**What is Worship?**

**Part 2**

**5/28/14**

* What is worship? Who do we worship? What is the essence of worship?
* 1st we emphasize HOW the notion of worship develops.
  + If we start by saying, “We worship God” – it is imaginary, not realistic as far as your conditions are concerned.
  + What do you mean by WORSHIP?
  + What do you really mean, God? It is a Proper name that does NOT introduce any of His qualities to me.
  + She is Aisha. He is Ahmed. It means NOTHING! If I say, “My father, teacher, protector was Ahmed.” Now Ahmed, starts gaining qualities, starts making sense to you because you CAN CONNECT to him.
  + We have to have more substantial qualities to REFER our beings to “God.”
  + Old Testament: Every other page, “Your Lord is God” *Rubbukum Allah.* In ancient prophetic traditions like Old Testament, why is it that Lord comes before God?
    - It is like saying, My Father, Ahmed.

*LAST WEEK REVIEW:*

* 1:2: Praise be to God, SUSTAINER OF THE UNIVERSE.
* 1:5: You alone we worship… Who? I am worshipping/acknowledging the Sustainer of my life, who is called, GOD.
  + This process is essential.
* 2:21: O human beings! **Worship** your Lord, who has **created you** and those before you, so that you might remain conscious of Him”
  + experience the createdness within your OWN being.
  + Worship is 1st established from questioning your OWN EXISTENCE. Where did I get it?
  + Reach a conclusion that this universe BELONGS to Someone.
* “We Muslims, worship One God” – it is baseless.
  + Throwing myself into usage of unknown realm, – sounds mystical– relieves us from concentrating on OUR very own existence.
  + Rather, use your PRACTICAL life, and start from your own createdness to arrive at your Creator, and conclude that ONLY this one can be The Creator of the Whole Universe.
* Rather, “I see myself as a created being, so I worship My Creator, who is Creator of the Universe, and that is God.”
  + My heart will be confident, sure.
  + Giving existence to my mind, my hand, my emotions, giving existence to everything that I am attached to and related to.
  + When I drink water, it is created by the Creator who created me. Same when I breathe in, when my lungs are working, are all created by My Creator who is creating me.
* In the Old Testament, the word father, is in reality My Lord. Never meant it to be “father” as in father/son or adopted son relationship. Father figure is a RABB figure.
* Conclusion: Associate God with something YOU can feel/experience/assure with your own mind and heart. Only then can you establish sense of appreciation, gratitude, acknowledgment 🡪 WORSHIP.
  + Express gratitude with your being – that is worship, experiential
* Q&A: How do we bring this into our practical work/spouse life, or mundane everyday things like walking/waking up, to maintain this awareness of God?
  + Question the existence of EACH event that you are experiencing in your practical life, such as work for example. If you are not seeing Sustainership/Lordship in THIS action, there is division between “Work life” and “religious life”. Existence cannot be divided into “sacred” and “mundane”. There is nothing mundane in reality. Quran calls “mundane” - anything worshipped besides God.
  + Question the existence of the things when you eat, for example. The perfection of front teeth versus back teeth to allow you to bite food are perfectly engineered! And the fruit, the design, the taste, consciously and perfectly engineered!
* **Alaq (96):1** “Read in **the name** of **your** **Sustainer**, who has created.”
  + Agreed amongst majority of scholars that this is the 1st verse revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS/PBUH).
  + Was in a cave, retreating asking serious human, existential questions, “why am I here? “Whoever made me, must tell me.”
  + When you ask the question, the answer HAS TO COME; it must be provided. (reference to verse: *id3oony, estejeeb lekkum,* ASK me and I will definitely respond)
  + We emphasize that he did not know how to read. Let’s assume he knew how to read. The answer said, READ. What shall I read? There is no document to read.
    - Meccan culture was not a reading/writing culture, but an oral culture. Everyone was narrating, or putting in a poem to make it easier to memorize.
    - Nowadays we use iphone to make a note, or take a picture instead of memorizing. We are not using our human qualities.
  + Read in the name of your Sustainer. – answers my question
  + Who sustains you? The one who created– further answers my question. You can get answers to your questions by reading the creation. You do not have to learn the alphabet how to read the creation
  + You were a piece of meat created.
  + Observe your heart/emotions/mind. Can you imagine that a piece of meat was the source of existence of all of your human qualities?
  + You can tell that Muhammad was deliberating existence.
  + From the answer, we understand what Muhammad was really questioning.

The disease of today’s age is straight away denying religion, or straight away claiming/accepting to be religious. Both are baseless.

* 1st: we have to **question the existence.**
* 2nd: the verse doesn’t put you directly to SUSTAINER. Puts you to the **NAME** first!
* 3rd: Verse continues “in the name of your Sustainer, who has Created”; Sustainer/Creator. It means think about the creation, your needs, to arrive at The Creator, Sustainer of your existence who is hosting you here.
  + The existence (*wujood)*, is described in Quran as *khalq (noun*; created thing*)* or *khalaqa* (verb, created), must be experience as “CREATED”
    - Example: these glasses are created. Someone may say, what do you mean? It is made in China. Qur’an brings our attention to all things, including these glasses, as being GIVEN EXISTENCE over NON-existence.
    - **Creation means a Conscious, Deliberate Will preferring and choosing something to exist, over its non-existence. It is a Conscious Act that requires an Agent.** 
      * **If it is preferred, must be a Conscious Agent.**
  + Qur’an is saturated with this word, *khalaqa*. We have to question, and keep questioning, “How does this exist? Can they come into existence by themselves?” This is the 1st question human minds ask.
  + Common problem is: We do not question, and we think we can be religious. If I don’t emphasize on the act of creation that is taking place right now, I CANNOT RELATE to God. I will take myself as if I am in a vacuum.
  + Practical ex/ As I walked out today, it was cold. It was no longer warm. Cold is a new moment that was given existence, different then yesterday. Pressure, humidity, clouds, all given existence.
* You are in a cradle. [verse: *Elem nej3l el arda mehada 🡪 (mehd*-cradle, furnished and prepared everything for you]*.* Quran describes the world as a cradle. It means we are entertained and hosted by The Creator, not our parents.
* “Look at the existence” vs Look at the creation.
  + Creation already neglects existence. Qur’an cues us to see EXISTENCE as CREATED.
  + I have to READ existence! (IQRA, from previous verse)
* Question: Quran never uses the word “existence”
  + 1st essential attribute of God: Wujood!
  + My humanity starts from existence. Qur’an then guides as the answer to say, to respond, “creation”
* **1st: GIVEN EXISTENCE** is the key realization. There must be Something behind this existence!
* 2nd: **ISM**, NAME.
* Leave previous knowledge at the door, take it off with your shoes and put it on the shoe rack. People feel the need to wear their “religiosity” like armor.
* **2:31 “And He taught Adam all the names, then showed them to the angels, saying: Inform me of the names of these, if you are truthful.”** 
  + I am Adam.
  + Who is my teacher? (3allama: taught) 🡪 Someone taught me.
  + What did someone teach me? All the names.
    - Quran is teaching me, I taught you all the names. What does it mean?
  + My Creator tells me, I TAUGHT YOU ALL THE NAMES. For example, I know this is a ceiling, this is a rug. I know the qualities, if this is round, if this is flat.
  + **It means…In my creation, the potentiality within my HUMANITY is that I know and can point OUT (this is \_\_\_, this is that, etc), the REALITY of all the objects that you are interacting with.**
    - The angels do not have this quality.
    - In other narrations as well, we are told that your potentiality is even greater than the angels, who are always interacting with The Creator.
  + **Ism:** from this quality, human beings will rise up. Humans are endowed with endless qualities.
* **Alaq (96):1** “Read in **the name** of **your** **Sustainer**, who has created.”
  + I was taught all the names, meaning that I am aware of the qualities of existing things, and whom these qualities belong TO.
  + Ism Rabbik: These qualities belong to Your Sustainer who sustains the whole universe.
  + *Alladhee –* refers to A Conscious Agent🡪 Who has Consciously Chosen their existence.
* If you want to be superior to angels, you must be aware of your human qualities.