

LECTURE 1 – 26 Jan2010

“Say, (O Muhammad) If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and will forgive your sins; Indeed Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”

Suratu Aali Imran 3:31

To understand this verse, we first need to look at the concept of love.

Love is so central in Islam that the Prophet (SAW) has said that “The strongest faith is to be sincere for the sake of Allah, to hate for the sake of Allah (Tabarra) and to love for the sake of Allah (Tawalla)....”

Fudhayl ibn Yasar, asked Imam Ja’far As Sadiq (AS) whether love and hatred were derived from faith. Imam replied: “Is faith anything but love and hate?”

Imam Muhammad Al Baqir (AS) has said that: “Religion is love and love is religion.”

So what is love?

‘Ahabba’ is used to describe the state of a camel who when it kneels refuses to stand up again just as a muhibb (lover) will not move his heart away from remembering his beloved.

‘Habb’ is a seed for love is the seed of life.

“Love is called *‘mahabba’* because it obliterates everything but the beloved from the heart.

“Love is the heart’s agreement with the wishes of the *Rabb.*”

In philosophy love is the ‘elixir’ – the philosopher’s stone which changes one matter into another by melting down, combining and perfecting. It is love that makes a heart a heart, otherwise it is just clay and water.

It is love which awakens sleeping powers, and frees the chains and fetters just like the splitting of an atom releases atomic power. Love develops the spirit, it inspires and builds. A hen will fold its wings and will run away even from a young child. But, when the same hen has chicks, love takes over. The same wings which were folded by its side are now lowered in defence of its young. Previously, it ran away from the child, but now it clucks noisily and attacks where possible to protect its young. Love makes a young man or woman who when single thought of nothing but themselves suddenly move like lightning at the slightest cry of their child from the cradle. It is love that turns a miser into a generous person, and an impatient person into a tolerant one.

Love is a subsistent relationship which is based on resemblance and similarity; essentially it is need which is the root of love. Rumi in his Mathnavi mentions fine story that illustrate this fact.

The story relates to a wise man that saw a Raven who had formed affection for a Stork. They perched together and flew together. The wise man could not understand how two birds of two different species that had no similarity either in shape or in colour with each other could be friends. He went close and discovered that both of them had only one leg.

The only desire of one who loves is to be loved back. In the verse 3:31; Allah gives the methodology to attain His love. He says “Follow Muhammad (SAW)” using the word *“Ittiba’*

“Ittiba’ (to follow) is the concept of a person submitting to and accepting the authority of a person in a particular field without demanding proof and justification for every view, opinion, verdict etc...

Therefore it is a practical and a potential following so much so that just as a glass container takes the colour of its contents – whenever someone were to observe the actions of one who does *Ittiba’* of Muhammad (SAW) they would say: “He is Muhammadi”

Whenever Imam Ali (AS) spoke he would say – “Sami’tu Rasulullah” I heard Rasulullah say.....

If we look at all the leaders of the world – Greek. Religious, Philosophers... we will find that all their messages are outdated and modified. The message of Muhammad (SAW) has withstood the test of time and intellectual pleasure lies in affirming his message.

His miracle was an intellectual one. A mu’jiza (miracle) is one that when humankind thinks it has reached its peak, Allah sends a messenger who proves that perfection is only from the divine. The Arabs thought that they had reached the peak of literary knowledge; even having competitions where the best 7 writings were pinned onto the Ka’ba (Saba’ muallaqaat). Rasulullah (SAW) pinned Suratul Kawthar under the best one. He looked at it and said that this is not from a human being.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE



We will divide the life of Rasulullah (SAW) into 4 phases:

1. Birth to Be'that 0-40 yrs - LEARNING
2. Be'that to Hijra 40-53 yrs - LIVING
3. Hijra to Wafat 53-63 yrs - LEADERSHIP
4. Wafat to Qiyama 10AH – Qiyama – LEGACY