this reality, we busy ourselves with repeated moments of temporary happiness
* The beauty in temporality is that it points us to our Absolute Creator
  + If this universe was not transient, we would not seek the Eternal.

However, if you are aware of the reality in creation, each moment is used as a means of connection and the loss is not felt.

Ali ibn Abu Talib: Live in this world as if you are going to live forever and work for your akhirah as if you are going to die tomorrow.

* We have to understand a person’s words based on his worldview
* Turn this world (in your perception) as a means of eternity
  + When I eat, be conscious that I am tasting the grace of my Eternal Creator
* When you obtain eternity, attach yourself to the Creator
  + At every moment, we are dying. Turn each moment of your life into a permanent one by being aware of the fact that every moment is passing with no return in this type of creation.

**Knowledge was transformed into fancy;-- I saw in science a thousand ailments**

In the eyes of the heedless, all the knowledge is nothing but an illusion

* So what if you have known the names of all the elements in this world?
* The elements will pass by as will you

Real knowledge is that which connects you to the Creator

* We ought to use the materials in this existence to know the Creator because He is the Only Constant.

If we are heedless, we add nothing to our humanity

* Even if we may add gems and advancements to society, our heedlessness has not benefit for us
* Only by acknowledging the Absolute and Eternal Creator can I benefit

Example: A cow produces milk

* Even if the cow produces lots of milk, it does not benefit the cow itself
* The milk benefits the people BUT the cow is only serving people
* It is not benefitting itself.
* **We make progress only by introducing the attributes of our Creator to our senses.**

To avoid living like an animal, we have to connect ourselves to the Creator in every action so that we may benefit ourselves!

* Turn every moment into a means of obtaining Eternity!

Think about: What are we obtaining from our actions in this world?

* We have to introduce our souls to our Lord in every moment so that each moment is meaningful
* Only by getting to know the Creator can we find eternity and satisfaction in each moment.
* We have to know the Creator through this created world; don’t run away from the world.

**I saw in science a thousand ailments**

**Science (***hikmah):* The more wisdom you seek to uncover in this universe, the more it bewilders you because of all the amazement we’ve come to see. But, in the eye of the heedless , despite gathering wisdom, it causes more pain.

**Pleasure became pure pain; -- I saw existence to be compounded non-existence**

* Everything that exists in reality disappears immediately, for the heedless it has no permanent existence but I still seek it, so it causes pain as it flees away from me.

**If you say the beloved, I found him; -- Alas! On separation I suffered grievous pain.**

* We think that we may have found that which we love (the beloved) BUT as soon as we get it, it separates because it’s reality is transient
* In its separation, it inevitably causes pain.
* For the heedless, there is no way to really enjoy this life.