

NATURAL AVENUES OF GOD-REALIZATION

LECTURE SEVEN

THROUGH INTUITION & FEELING

Of the different natural ways of recognizing God's existence, one is the intuition - the power of the mind by which he is able to perceive the truth of things without reasoning or analysis or immediate knowledge. In the course of ups and downs of life, man experiences this and it can lead him towards God-Knowing.

A. WHEN DOES IT BECOME APPARENT ?

In times of crisis and hardship, when a person afflicted loses hope through any means to solve his problems, even a most irreligious and non-believing person does feel the existence of an Unseen yet Super-Natural Power to Whom he beseeches and looks to for help. There is a natural inclination, under such circumstances, in human heart which makes him bend and direct him towards that Power, which is God Almighty, in the hope of receiving help from Him.

B. ALBERT EINSTEIN ON INTUITION

Man at times becomes engrossed in wonderment and sacred awe, intelligent and purposeful appreciation of creation. Albert Einstein the great scientist said:

" The most beautiful thing we can experience is the Mysterious. It is the Source of all true art and science. He to Whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead, his eyes are closed. The insight into the mystery of life, coupled though it be with fear, has also given rise to religion. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the Highest Wisdom and the Most Radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms. This knowledge, this feeling is at the center of true religiousness. In this sense and in this sense only, I belong in the ranks of devoutly religious men!"

C. IMAM JAFFER SADIQ (A.S.) ON INTUITION

A person once asked the sixth Imam Jaffer Sadiq (A.S.) what proof there was for the existence of God. In reply, the Imam asked him the following questions:

"Have you ever been aboard a ship ? asked the Imam.

"Yes" answered the man.

"Has it ever happened that a storm threatened to sink your ship and all your hopes were cut-off from everywhere ? the Imam asked.

"Yes" the man replied adding "Such an incident has indeed occurred".

"At that time, was your heart focussed to a point from which you were seeking refuge, beseeching that point to save you?" asked the Imam.

"Yes" answered the man.

"That was God" explained the Imam.

Thus the Imam showed the man the existence of God through intuition and his own heart's feeling, This inclination towards an unknown, unseen Super-Natural Power is a proof of existence of Almighty Allah Who created it to help man to seek relief and preserve hope in times of crisis. The Holy Qura'n pointing to such intuition and heart-feeling says:

"Oh, Who listens to the (soul) distressed
when it calls on Him (Allah) and Who
relieves the suffering" (Sura Naml v.62)

"Say: It is God That delivers you from
these and all (other) distress and yet you
run after false gods" (Sura Ana'm v.64)

These ayats of the Holy Qura'n invite us to believe that it is only God Almighty Who does listen to our inner prayer at times of distress and crisis and it is He Who provides relief.

D. "TITANIC" DISASTER - A GOOD EXAMPLE

Many incidents in life provide practical experience of how man feels an existence of a source of relief at times of crisis. You may have heard or read about "Titanic" - a gigantic 46,000 ton luxury liner, 300 ft. long, carrying 2,000 passengers and which had cost Sterling Pound 3 million to build. It was considered to be so strong and well-built that the owners arrogantly claimed it to be unsinkable. Obviously the vessel being a luxury liner, had all facilities of enjoyments, cinemas, theaters, gambling dens in which the wealthy passengers could pass their time. There was also a small chapel where hardly a couple of old people would occasionally go to remember God.

On April 10th 1912, "Titanic" was on its maiden voyage to New York. On the way, despite a warning from another vessel, that it was heading towards a big iceberg in the ocean, it was ignored. On the night of April the 14th 1912, the vessel suddenly hit the iceberg with a big bang. Imagine what a panicking noise of some 1500 passengers trapped on board, sinking along with the vessel. Only 652 passengers ultimately survived.

It is mentioned that at the time of the crisis, the very people who were busy gambling and enjoying themselves before, could be seen flocking into that chapel to pray to God for hope and to save their lives. It was the natural display of man's instinct in times of crisis to look to God for solace and refuge. How lucidly has the Holy Qura'n, 1400 years ago, explained such man's natural instinct:

"He (Allah) it is Who makes you travel by land and sea until when you are in the ships, and sail on with them in a pleasant breeze and they rejoice at it, a violent wind overtakes them and the billows surge in on them from all sides, and they become certain that they are overwhelmed, they pray to Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience: If You do deliver us from this, we will most certainly be grateful ones."

E. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INCLINATION AND
ACQUIRED GOD-KNOWING

But there is a difference between a man who reverts to God seeking refuge and help only when faced with crisis and the one who constantly seeks knowledge and keeps himself aware of the ever full control of Almighty Allah over this Universe. Take an example of a child. The desire to look for milk exists from the very beginning of its life. Whenever it becomes hungry, this desire is motivated and the infant is instinctively guided to look for the nipple (on the breast of its mother). It is only the natural instinct which guides and compels it to open its mouth in search of food. In case of failure to do so, the child cries which is meant to seek help of its mother.

[In having inclination to seek and pray for God's help at time of crisis, man is in the same position as the child searching the breast of its mother and crying for an unknown and unrecognized mother.]

However, this is not the perfection of man. It is only when man purposely uses his brain and reason in search of understanding his Creator, irrespective of his inner inclination in times of need, that he attains perfection. Only when he involves the use of his intellect and observes the nature of things created that he truly attains God-Knowing and awareness.

SUMMARY

1. One way of recognizing God's existence is man's intuition and feeling through his heart.
2. At times of crisis and affliction when man loses all hope of survival, it is God which has provided him with inclination to look for unknown source of help and refuge.
3. The crying of a child when hungry is a natural example of how human being looks for help from unknown source.
- [4. Man's perfection lies in his constant effort in understanding God and obey Him.]