Aouzubillahi Min Asshaytan nir-Rajeem

We are up to Ayah No.74 of *Surat-ul-Baqarah.* Allah(swt) just talked about the incident of the calf, the cow that had to be slaughtered and at the end of that what Allah(swt) mentions is, “Strike some part of that flesh with the rest of the corpse, when you strike that part of the flesh Allah will bring that corpse back to life and it will point to the killer”. That’s the summary of the story. But Allah(swt) mentions, “That is how Allah gives life back to the dead”. And this is a very interesting statement to make because one of the lessons in that is ‘it is by Allah’s command that life is given after death’.

Now, whatever that command may be; that command may be in the form of slaughtering of the cow, it may be in the form of ‘*kun fa ya koon*’. It may be in the form of water coming from the sky and the dead earth coming back to life. That is how Allah(swt) gives life back to dead. In other words he brings life in a way you cannot understand. And, “He shows his miraculous signs so that you may come to understand”. Really interesting language, first He says, “He shows you the Ayahs so you can understand”. Of course understanding is something that’s up here. It’s an intellectual thing. Then immediately He says, “Then your hearts became hard”. This afternoon I mentioned to those of you who were present I mentioned there are two faculties; there is our heart and there is our mind. First Allah questions, “Why don’t you think?” which is a faculty of the intellect and immediately He says, “There is a reason why you can’t think straight. It’s not that you have an intellectual problem. The real difficulty with you guys is you have a spiritual problem. Your hearts became hard.”

Here we learnt something, I’ll simplify it as much as I possibly can. The relationship between our heart and our mind. Our minds, they process things. We calculate with our mind. We analyze with our mind. We understand things with our mind. We memorize. We learn things like that we do these with our minds. And our minds, progressively develop. In other words the mind of a child that’s 4 is less advanced and when it becomes 6 or 7 or 8 or 10 it starts getting more and more advanced and when the same person becomes 20 their minds have matured and when they become 30 and 40, it’s matured even more. So, the mind is something that’s constantly growing and maturing and learning more and more; acquiring more and more.

However, the heart is a different kind of entity. The heart doesn’t mature or grow; the heart fluctuates. Some days you have really good days as far as remembering Allah and being cautious of Allah. On other days it is really bad. You have up and down in the heart and the heart can become hard and the heart can become soft. It can die; it can come back to life etc.

So, on the one hand you have this entity that matures and on the other hand you have this entity inside of us that is very volatile. It’s a very fragile entity which is our hearts. We have to take care of our hearts. In other words, you know how sometimes the *Khatib* will give *khutba* about something you’ve heard a thousands of times and the first that goes in your head is that ‘Man, I already know this. I don’t need to hear this again, I already know this’. Well you know it up here. Your mind understands but the heart still needs it. The heart needs the reminder; “Reminder has benefits, benefits for the hearts”.

Now, the thing is, the question is as far as the Quran’s picture of human psychology. When you and I make a decision. Does that decision comes from the mind or does it come from the heart. It’s a very interesting philosophical question. How do we make our decisions? And the answer to that is that is actually a combination of both but the heart is in the driver’s seat. The heart is actually in the driver’s seat as far as the Quran’s picture of this thing is concerned. So, let me give you a couple of quick examples of that. Like a young boy, a teenager, goes to high school. All of his friends smoke. I’ll just leave it at smoke. What they smoke I won’t talk about it. So, he smokes. In high school you’re supposed to take a health class. So, he takes a health class and in health class he learns that smoking is really bad for your health. It can cause this and this kind of cancer. These kinds of narcotics can have these kinds of impacts on the brain and it can result in these kinds of disorders etc etc. And he’s a smart kid. So, he gets an A in health class. In other words when he takes a questionnaire that has 100 questions about the harms of smoking, he answers all of them correctly. And when he goes to the store with his fake ID to buy a pack of stogies, on the side of the cigarette you know what it says? The surgeon general asks you to have *taqwa* because smoking will lead to cancer, don’t smoke, you know. The surgeon general will tell you on the pack of the cigarettes itself, right. But does he still smoke? He still smokes. If you ask him, ‘do you understand the harms of smoking? Over here, in your mind, you understand them. Have you come to understand completely, even the science of the harm and smoking every single puff? He will say ‘yeah I get it. I understand’. Then you ask him, ‘So why do you smoke?’ He will say yeah, ‘we all do it together, I like it’. Meaning he won’t give you an intellectual answer. He might even say I don’t know. I dunno I just like it. They might say something just as casual as that.

But let me give you that same kid’s example. So, he is at home in his room upstairs, smoking, and he sees his dad’s car pull up into the driveway. What happens next? The cigarette goes into the toilet, flush, air freshener, couple of gum in the mouth. The surgeon general was not able to scare him of cancer. But the Dad pulls his car up into the driveway and all of a sudden that’s enough for him to be convinced that smoking is bad for my health. How come? Because he has fear of his father. Where? In the heart. If you don’t have fear in your heart, then even if you know it’s bad for you, you’ll still do it.

Another example of this; one more, worldly example and then I’ll give you a religious example. Another worldly example is you can have a young man or woman or a young student in college that is they love entertainment. They love movies. They love basketball. They love sports. They love these things; they love entertaining themselves. But it’s exam season, right? So it’s time for exams. Now, nobody enjoys taking exams. But in his heart he is convinced that he wants to be a doctor or he wants to get a 4.0 GPA or he wants to make his parents proud. In his heart he is absolutely convinced that’s the goal he wants to achieve. For that goal he will sacrifice his entertainment. He will stay up all night and study the textbook and keep it wherever he goes with him, right? He will do all of that, he will sacrifice all of that, he will apply the best of his mind, where? Where his heart wants him to apply it.

So, the heart decides that’s what I want to acquire and then the mind submits and the mind gives its best efforts to acquire that. In other words, the greatest scientist doesn’t become the greatest scientist just by thinking or studying hard. It’s because they want to become a great scientist. And that want and that drive comes from the heart. That’s the spiritual drive.

Now, Allah (swt) mentions their hearts became hard. The religious example I wanted to give you; Allah has acknowledged in *Surah Al-Baqara* and other places that the Israelites at the time of the Messenger (s.a.w) were incredibly intelligent people. They’re very very smart people. They understand, they recognize. Later on, in the latter half of this Surah we are going to learn when they see the messenger they know him as well as recognizing their own children. “Even when they change the book.” There is one thing to change the book, you didn’t realize it’s God’s book so I changed it I’m sorry, I didn’t realize, I thought I could edit it because it’s human speech! Allah (swt) says, “They changed it even after they understood it.” In other words Allah is giving them credit that they actually understood. But what’s the problem. There’s no problem here. Actually we even have Hadith narrations where the rabbi sent his son to meet the messengers of Allah (s.a.w), go find out if he’s the one being promised in our books. So, he spends time with the messenger and comes back and he says so, what did you find? He says there’s no doubt about it that’s the guy. That’s the final messenger and they both swear, we swear till our death we will both oppose him, right. Because their heart is not willing to accept a gentile; a child of Ismail (AS). It’s not willing to accept it.

So Allah says, now at the end of all of this, ‘You understood that he is Allah’s messenger. You understood Allah gives life back after death. You understood that it can only be Allah who parts the water so you can cross. You understood that the water coming out of the boulder can only be from Allah.’ But that was all up here, it never entered where? In here. It never entered the heart. And so even after seeing all of that, these things were supposed to melt your heart, but even these things could not, I mean the dead guy coming back to life? If you have kind of weak *Iman* in Allah and you see a dead guy coming back to life by Allah’s command in front of your eyes, you’d say you know what? *Astaghfirullahil Azeem!* I will take the last 3 or 4 days of Ramadan more seriously. Right. Your *Iman* would get straight. But these guys, Allah says, “Even after that your hearts became hard”. Then He says, “Then they became like stones.”

Now, the thing with stones is, very interesting parable that Allah gives. I’ll roughly translate it for you and leave you the riddle so we can address the riddle in completion later on tonight. Allah says, “Your hearts became hard, like a boulder; like stones. Or they became even tougher, more intense in their stiffness than stone.” So now Allah says 2 things. Your hearts are hard as stones, which is bad enough. But then he adds, no, you know what they might even be worse than stones. And He doesn’t stop there. He says, “Even out of stones there are those from which water explodes out”; gushes out, rivers gush out. You know like waterfalls coming out of rocks and boulders. Allah is giving the example of that that even stones can compromise. But your hearts were even worse than stones. The first kind of stone He mentions is the one that explodes and waterfalls and springs come out of it. The second kind of stones, He says, “Even out of stones there are those who crack open.” They are hit hard and they crack open, they break and what is found from inside, what comes out of them is water.

So, the first example was springs coming out of a rock. The second is the rock cracks open and what do you find inside? You still find some water. The thing to ask is which example had more water; the springs coming out or the water being found inside the rock? The springs coming out. That’s more water. Now, He mentions less water. Then He gives a third example of rock. There are 3 kinds of rock. He says, “And even out of stones there are those that descend, that collapse.” You ever seen anything like an earthquake maybe in a video or something, a landslide? So the rocks that are at the top of the cliff start collapsing and falling down. Right? And they are rolling their way down the hill. So, He says there are even out of stones that collapse and fall from the fear of Allah. How many kinds of rocks do we have in this Ayah? 3 kinds of rock, right. We have the rocks that gush into spring. We have the rocks that water comes out of and the rocks that fall because of the fear of Allah.

The question, though, is what’s the point of mentioning these 3 kinds of rocks? What does this have to do with the rest of the conversation? What does Allah (swt) mean by these 3 rocks? Allah (swt) says in another place, “These are examples we give for people. Nobody understands them except people who have knowledge.” In other words these examples that Allah gives, in this case is the example of rocks, 3 different kinds of rocks, these examples are supposed to make us ponder and reflect and do research and pursue knowledge and until we do, you’re not going to be able to understand them. Because it’s not something you can casually read and say ‘ah I get it 3 kinds of rocks that’s cool’. It doesn’t work like that. It’s something that requires pondering and reflection. So, In Sha Allah, I’m not going to tell what those 3 rocks mean, yet, but In Sha Allah, after taraweeh, I will tell you what Allah means by these rocks and what does that have to do with this conversation that is happening in regards to Bani Israel and so I’ll conclude with the conclusion of the Ayah, “And Allah is not unaware at all in regards to what you are doing.” In other words He didn’t say what you did do, what you continue to do, Allah is not unaware, not heedless at all.

Asslamu-alaikum Wa Rehmatullah !