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Thursday



Title: The True Mind Lies in the Heart

DVD title: The Mind of the Heart: A Receiver of Revelation and Transmission

Bismi-Llāhi-r-Rahmāni-r-Rahīm. Going back to the subject of metaphor and reality, when you read Sufic texts you become very familiar with how the metaphor is used over time. Especially in Sufic poetry, there is the metaphor of the eye of the mind, or the eye of the heart. There is the idea that the cornea or the lens has certain diseases that affect them. Metaphors talk about cataracts that afflict us. Also, the heart and the blood circulating, the channels, the bloodlines, the lines of relationships are often used. There are all the other metaphors used in poetry, that are even more specific, especially in Persian poetry: the arched eyebrow, the almond eye, things like that.

I'd like to focus on one of the fundamental realities that the revelation of the Qur'an puts forth fairly clearly, again and again. There are also parables told in the Qur'an. All of it renders the Qur'an more understandable; but most people pass by them and don't notice what they mean. Our mind is really two minds. What we call the mind in day to day terminology refers to the capability and faculty that is common to all human beings, but this is not the mind that is referred to in the Qur'an. The [word for] mind, *'āqil*, is a verb, an action. The mind is a dynamic of an inner capability, an inner faculty within the human being. That faculty is called *qalb*, the heart. It becomes very difficult when we talk about the mind in day to day life as a mental process; but in Tasawwuf, we are referring to the dynamics of the heart.

The mind, in the Qur'an, is a receiver of the reality of the revelation of Allah (swt). This mind that is referred to in Qur'an is what receives the revelation of Allah (swt). It receives it through the means of the heart, the heart's capability to receive. If you think of

your heart as being a receptor of transmissions from Allah, and the mind that receives the revelation vis a vis the heart... let me step back. When the mind (that we normally think of as the mind) tries to understand Islam, you run into a lot of trouble—rules, regulations, ideas that are not based on a heart’s understanding. It’s interesting because the word for comprehending this revelation is also *fiqh*. But when you think of *fiqh*, you think of laws, rules. A *faqīh* knows the rules, the way things are to be done, the format. But comprehension, *fiqh* in this sense in the Qur’an, is knowledge that arises from within the human being in the human being’s heart. The true *faqīh* is a person of heart who understands and receives the revelation in their heart.

Tafakkur/contemplation is not of the mind. It is heart-centered and dynamic. It is the means through which we meditate on this creation, the Creator, and the universes, what has been revealed in order to manifest to ourselves or prove to ourselves, or affirm in our own the existence of Allah (swt). What is the revelation? Allah reveals the Truth. Who is the Truth? Allah reveals Himself to us vis a vis the heart. The understanding we get through the heart is the proof, if you will; the affirmation of understanding the existence of Allah. It’s like me hiding, and saying, “Khaled, Khaled.” Khaled is looking around for me, and all of sudden I walk out and he associates the voice with the body—the proof.

The mind that is shared by all human kind may be a tool for the human being’s aspiration or hope to understand the Creator, but it can also be a tool for a kind of passion that considers one’s own self divine—ego. The lower self feels it is in control of satisfying its own desires, defining them, and controlling them. Or it can be a means for developing philosophical ideas, or of meditating upon the truth. It can be a means for influencing outcomes, collecting information and data. It is a means for using inductive reasons. But the perfect use of the mind as an instrument is to serve the heart and the heart’s aspirations. To receive the revelations and teachings in the heart, and have love, *eshq* (passionate overriding love or *muhabbat*) is a foundation for understanding how to properly direct the mind.

It is through the heart that we have the most cogent understanding, the most committed service, that we sense what is timely, appropriate, coherent, that connects the here and the Hereafter; the outer with the inner. There is the mind that interfaces with the world, with other human beings, that observes the beauty of nature, that derives the sciences we use every day. Then there is beyond the veils into the unseen world where true knowledge is only attainable by receiving and learning from that revelation in the heart. That's why the subject of *qalb*/heart is mentioned more than 130 times in the Qur'an. In no instance is it used as a term for the fleshy gland, or the pineal gland.

The subject of *'āqil* is mentioned 50 times in the Qur'an, and in no instance is it used as a term for the common understanding of mind we use in every day language. It is never used in that context. The subject of *fiqh*/contemplation is used 20 times. The subject of *fikr*/thought is used just a little less, 17-18 times. In every case, it is referencing the faith-related function of the heart. It is not anything mental, but one's *iman* in the heart. Check it out. This terminology people assume they know and understand, but they don't understand it. The mind we are used to using, the instrument we use to obtain knowledge of the universe, through our senses, that develops the logic through investigation and other variables of inter-related circumstances is different than the perfect mind. The perfect mind receives knowledge from revelation.

The knowledge you can receive with that mind through the heart also is at times very focused on what we would call science, on the discussion of how human beings are created, the universes within the body, mitosis, all these biological discussions and discussions of other universes; but it's arrived at through the heart. The beauty of what is happening (revelation being received through *qalb*) is obtaining that revelation or knowledge from the unseen world, the *ghaib*—not from what is being seen through the senses. We all know that what you can perceive through the senses can be very distorted, not from what in the common realm is visible or audible.

The mind that believes in Allah (swt) and in revelation suffers a loss of *basara*/sight when it closes the eye of the common faculties/capabilities, and becomes incapable of learning from the universe. It abandons its primary tool, and the heart ceases to be attuned to the revelation. The Sufis say “the heart rusts,” thus you get the metaphor of “polishing the heart.” Just like any tool that is left and neglected, it rusts. It fails to achieve it’s highest stage of mastering, both the worldly life [and the inner life], and one finds themselves sitting in the company of lazy people, slackers. This is what comes from not trying to understand, not trying to receive the revelation of Allah (swt), as if it is coming to you, to your heart. Not that it’s written in a book, and you are trying to understand it with your head. To me, something very interesting about this is, Allah (swt) makes this whole universe subservient to us (His created human beings), and then commands us to move about this earth (there are many descriptions of moving about the earth in the Qur’an, on the seas and walking), and to live in this world and strive and struggle, but for the purpose of receiving or being aware of the beauty, *ihsan*, the Divine Presence.

At the same time, He tells us we cannot do this unless we learn how to use this instrument, called the mind, properly. We cannot understand it until we understand what is contained in the mind of the heart. Again, this is the reason why in Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī Tarīqah, we begin with *qalb*. We start from the very beginning to understand that understanding comes through refining *qalb*. When the mind of the heart is blinded by distractions, then it negates the real vision, the vision of Allah (swt), of the Attributes of Allah, of the Hasana of Allah, the vision of the Beauty of Allah’s creation. With that, then, one cannot connect the dots between the Creator, the creation, life and the Afterlife, because this revelation is coming from the *ghaib* to the heart. The link is in the heart and in love. That’s what has to transcend the limitations of this physical world, but embrace the metaphors of this physical world, the beautiful metaphors, symbols of that eternal reality that Allah has placed before us—the beauty of nature, the sunset, the love between

human beings, the sacrifices that people make, the joy of service. All the things we see in the physical world are revelations if you understand them and see where they come from, and where they emerge from the Qur'an. You feel the revelation is living your heart.

When the mind is blind, it is not interested in revelation. Indeed, when the mind is blind and the heart is closed, revelation seems to be some kind of manipulative tool of religion that people use. Their minds tell them, "You should not fall into this trap." These are those who wander astray, because there is no guidance. They are not open to guidance. There is no goal the person has that links their life with something eternal, links their day to day experience with destiny, either here or in the Hereafter. It doesn't link the person with Jannah or Jahannam, either. There is no guidance, no other-worldliness, no sense of perpetuity. There is only the limitations of the material comforts of this world.

This blindness is so important that it is mentioned 33 times in Qur'an, including three expressions that refer to the blindness of the sense, and thirty expressions that refer to the blindness of the heart. It is so important that the heart is not blind; consequently, the function of the common senses of hearing and seeing are restricted and they become ineffective. You see, but you don't see. You hear, but you don't hear. Even if you are looking at the Book, the Qur'an, you see it but you don't see it; you hear it but you don't hear it. Again, you have eyes but you don't see, and you have ears but you don't hear. The listener listens, but they are listening to words, sounds. The seer sees, but it's as if you are driving down the road, and you see the sign that says Roanoke to the right, but you can't read. You can't be guided, even by the sign in front of you. Even if it were ten times bigger and flashing, you still wouldn't know it. The person isn't guided in the right direction. You see; you are reading Qur'an, but you are not being guided in the right direction because your heart is not receiving it. You are receiving with your mind, so you are interpreting it with your mind. You interpret it with your mind in a way that benefits you, or your ideology, or your ideas, or your desires, or whatever. You become like the "archaic revivalists."

This is what happens when unbelief intervenes between human beings, created by Allah, and the *tajalli*, the radiant light of revelation. That's when disbelief becomes like a black curtain. No matter how much light is on one side of it, it won't reach you. Someone is telling you about belief, God, Allah, or Truth (whatever you want to call it), and the doubt severs your connection with that truth. Indeed, the person stops listening. They stop coming to *dars*, they stop reading Qur'an, they stop praying, and they stop believing. If you give people an excuse so they don't feel guilty, they blame you or me or Allah or Jesus (as) or whatever. They blame the Pope. The condition of the disbeliever or the unbeliever is described by Allah when He addresses Prophet Muhammed (sal):

And among them are some who listen to you. Try to grasp this: I'm not Allah, and you're not the Prophet, but I'm talking to you. Don't make it like a book; think about two people talking. **And among them are some who listen to you, but can you cause the deaf to hear, even though they do not comprehend? And among them is he who looks toward you, but can you guide the blind, even though they do not see? (10:42-43)**

Such people hear; they are not physical deaf. They see elements in the universe, yet they are, as described in the Qur'an, "...**deaf, dumb and blind so they do not understand.**" (2:171). You hear; but you don't hear. You see, but you don't see. You are deaf, dumb, and blind. The mind rejects the revelation because the heart is closed. When the mind rejects the revelation, automatically you question the sovereignty of Allah, the Divinity of the Revealer. When you look at certain societies today, they look at Islam and deny Allah and deny the Qur'an. Those people, no matter what they claim, they are secularists. They are not seeing the truth. Why do I say that? Because *shirk* happens. The mind rejects the revelation; consequently, you dispute or reject the sovereignty of the Revealer, Allah. So the next thing that happens is you arrogantly claim to be the knower. You speak for Allah. You're going to "win it back for Jesus," or for Allah.

The whole thing now comes to a fight between what somebody considers to be the truth and eternity; and those who know what the truth is and understand eternity in the now. Hence, you have the world we live in today where people are willing to battle, fight, die, and kill others for a truth they believe; but they don't see the eternal wisdom or the real revelation, which is called *islam/peace*. They make people insecure, unsafe, and not peaceful. How much further from the truth could you be? People take pride in being animals. They act like animals and kill like animals. In fact, animals are smarter. I shouldn't be putting down animals. Animals only fight in order to survive, and there is no philosophy behind it. But these people act like animals act, but not for the good reasons animals act that way. That's a better way of saying it.

Allah says about these deaf, dumb, and blind people: **“We have already created for hell many of the jinn and men having hearts with which they do not understand, eyes with which they do not see, and ears with which they do not hear. Those are like cattle; no, they are worse. Those are the heedless.”** (7:179) Cattle will do what you tell them to do; you can at least herd them. [But these people,] their hearts are closed. They operate by the mind that most people in the world operate. They are selfish and live a life that is disconnected. They eat too much, sleep too much, live a pace of life that doesn't have time for reflection. They constantly engage in the insanity of the materialistic world, the insanity of power, of money, of fulfilling personal desires, the insanity of possessiveness and being overseers of others. Their hearts have become rusty or never were polished at all. They do not have the hearts to receive revelation and comprehend it. They don't have the ears that can hear anything other than what is selfish and self-promoting. They don't have the eyes that can see at all the light that comes from the truth and from revelation. No, they are worse than cattle.

In this greater scheme of things, life can be a metaphor for total awareness and awakensness, and eternal, ever-lasting happiness in the awareness of the Divine, or life can

be hell. Allah curses them; He deafens them and makes them blind. When I say “He,” it means that when people make certain choices and refuse certain guidance, there is that capacity and capability within each one of us to choose to be the masters over our own self and our own destiny. We blind ourselves and deafen ourselves. Again, you see what people do. They listen to music very loudly, and literally become deaf. They stare at things and covet things to such a degree that they can see nothing else but what their desires are. Allah says, **“What, do they not ponder the Qur’an, or are there locks upon their hearts?”** (47:24) You think ponder means mind; but it says, **“locks upon their hearts.”** Pondering means in the heart. Here is another example of the mind being referred to in relationship to the heart.

They have sealed hearts, which locks have been put on and fixed. These locks are products of their own indolence and stubbornness, of their own arrogance, of their own animal nature (not to insult the animals who are just acting instinctively). I think the issue is that we should really seriously try to read Qur’an with the heart. Try to understand what it means to have the revelation come to the heart. Try to understand that the mind that dwells as the heart gives good guidance and leadership to us if we allow the light of the teaching and revelation to come to us. We should really, really catch ourselves in our own arrogance, laziness, indolence and desire nature, and be grateful that at least we have heard the message. [We should] allow the beauty and magnificence of everything around us to really be a reminder.

I was going to talk a little more later on how Shaykh al Akbar talked about the heart, and how the heart plays a critical role in the manifestation and actualization of the human soul, how the relationship between the heart that comprehends knowledge and receives and accepts this revelation interfaces with the *rūh*. A preview of coming events.

Asalaam aleikum.