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| **Date** | Saturday, March 19, 2016 |
| **Topic** | Prophet Job’s supplication |
| **Part** | 3 |

*Recap:* When I start realizing my reality, my worldview changes. That is, my perception about events starts changing. My feelings are now pointed towards a certain direction. Overall, there is a revolution that takes place within me. Until then, I was neglectful i.e. I did not realize an affliction penetrating to my heart and therefore, similar to Prophet Job, I should come to my sense of realization and find relief from the affliction.

* **It means that I am usually not aware of my reality or that I have not realized my reality yet.**

Only when I realize that I am afflicted with pain and understand that the One that gives the pain will cure it, will I use patience in the right way. The point of practicing patience is to keep my connection with my Creator alive. In happiness and sadness, I have to stay persistent in my relationship with my Lord.

* **Patience is needed to be persistent with one’s relationship with the Creator.**

We are not created to accept any painful event given to us. Yes, I have to be patient with whatever I am subject to but at the same time I need to perform my duty. **My duty is to look for solutions.** Through the pain, we are forced to look for the solution. While we are looking for the solution, we realize the purpose of our existence. When we realize the purpose of our existence, then we start feeling secure in our existence:

* **“I am the one who is needy and ill and He is my Provider and fulfills my need”.**

That is why we are given all the senses in order to fulfill the purpose of our existence. Just because there is some pain I am suffering from, I turn away from the Creator. **In reality, everything (events/feelings/senses) serves us to fulfill the purpose of our existence.** Sometimes we may perceive to lose the path of pleasure in fulfilling this purpose not realizing the true pleasure in it, which is how the order is established by the Source that establishes the order. That is how I get to know who I am and who my Owner is which is how I am created.

**“When affliction affected his heart and tongue…”** The author alludes to the fact that when illness started affecting Job’s belief (his understanding of God as his Creator) i.e. he viewed God as making him suffer, his connection with his Creator started to loosen up and his heart started turning away from his Creator.

* In other words, when my relationship with my Source of existence is affected, this starts affecting my belief.

**Essentially, I am needy**. **My Creator is the One that fulfills my needs.**  **Realizing that is the cure to my affliction.** Then Job understood that he has to turn to its Creator as being his Lord: “You gave me senses which require me to wanting to be healthy not ill and you also created some means of cure in creation. I have to obey your rule. While I am obeying your rule, I will no longer suffer from pain and complain since I realize that I belong to You.” With this realization, the pain starts functioning as a call for human being to look for the cure and at the same time connect himself/herself with the Creator of this cure.

While trying to solve the problem, be conscious that that is the order of the Creator that I am following. I should not be disappointed with the Creator of the order. **Through pain, we are forced to look for a solution. While looking for the solution, we realize the purpose of our existence which is to acknowledge that I am created and needy while I have a Creator who provides the cure for me.** I am subject to this rule/way of creation and I have to acknowledge that. I am the one that is needy and my Creator is the one who fulfills the needs. This is a beautiful relationship. That is why we are given senses to be patient in **keeping my connection with the Creator persistent** INSTEAD of disconnecting, turning myself against the Creator due to some pain/suffering.

* Everything is consciously organized in order for me to get to know who I am and who my Creator is,.

Forgetting that my Creator is Omnipresent is my affliction/pain. If I cannot stand a small prick of thorn, how can I claim that I exist by myself? Turning a small affliction into a realization of my reality is the sign of being forgiven for the sin of neglectfulness. It is a perfect refreshment or purification of one’s realization about the reality because we keep forgetting.

* **Human being *(insaan)* is driven from the word forgetfulness *(nasiya)*.**

What we see in civilization is that people have forgotten their reality so much that they claim to be Lord of their own existence. This attitude is hiding itself behind economic, industrial and technological power that gives us the ability to do almost anything. In previous eras, we are told that people thought that they were controlling the existence of something which they referred to as magic. Now, that magic exists in the form of using technology. We are under the delusion that we are the Creators of any phenomenon. Even the ability to do scientific “magic” needs to be given existence as whatever science discovers is existent in the order. Not questioning the ability to utilize what is already created in the universe is the main problem. If we do not think on how any phenomenon takes place, we can never think of our own existence.

If you do not think about how you are given existence, then you think that you are creating everything. We are forgetful of our own reality: We are given existence and all our human qualities are given existence by a Source, I can never claim that anything in the universe can be the Source of existence of my ability to think/analyze, my ability to speak/see/hear, my ability to love/to be scared, my ability to hope. ***Nothing in the universe can be the Source of existence of our human qualities (lailaha)***. Sometimes the forgetfulness takes place deliberately, very small number of people know that they have no answer and they omit existence deliberately. They may acknowledge the universe as being created, look at the physical aspect of the matter and ignore the non-physical aspect. We need to engage these people and to freely think by questioning our so –called ‘beliefs’.

**THE SECOND FLASH (continuation): “Sin, penetrating to the heart, will blacken and darken it until it extinguishes the light of belief. Within each sin is a path leading to unbelief. Unless that sin is swiftly obliterated by seeking God’s pardon, it will grow from a worm into a snake that gnaws on the heart.**

Sinning needs to be understood in a special context to help us follow the story of Prophet Job and relate it to our lives right now.

***I- Why sinning is a path leading to unbelief?***

* Belief requires a conscious, positive action that will result in a firm conclusion.
* Unbelief does not require a conscious action. It is the result of negligence, denial or omitting our reality.

 **By not thinking, one cannot become a believer. By not thinking one can live as an unbeliever.** How much aware are we about our reality depends on our level of consciousness?

* Sin means being neglectful of my reality.

Pharaoh and Nimrod are two symbolic representations of people referred to in the Quran who consciously denied the truth. They represent a side of me when I am in denial. Most of humanity are not deliberate deniers, but rather comprise of individuals who are not engaged in ‘active’ belief and realization (or neglectful ones not denying the truth).

* It is almost impossible to be an enemy of God and to deny His existence, if one really thinks about existence. Atheists are merely individuals who are not satisfied with the way religion has been presented to them. They have a valid point as religion is mostly misrepresented.

Everything is self-evidently given existence. Is matter a self-existent being or a contingent being? Question what you mean by any word you use. As per the Quran, everything in the universe is a sign to question your belief.

**Belief requires evidence whereas disbelief requires no evidence.**

Conscious denial (***Enemy of God***) 🡨 GREY AREA (**Idolaters who attribute creation to false elements such as nature + Neglectful ones not denying the truth**)🡪 Conscious Confirmation (***Believer***)

* WATCH OUT! Do not Fall into the grey area.
* Train yourself to become conscious of your reality.

***II- Am I a believer with a certain confidence in my existence i.e. Am I conscious of my reality?***As stated above, since enemies of God are very few, I may find myself in the following two categories:

1. Neglectful one not denying the truth= ***unbelief*** (*mushrikoons* were not enemies of God. Rather, they were not submitting to the truth or engaging in “active belief” and realization.
2. Conscious one confirming the truth= ***belief*** (*imaan* is conscious confirmation of the truth)

***What does submitting yourself to belief entail?***

* Being conscious of your connection to God by attributing everything you experience to the Creator is what constitutes ***belief***.
* *I need to make belief in God a certainty for me.* I am aware that hunger is given to me, disliking of pain is given to me. **These emotions and experiences are all precious presents from It that are given to me so that I may confirm my connection with It RIGHT NOW at every moment.**

Belief has not truly entered our hearts if we segment our ‘religious’ actions and our ‘non-religious’ actions.

* **Each moment needs to be a point of connection to our Creator otherwise we have lost that moment to negligence and are falling into the path of sinning.**
	+ **We may not be ‘denying’ the Creator in these moments of negligence BUT if we are not drawing closer to the Creator, we are most certainly drawing further away from It.**

We are learning through the story of Prophet Job, that he found himself sinning when he was disconnected from a sense of conscious belief. **Again, whatever God creates is alright for the purpose of my existence.** We do not like pain BUT we find ourselves experiencing pain.

* We should ask:
	+ *Why am I made with this sense of disliking pain?*
	+ The One who made me with this sense of dislike is trying to tell me that I have to use this sense to know who my Creator is, the One that I can rely on.
* I have to obey the order of the Creator. He is instructing me to dislike the pain and seek means to get rid of it.
* I seek the means He provides and ask Him to cure me through His means.
* The pain is giving me an opportunity to know my Creator and to acknowledge Its ownership over my being and the universe.

Understanding who I am and who my Owner is: **that is *belief*.** While I am attempting to obey the order, ***that is worshipping God*** i.e. acknowledging It.

* The whole order is functioning to serve me so that I may know my Creator and acknowledge It.
* While I am obeying the order (example: seeking a cure when I am ill), I have to merely strike a conscious awareness to realize that I am asking from It Who is the Creator of that cure and my need for it.
* Regardless of whether I remain consciously aware or not, His order is in function.
* **If I am conscious, I am connecting myself to the True Creator.**
* **If I am unconscious, I am paving a path to denial as it will lead to a series of neglect.**
* **Within each sin (unconscious state/unbelief), is a path leading to denial.**
* God consciousness will be eroded gradually if we keep neglecting the connection with the Creator.

Because of the heavy pain Job experiences (feelings of unhappiness towards his Creator), he realizes that he is not connecting with the Creator because of this feeling. **When we do not use our state of being to establish a connection with the Creator (Source of our existence), we find ourselves in pain.** Being conscious of my connection with God, attributing my existence to the Creator: “I am receiving your favor with whatever I am given”, my feelings must be satisfied and my tongue must be saying it, **that connection is with belief**. The rest is lack of belief. This makes me understand which path I should take, the path to consciousness or negligence.

One of the main reasons why the religion of Islam has become so corrupted is because we have reduced the religion to a set of norms and rules. However, religion is more than just that. Fiqh is only a small part of our lives. Religion is a state of being. **Consciousness requires work, negligence does not.** Doing physical activities is easy, engaging in intellectual consciousness is hard.

We tend to live our lives by not only neglecting the Creator but by introducing false attributes for our existence. Example: I am growing // The baby was born // The rain is falling. INSTEAD, We are being made to grow // The baby was given life // The rain is made to fall.

* **We have to train ourselves to see the conscious action behind all acts of creation.**
* **While doing the action I have to keep my consciousness of the Creator alive.**

***“For example, a man who secretly commits a shameful sin will fear the disgrace that results if others become aware of it. Thus, the existence of angels and spirit beings will be hard for him to endure, and he will long to deny it, even on the strength of the slightest indication.”***

It becomes easy to carry our neglect forward when we engage ourselves in actions that deny His existence.

***“Similarly, one who commits a major sin deserving of the torment of Hell, will desire the non-existence of Hell wholeheartedly, and whenever he hears of the threat of Hell-fire, he will dare to deny it on the strength of a slight indication and doubt, unless he takes up in protection the shield of repentance and seeking forgiveness.”***

People may come up with theories about the afterlife based on the way they live their lives in this world.

* When we do not use our human consciousness for the purpose of our existence (i.e. meaningfully), we denigrate ourselves to an animalistic life.
* To make sense of our animalistic way of life we attribute meaninglessness to our purpose of existence.
* To add a humane aspect to our animalistic tendencies means recognizing the Creator in our actions and to attribute our emotions as being created by It.
	+ We have to always connect ourselves to the Eternal Source so that we may know who we are and to understand the reason behind our existence

**Example:** Taking care of the child. Here, I find myself in need of taking care of my child so that I may KNOW that I have a Creator who is taking care of me. I have to realize that I am the needy one and my child is in need of care as well. **This realization is needed in order to understand that I have an Owner who is taking care of all my needs.**

* Both animalistic side and human side is engaged in physical activities.
* **Our human side needs to be trained** so that we may add meaningfulness to our physical activities.
* If we fail to add meaning ( i.e. drawing a connection to the Eternal Creator), our physical activities will add up to meaninglessness although we may not realize it immediately.
* Example: Eating food.
	+ We may enjoy the taste and think that we are eating to keep ourselves healthy
	+ However, sooner or later we realize that our body gets weaker and our physical form is no longer in the best working condition.
	+ All that food we enjoyed did not really ‘last’ and we get frustrated.
		- But, if we eat each morsel with the awareness that the enjoyment of taste and energy derived from the food is being GIVEN to me by my Creator, I find myself attributing pleasure and health to the Eternal Being.
		- My existence is from Him and my enjoyment is from Him; By completing the circle of connection, I am returning my existence to Him and **establishing meaning to my life.**
		- I have to use my animalistic tendencies under the leadership of my human qualities.
* **Humanity + Biological needs (animal side) = Human Being**

I may fall into negligence; that is human. If I keep neglecting consciousness, I get used to it. It becomes easy to carry the neglectful life i.e. we start denying the fundamentals of our relationship with God, we do not want to question or use our human consciousness. Therefore, I ought to wake up and **seek forgiveness** (i.e. it was my mistake) by acknowledging that I reduced my life to animalistic tendencies.

In conclusion, Quranic teaching stimulates my human side. We have to constantly work on our belief in the Creator and strive to make it our priority, God willing!