

Creed- Creed and Quran Inimitability- Lesson(01-36): Introduction- Purpose of Man's Existence

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creations, and Peace and blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad, the faithful and the honest.

Oh, Allah, we know nothing but what You teach us. You are the All- Knower, the Wise. Oh Allah, teach us what is good for us, and benefit us from what You taught us, and increase our knowledge. Show us the righteous things as righteous and help us to do them, and show us the bad things as bad and help us to keep away from them.

O Allah our Lord, lead us out from the depths of darkness and illusion, unto the lights of erudition and knowledge, and from the muddy shallows of lusts unto the heavens of Your Vicinity.

Dear brothers, this is going to be our first lesson on aqidah (the creed) and the inimitability (of the Qur'an).

Man is a mobile being:

1- Man's motion is a result of stimuli within him:

To begin with, man is a mobile being. Think for a moment about a being which is motionless, such as a piece of wood, so unlike man. What makes man move?

These are the stimuli which Allah has installed in human beings, such as the desire for food, for the opposite sex, for safety. They make man mobile.

2- Man's basic needs are three:



Allah has installed in us three basic needs. First of all, there is the need for food and drink, the need for mating, and the need for safety. If it were not for these three necessities, you might see the surface of the earth void of everything.

Because you urgently need food and drink, you work, and when you work you build. Thus, somebody builds a school or a hospital, and somebody else paves a road or makes a closet. Yet another person studies medicine or architecture. So, because of his need for food and drink, man works and builds, and in this there is a test for us, that is Allah is testing us by means of our work to see if we believe or not; if we complete our work or not; if we intend earnestly or not.

3- Between plants and inanimate objects:

An inanimate object is, by definition, the one that occupies space, that is has three dimensions and weight, whereas a plant, having three dimensions and weight, occupies space, and it also grows, so growth is the difference here.

On the other hand, animals occupy space, having three dimensions and weight, like inanimate objects, and grow like plants, and furthermore they also move and walk. Man occupies space, having three dimensions and weight; he moves and grows as well, and above all, he thinks.

So the most honorable thing in a human being is his mind, and Allah has bestowed on man cognition, which is fed by knowledge.

Unless you seek knowledge and truth, and unless you believe, you lose your human value. In that case the human life turns into that of a beast, and for that reason we tend to call a human being that lacks any knowledge whatsoever "an animal", and the evidence for that comes in these ayaat:

"The similitude of those who were charged with the (obligations of the Torah, but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is that of a donkey which carries huge tomes (but understands them not)."

(al-Jumu'a, 62:5)

"They are only like cattle; nay, they are worse astray from the Way."

(al-Furqan, 25:44)

"They are as (worthless as hollow) pieces of timber propped up, (unable to stand on their own)."

(al-Munafiqun, 63:4)

Dear brothers, thus the first issue is that man is a mobile being. At the same time we see beings that are rigid, motionless, unable to move. So what exactly motivates us to move? The answer is: our need for food; and the Prophets share this need with us since their nature is human. We find the confirmation of this truth in the following Words of Allah:

"And the Messengers whom We sent before you were all (men) who ate food and walked through the markets."

(al-Furqan, 25:20)

The ayah stresses the fact that the Prophets' existence requires food, buying it, walking in the markets in order to make a living, and this constitutes the proof of their human nature.

The food for the mind, for the heart, and for the body:

Hence, dear brothers, man is a being with a conscious mind (fuad), loving heart, and mobile body.

Knowledge is the nutrient of the mind, while love is the nutrient of the heart, and food and drinks are the nutrients of the body. Unless you seek the three of them; unless you seek knowledge, Divine love, food, sleep, and repose you should know that you have become an unbalanced being.

How to avoid the unbalance caused by putting food before other needs?

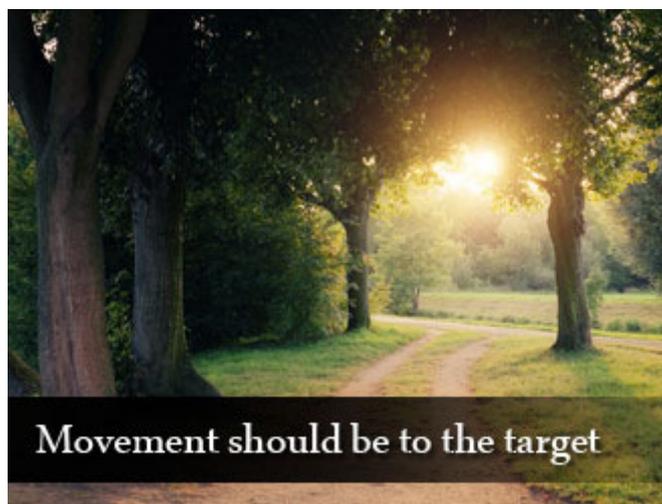
What is the difference between unbalance and equilibrium? Equilibrium is to fulfill all the needs at the same time, working on all the tracks by seeking knowledge, inspiring your heart and taking care of your body; while unbalance is to make your mind work and neglect your heart, or to put your heart before your mind, or to build

up your muscles and forget your mind and your heart. So there is a big difference between unbalance and equilibrium.

I have mentioned once that unless man takes care of his relationship with Allah, his family, his job, and his health, he is bound to suffer a breakdown because any neglect of the above will affect the three needs.

When is man's movement on the right track?

Considering the fact that man is a mobile being, we ought to ask: When is his motion on the right track? That means that there is a right movement and a wrong one, productive movement and chaos; it might even become entirely useless. So, the success is not in just moving, but in moving in the right direction.



For example, if somebody is hungry, thirsty, on the point of dying, there are many movements his body can execute, but the right thing to do here, the right movement is to move towards water because his survival depends on drinking it. So man is a mobile being, with a conscious mind, loving heart, and moving body, and his movement is fruitless unless the objective is known.

Here is an example of what I mean: You arrive in a western country and check in at a hotel. You wake up on your first day and ask: "Where should I go today?" The question, in the first place, should have been: "Why am I here? Why have I come here?" So if you said: "I am here to seek knowledge", we would tell you: "Go to universities and colleges." And if you said: "I came here as a tourist", we would tell you: "Go to parks and restaurants." And if you said: "I am here as a merchant", we would tell you: "Go to factories and business companies."

The subtle truth is that although man is a mobile being, his movement is wrong, fruitless, unhealthy and unsuccessful unless he knows the reason behind his existence in this life.

If a car has been recklessly driven, it will end up in a ditch causing death of its passengers. So it is not enough to move. Look at all the people moving in the morning:

"By the Night as it conceals (the light); By the Day as it appears in glory; By the creation of male and female; Verily, (the ends) you strive for are diverse."

(al-Lail, 92:1-4)

Each one of them has something on his mind which he will try to achieve, so the right thing is not just to move but to direct our movements onto the right track. For that reason Allah says:

"Say: Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works?"

(al-Kahf, 18:103-104)

Any movement should have a goal, and I am sorry to say that in a survey of a thousand people who were asked what their objective was, the result was that only 3% have clear goals, whereas 97 % move aimlessly.

That is why I always say: Either you set up your own plans, or plans will be set up for you. Either you are active, or you will be passive. Either you establish your own goals, or you will be artfully framed and used.

Knowledge is a serious issue:

Knowledge is a serious issue and Allah says:

"...and (Allah) taught you what you knew not (before): and great is the Grace of Allah unto you."

(an-Nisa, 4:113)

And I always say, my dear brothers, that the most glorious blessing for man, which does not need any innovation, is knowledge, and this, precisely, is what these ayaat are telling us:

"...and (Allah) taught you what you knew not (before): and great is the Grace of Allah unto you."

(an-Nisa, 4:113)

"When he reached full age, and was firmly established (in life), We bestowed on him wisdom and knowledge."

(al-Qasas, 28:14)

So when you go to a western country to get your PhD, you go to a modern beautiful country with parks and restaurants, with theaters and cinemas, with taverns and well-designed roads, with ruins and museums, with universities and

schools, with factories and business companies. However, your being there in order to get your PhD implies certain things. What are they?

When you have a clear goal, you will choose the means which will help you in fulfilling this goal.

A student in a western country who seeks his PhD will, first of all, rent a house nearby the university to save time, money and efforts.

He will befriend another student who excels in the language of the country. He will buy magazines relevant to the subject of his thesis. He will visit scientific exhibitions to learn more about his specialization. Thus, when you have a clear goal, you are led to grasp at any means that help you fulfill it.

So the first truth is that unless man knows the reason behind his existence in this life and his goal, his movements will be incorrect.

When does man achieve happiness?

1- Knowing the objective of his daily movements:

The second thing: When does man achieve happiness? It happens when his life runs according to a goal he has set up for himself, and the evidence is to be found in the case of a student who is going to sit for an important exam. He has some good friends who do not study at university but run their own businesses, and they want to take him to a beautiful park. Although the place is extremely appealing, with stunning views, and although he loves his friends and vice versa, despite all that and with an important exam round the corner, if they convince him to come with them, he is certain to feel uncomfortable. Why will he feel uncomfortable? Because this movement doesn't go along with his goal, and this will definitely make him feel uneasy. But if the same student stayed in a dark room, and read his books, learning and trying to get a good grasp of the subject matter, he would feel great comfort. Where would that comfort come from? It would come from the perfect match between the movement and the goal.

So your movement is right as long as you know the reason behind your existence, and you will be happy as long as your movement matches your goal –these are the rules of thumb.

2- Man inherently loves perfection, continuity, and safety of his existence:

Dear brothers, it is also a rule of thumb that man is born to love, or as modern expressions have it, he is tuned up to love his existence. Whether he likes it or not, admits it or not, he is born to love his existence, its perfection and continuity, without one single exception among the 6 billion inhabitants of this earth on the five continents, as each one of them is unlimitedly devoted to love, perfection, and continuity of their existence.

Who among us likes to be sick? Who likes to be poor? Who likes to lose their freedom? None of us! All of us on this earth share this attitude:

"...Who (your Guardian Lord) created you from a single Person..."

(an-Nisa, 4:1)

Thus, we all have the same nature, attributes and goals.

When do I achieve the safety of my existence?

Hence, dear brothers, when do I achieve the safety of my existence? You are the most complicated machine in the universe, and it is complicated on purpose not by defect. This very complicated machine has an All-Wise and All-Knowing Creator Who has with Him all the instructions of performance and maintenance, so, given your love for yourself, for your existence, and for the safety of your existence, you should follow the Creator's Instructions to the letter:

"If anyone does a righteous deed, it is to his own benefit; if he does evil, it works against (his own soul)"

(al-Jathiyah, 45:15)

1- To know the connection between disobedience and its consequences:

We begin by getting to know that the consequences are included in the Creator's Instructions and that disobedience includes its consequences. Furthermore, that the relation between any matter and its results, in other words between the cause and the effect, is objective, we thus arrive at the fact that the relation between disobedience and its consequences is objective.



And to make this clear let us say that when you are not allowed to approach a high voltage power line, but you disobey, in this case you don't need policemen, authorities, or fines, because electricity itself will punish you.

If you get closer than 8 meters you will be carbonized, so it is not a matter of illegal acts, it is fatal. It wasn't a human being who laid down the rules to hold you responsible, it is more complicated. Hence, when you believe that the link between the matter and its results is relevant, as is the link between forbiddance and its consequences, the same as the connection between the cause and the effect, you will follow Allah's Orders for your own safety.

This lecture is designed to be part of the introduction to aqidah; it is an objective relation between the order and the prohibition. It can also be sometimes a subjective relation.

Sometimes a country prevents exchanging money to maintain the value of its currency, so if a citizen of this country takes cash out of the country, he will be severely punished.

So we say that there is a subjective relation here, which means that the rulers of the country choose to punish all those who take cash out of the country, so here the relation between disobedience and its consequences is subjective, not objective.

If a father prohibited his son to use one of the house's two doors but permitted using the other one, and if this son used the entrance door prohibited by his father, we would say that this is a subjective relation. However, in the case of the orders of the deen the relation is objective, meaning that every order includes the seeds of its consequences, and every prohibition includes the seeds of its consequences, and by that you become a faqih.

If a faqih saw a sign which says: "Beware! Minefield! No trespassing!" he would never feel bitter toward the person who has put up this sign, and he would never consider it as a restriction to his freedom. On the contrary, he would see it as a guarantee of safety.

2- The obedience to the Expert and All-Knowing Creator:

Hence, dear brothers, you will achieve the safety of your existence when you obey the Expert:

"And none, (O man!) can inform you like the One Who is Expert."

(Fatir, 35:14)

He knows what is best for your safety, happiness, activity, and your final destination.

Hence, following the Creator's Instructions will guarantee the safety of your existence. There are do's and don'ts, and that is why the believer sometimes says: I don't lie, which is good –he is abiding the Creator's Instructions; I don't backbite, very good! I don't accept unlawful money, excellent! But these expressions of honesty are put in the negative here because most of these terms use the word "don't" as a prefix. "I don't take unlawful money." Bless you! "I don't lie, I don't

cheat, I don't backbite, I don't commit adultery, I don't drink wine, I don't kill."
Good, safety needs righteousness:

"In the case of those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah', and, further, stand straight and steadfast, the angels descend on them (from time to time): Fear not!(they suggest), nor grieve, but receive the Glad Tidings of the Garden (of Bliss), that which you were promised!"

(Fussilat, 41:30)

You are born to love your existence, to love the safety and perfection of your existence, but the perfection of your existence needs closeness to Allah. The Almighty says:

"... for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction."

(ar-Ra'd, 13:28)

3- Closeness to Allah:

The only way to achieve happiness is to be close to Allah:

"But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down."

(Ta Ha, 20:124)

I swear by Allah that I read an exhausting research about 400 people, most of whom, at the peak of their careers, committed suicide because they sought only the success of this fleeting life and entirely forgot the Hereafter:

"But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down."

(Ta Ha, 20:124)

Again, one of the most remarkable architects in the world, who designed the bridge in Istanbul that connects the Asian continent with the European continent, used by 300 thousand cars on daily basis, on the day of inauguration of this bridge threw himself in the Bosphorus, and when they checked his hotel room they found a piece of paper which said: "I have tasted everything in life but haven't enjoyed it, so I choose to taste death."

Life without knowing Allah is empty, absurd and worthless, and this is why the miserable people so attached to the earthly life, come in and out of it without tasting the best it offers –which is to know Allah. There is a heaven on earth, and he who doesn't step in it will never enter the heaven of the Hereafter:

"And admit them to the Garden which He has announced for them."

(Muhammad, 47:6)

They tasted heaven in the earthly life:

**If your eyes saw the beauty of ours they have seen, you would never turn
your back on us for other's sake**

**If your ears heard our nice speech, you would throw away the arrogance
garb and come to us**

**If you taste an atom like of love, you would excuse him who loved us to
death.**

**If you felt the breeze of our closeness to you, you would die in excitement
and eagerness for us.**

Dear brothers, the real happiness is to connect with Allah:

**"But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life
narrowed down. And we shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement."**

(Ta Ha, 20:124)

**"...for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find
satisfaction."**

(ar-Ra'd, 13:28)

This is a fact, and the best thing to do is to find out about it at an early age, not in the old age:

**"The day that certain of the Signs of your Lord do come, no good will it do to
a soul to believe in them then, if it believed not before nor earned
righteousness through its Faith."**

(an-An'am, 6:158)

Your choice in faith is a matter of time:

Dear brothers, your choice in faith is a matter of time, as you have one million choices of accepting and rejecting. You might reject this job for the pay is insufficient, you might reject this wife or a candidate for wife, because she is not up to your standards, you might reject this house because it is too small, but if you reject faith, you disgrace yourself:

"And who turns away from the religion of Ibrahim but such as debase their souls with folly?"

(al-Baqarah, 2:130)

How do you achieve continuity of your existence?

Your choice in faith is a matter of time and the safety of your existence depends on your following the Creator's Instructions, and the perfection of your existence lies in being close to Allah. One third thing remains, and it is the continuity of existence, which is achieved by upbringing your offspring. It has been transmitted by Abu Huraira that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

"When a man dies, his deeds come to an end, except for three: sadaqah whose benefit does not cease, knowledge from which people derive benefit and a pious son who prays for him."

[Sahih according to Ibn Khuzima]



When one of the Damascus most remarkable imams, who used to deliver khutbah at the Omayyad Mosque died, there was a huge mourning at the Omayyad Mosque. On the last day, his son came to the minbar and spoke like his father used to do, so I said to myself: "His father hasn't died then, there is continuity here."

When you get married and have children, it should be as Sayyidina Umar said:

"I swear by Allah that I sleep with my wife not to satisfy my desire but to have a pious son whom I hope people will benefit from after my death."

So when you get married you wish for pious offspring, and the noble hadith confirms this meaning:

"When a man dies, his deeds come to an end, except for three: sadaqah whose benefit does not cease, knowledge from which people derive benefit and a pious son who prays for him."

[Sahih according to Ibn Khuzima]

So you achieve happiness by being close to Allah, and closeness to Allah is a positive thing.

It is righteousness to say: "I don't lie, I don't cheat, I don't backbite, I don't steal, I don't betray..." All these sentences, however, use the word "don't" as a prefix. Yet another way of speaking is to say: "O Allah, I paid for it from my own money; I spent my free time on such and such enterprise; I made an effort to do such and such thing; I came to this talk on matters of the deen instead of staying comfortably at home, on my comfortable couch, drinking tea or coffee, eating fruits, with my wife sitting opposite me –I left all that and came to the mosque; it took me an hour to get here, an hour to attend and another hour to get back home, for the sake of seeking knowledge."

Thus, closeness to Allah is considered a positive thing, it doesn't have the word "don't". "Oh Allah! I attended this lecture, I taught others, I wrote a book, I established an association, I built an orphanage and a mosque, I opened a medical center, I supported good deeds..."

Hence, dear brothers, your righteousness is your safety net, and the sublime good deeds are your happiness, and your continuity is in upbringing your children. Thus, your continuity is achieved by a pious son who will invoke Allah for your sake. "Oh Allah give me a pious son":

"And those who believe and whose descendants follow them in Faith, to them shall We join their descendants, nor shall We deprive them (of the fruit) of anything of their works: (Yet) each individual is in pledge for his deeds."

(at-Tur, 52:21)

The ayah above means: To them we shall join their families' deeds.

The importance of the Divine Method:

Dear brothers, the following ayaat show us the importance of the Divine Method:

"The Most Gracious! It is He Who has taught the Qur'an.

He has created man:

He has taught him an intelligent speech (and capacity to understand)."

(ar-Rahman, 55:1-4)

They are mentioned in chronological order, and a big question arises: Is it rational to maintain that man should have known the Qur'an before his own creation?

**"The Most Gracious! It is He Who has taught the Qur'an.
He has created man:
He has taught him an intelligent speech (and capacity to understand)."**

(ar-Rahman, 55:1-4)

It would seem irrational, but the commentators say: The order here rather than chronological is hierarchical, which means that the human existence is pointless without a method to follow, and again the example makes it quite clear: You have imported a very complicated, valuable, useful machine but by mistake the instruction manual has not been sent with it, so if you use it without the manual, it will break down and you will lose your money, and if you leave it unused, you still lose your money. Taking the case into consideration –aren't the manufacturer's instructions more important than the machine?

**"The Most Gracious! It is He Who has taught the Qur'an.
He has created man:
He has taught him an intelligent speech (and capacity to understand)."**

(ar-Rahman, 55:1-4)

Every affliction or sin is an outcome of ignorance and deviation from the Creator's Instructions:

I assure you, dear brothers, no affliction happens on earth except on account of deviation from the Creator's Instructions and this deviation is the outcome of ignorance –man's bitterest enemy; and the ignorant can hurt themselves more than their enemies.

You should seek knowledge. You want either the life of this world or the Hereafter, or both; and knowledge will not give you a part of it unless your dedication is total. If it is not, knowledge will give you nothing; and man is knowledgeable as long as he seeks knowledge, and the minute he thinks he has had enough of it, he turns ignorant.

The seeker of knowledge prefers the Hereafter to the earthly life and he consequently wins them both, whereas the ignorant one chooses the earthly life over the Hereafter, and consequently loses them both.

I studied at a high school in Damascus, one of the oldest ones, and there was a sign hanging over the entrance which said in big letters: "The highest rank is that of knowledge."

Hence, dear brothers, every human being among the 6 billion people living on this earth wishes for safety and happiness, and man is born to love his existence and safety, perfection and continuity of his existence.

The safety of existence lies in obeying Allah and following His Path, and the perfection of existence lies in being close to Allah, while the continuity of existence lies in upbringing a pious son who will be of benefit to people after you are gone, and thus he ensures your continuity.

The reason behind man's existence:

1- Worshipping Allah is the reason behind man's existence:

What is the reason behind our existence on earth? At the beginning I said: "When you know the secret behind your existence, your movements get onto the right track." So what is the reason behind our existence on earth? In the Qur'an we read:

"I have only created jinns and men, that they may worship Me."

(adh-Dhariyat, 51:56)

So worshipping Allah is the reason behind our existence on earth.

"I have only created jinns and men, that they may worship Me."

(adh-Dhariyat, 51:56)

Hence, worship is the reason behind our existence, and when you worship Allah you fulfill its purpose.

2- The concept of worship may get narrowed and widened:

The concept of worship may widely expand or narrow. It gets narrow on account of the ignorant who assume that worship is only prayers, fasting, hajj and zakat, whereas it widens up until it becomes a complete system for all walks of life, starting with the marital bed and ending with international affairs. It is a system comprising and constituting a whole, and he who assumes that worship is only prayers, fasting, hajj and zakat is certainly deluded.

I shall not be exaggerating when I say that Allah the Almighty's System comes to 500 thousand items. It accompanies you round the clock, and in all your circumstances. If you enter your house, there is a dua'a (supplication) the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to say on this occasion. The same goes for the beginning of your meal, for looking at your wife, for looking in the mirror:

"O Allah! As you have beautified my physical appearance, thus beautify my conduct."

On leaving home:

"O Allah, I take refuge in You lest I should stray or be led astray, or trip or be made to trip, or oppress or be oppressed, or behave foolishly or be treated foolishly."

If you are a doctor and operate on a patient:

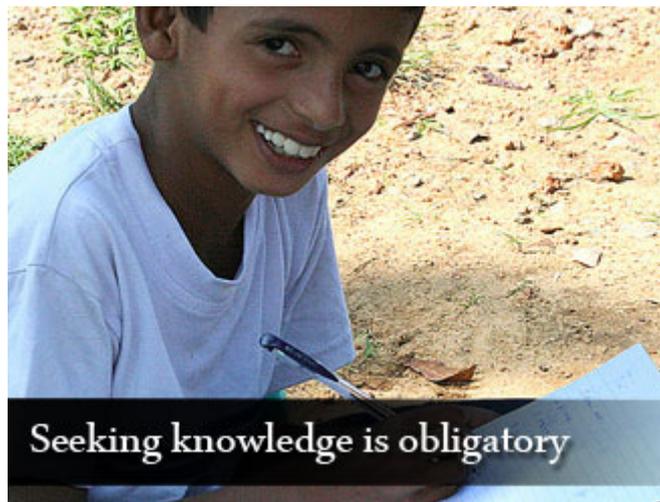
"Oh Allah, I leave my power and strength to Your Power and Strength, since You are the All-Powerful and the Firm."

3- Every move in this life is regulated by shari'ah:

Acts can be obligatory, mandatory, recommended, lawful, detested, and forbidden.

Every move, moment of quietude, action, bond, suspended relation, rage and satisfaction is covered by a ruling of shari'ah.

4- Seeking essential knowledge is mandatory:



Hence, seeking the knowledge of the deen is mandatory for every Muslim. How can you obey Allah if you don't know his Orders and Prohibitions?

Attending educational session to learn about them is a must, and you have no choice in that. You should seek knowledge. For example, a sky diver can be ignorant of the shape of the parachute; of whether it is round, oval, square, or rectangular. He can be ignorant of the fabric it is made of, whether it is synthetic or natural. He can be ignorant of the number of cords and their colours. There is a lot of information and data that he might be ignorant of, but there is one thing he cannot be ignorant of and that is how to open the parachute. It is mandatory knowledge for a skydiver and if he lacks it, he will never land alive.

You may ignore the materials used for the production of the breaks in the vehicle you drive, or its engine, or the way it works. You may ignore how the vehicle is produced –whether it is compressed or molded or just hammered, and nothing will happen to you. However, you have to know how to bring this vehicle to a halt or else you will cause an accident. Thus, starting the vehicle and bringing it to a stop, together with detecting any malfunction, are included in the mandatory knowledge of any driver, and you have no choice here.

If you are a doctor with the highest licence in medicine, like the USA Medical Board, FRCS in Britain, EDS in France, or Arab Medical Board, you are obviously highly qualified in medicine but you might be ignorant of your religion, in the same way as a religious scholar, to whom you show an EKG, would totally ignore how to

read it. However, you should know that this kind of knowledge is mandatory for every Muslim, whereas Islamic history is not; comparative fiqh is not; the proofs given by great ulamah are not; tajweed is not... Thus, you cannot ignore how to perform salah, how to fast, how to perform hajj, how to buy and sell, how to get married; you cannot ignore the rights of husband and wife... Such things are considered obligatory knowledge, exactly like the knowledge of opening a parachute, whose ignorance will cause your death while landing.

A sky diver was told to press the first button in order to open his parachute, and if it failed, there was another button he should press, and if that didn't work, there was a third one, and he was told that when he landed, there would be a car waiting to take him back to his barracks. He pressed the three buttons, one after another, but they all failed to open the parachute. In the end he said to himself: "I hope that the car, at least, won't fail, and I'll find it waiting for me when I land."

So there is mandatory knowledge, which constitutes the pillar of aqida and of Islam, and there are laws covering your private and business matters. If you are a merchant you should know the laws of selling and buying, and the same goes for any other profession –a lawyer, a doctor, a teacher...

For example, the doctor is paid for his care not for the outcome. Every job has its own rules, and unless you know these rules you will commit mistakes and be at fault.

He who enters the market place without the knowledge of shari'ah will eat riba (interest on money) whether he likes it or not. So seeking knowledge is not an option but indeed a crucial matter because there is either Heaven or Hell after death. Come to think of it, let me ask you why Allah mentioned death before life in this ayah:

"He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed;"

(al-Mulk, 67:2)

It is because man has millions of choices when he is born... he can be a doctor, an engineer, a pilot...

An inspector visited once an elementary school and asked a bright student to stand up and to tell him what he would like to be when he got older.

The conventional answer would be: a doctor, a teacher, a pilot, an officer, or a scientist, but to his surprise the student said that he wanted to be a smuggler.

So dear brothers, there is mandatory religious knowledge: the pillars of faith and Islam; the Book of Allah; interpretation of the Book of Allah, and interpretation of the ahadith of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and actually we are at the moment celebrating his birth. Allah says:

“So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you.”

(al-Hashr, 59:7)

How do we take what the Messenger assigns us and leave what he withholds from us unless we know the nature of those assignments and those denials? Thus, knowing shari'ah is mandatory for every Muslim.

You know Allah, but how are you going to obey Him?

You should know His Orders and this is the reason why it is mandatory to know the rulings of shari'ah. It is something vital in your life not something optional or just a pastime. It is absolutely essential.

Dear brothers, I hope it is crystal clear to you now that seeking knowledge is a must.

If you are riding a vehicle and you consider the light flashing on the dashboard as a decoration, the engine will break down; the vehicle will come to a stop. You won't be able to reach your destination, plus you will have to spend 50 thousand at the repair shop. It was a pity you didn't know that this warning light was an alert to you about the requirement to change oil, and by having changed it you would have saved the engine, continued your trip and reached your destination. These are very precise words.

The right attitude is to apprehend whatever is taking place:

Thanks to all mass media at your disposal, you are able to get to know whatever happens anywhere in the world within minutes, and the right thing here is not just to find out about it but rather to comprehend it.

In old days receiving the news was the most important thing and with this aim in mind people used to stand by city gates waiting for caravans. Now, it takes minutes to learn the news and often you can see it happening.

And yet, the right thing is not to know what is taking place but rather to apprehend the secret behind it. It is just like the oil alert in the vehicle. The important thing is not to see the light flashing, but to know why it has flashed and whether it is a decoration or alert. That's where the problem lies –so you should seek knowledge.

Man's reality amounts to a few days:



You should seek knowledge, and thus Allah the Almighty says:

"By the Time; Verily Man is in loss; Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy."

(al-Asr, 103)

Every human being is a loser. Why? Because the passage of time wears him out, and man's life is only a few days. Every day that passes takes away a part of him; every day shouts in the early morning: "O son of Adam! I am a new creation, and a witness to your deeds, so use me as I will never come back till the Hereafter."

So you last only a few days, and I swear to Allah, dear brothers, that I have never found as all-inclusive, preventive, satisfying, and solid definition as this one: "a few days". Every day that passes takes away a part of you, so the right thing to do is not to keep counting years that have passed; to say I am 60 years old, but to say annoying words like: "How much time is left for me?"

If the years that passed seem to have elapsed in the blink of an eye, it is most likely that so will those that remain. Suddenly, you read an obituary. The deceased used to be a person, now he is a piece of news.

Once, on the flight from Morocco to Damascus I occupied a window seat and during a stopover at Tunisia I spotted a coffin being unloaded from the plane. The man inside it used to be a passenger with a ticket and a passport, now he was nothing but a cargo; a person had transformed into a cargo, needing customs clearance and paperwork.

Every human being is a loser except...

Hence, dear brothers, the right thing to do is to count down your lifetime:

"By the Time; Verily Man is in loss; Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy."

(al-Asr, 103)

Who will survive and make it?

"Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy."

This ayah means: Seek the truth, act, seek patiently Islamic knowledge and lead others to it, apply that knowledge, and lead to it, so you can survive the loss:

"By the Time; Verily Man is in loss; Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy."

(al-Asr, 103)

Conclusion:

Given that worship is the reason behind our existence, we will talk in our next lecture about its reality, its kinds and levels.

We will talk about ritual and transactional worship (people oriented worship), and the like.

Translation : Noura Sharabi

Edited by : Nayat Roszko