Halaqa: Wednesday, August 6, 2014

Topic: Divine Determining- Part 3\*

\* *As an introduction to the heavy topic of Qadr, the first few parts in this series will focus on establishing the foundations of belief. This will include discussion on words often taken for granted, such as* ***God****,* ***Absolute, All-Knowing Creator.*** *The repetitions that may surface in the discussion should not be brushed away. Rather, they should offer points for contemplation as the subtleties of the topic are often overlooked.*

**“For, with Him are the keys to the things that are beyond the reach of a created being’s perception: none knows them but He. And He knows all that is on land and in the sea; and not a leaf falls but He knows it; and neither is there a grain in the earth’s deep darkness, nor anything: fresh or dry (living or dead,) but is recorded in a clear book.”**

**An’am (6): 59**

**006.059**



Re-cap: It is important to first establish the foundations of belief before delving into the topic of divine determining

* Without understanding who God is, we cannot understand how the Divine determines.
* Distinguish between God’s Absolute characteristic and humanity’s limitedness

Understand the methodology that we should adopt when reasoning about the Divine through the following example:

Statement #1: “All swans are white”

* An inductive statement based on observation of a limited number of white swans
* In order to validate this statement, I have to observe ALL swans in the universe, which I have no ability to do so the statement itself is on shaky terrain.
* As long as I come across 1 black swan, this statement falls apart

Statement #2: “This swan is white”

* We need to make decisions according to our observations

Our belief needs to be founded on the methodology of the statement #2

* We have to observe each single aspect of creation and reach a conclusion about it, through it.
* Otherwise, we will be making sweeping claims with no firm basis
	+ If so, how can we tell fact from fiction?

Example: A fly

* Through observing a fly and its various characteristics, I can conclude that it has a Maker (cause of existence).
	+ Quran repeatedly presents the reader with observable objects (fly, sky, sun, bird, etc)
* The fly has the following qualities:
	+ Intelligence
	+ Knowledge
	+ Power etc.
		- None of the component parts of the fly can be the cause of existence of the intelligence/knowledge/etc that I observe in the fly
		- Particles within this fly have no ability to CREATE these qualities
	+ In order for the fly to be an intelligent object, its maker must be intelligent
		- By studying the component particles of the fly, I find that nothing within it can be the cause of existence of the quality of ‘intelligence’
			* The maker of the fly cannot be within its components
				+ None of the components of the fly can sustain its own existence
			* The Maker is not of the same nature as the product that it makes.
			* Nothing can be the creator of itself. That is illogical.
			* The Creator of the fly cannot be of the same qualities as the fly

Its component parts ‘own’ no qualities that I observe on the fly: Life, shape, ability to fly, motion, functioning systems –nerve, blood circulation, digestions etc- making decisions, choosing, protecting its life, feeding itself, ability to reproduce, protect its young etc. etc.-

* + - * + The fly is CREATED
	+ Anything that exists needs a cause of existence
		- This cause of existence is beyond the object itself and cannot be of the nature of the ‘object’

**If the object is continuously changing, the ‘cause of existence’ must be constant**

**If the object is dependent, the ‘cause of existence’ must be independent**

**If the object is limited to this universe, the ‘cause of existence’ must be beyond the limitations of this universe**

**If the object exists within the order of this universe, the ‘cause of existence’ must be the creator of this order of the universe.**

* **Therefore, I conclude that the maker must be Absolute (beyond this universe because this universe is LIMITED, SUBJECT TO CONSTANT CHANGE and DEPENDENT)**

Number: A digit that is quantifiable

“Infinite number”: An oxymoron

* Infinite is something that cannot be quantifiable
* Thus, any number cannot be qualified by the concept “infinite”

“Things are known only by their opposite”

* Temporary vs. Permanent
* Made vs. Maker
* Finite vs. Infinite

We may have never perceived or observed the permanent/maker/infinite BUT we can make a conclusion about it through observing its opposite.

The universe is made; The Maker cannot be of the nature of this universe

* Therefore, the Maker’s qualities must be INFINITE because this universe (as I observe) is limited.

We should only make conclusions based on observations.

- That is the way for us to be able to be secure in our claims!

Use the Quran as a guide that we humans have to confirm.

* In the Quran, God says: I am Absolute and I created you.
* I observe my creation and find that nothing in this universe can create me
	+ I am utterly dependent. This necessitates that my Creator is entirely independent because my Creator cannot be of the same nature as me.
	+ I am subject to change. This necessitates that my Creator is beyond the limitations of change because my Creator cannot be of the same nature as me.
* I conclude that the speaker in the Quran is my Creator because my Creator must be Absolute.

**Clear book:** Everything is recorded in the objects of this world

* In each object of creation, we can observe that it has a Creator who is Absolute and who gives existence to everything based on His Absolute Knowledge
* We are in constant communication with the Author through His book (the universe)
	+ This clear book is the result of the One who knows.

*Kitabun mubin:* The observable universe

*Imamin mubin:* Knowledge of the Creator

* The Creator knows what He is doing

**Through its creational signs like the order, balance, regularity, adornment, differentiation, and the giving of form, the signs of the mighty Quran (universe) inscribed by Divine power and called the universe confirm these statements of the Quran.**

**The Words, 26th word, p. 484**