



Unleashing Your Potential

The Power of Critical Thinking



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Lecture 2

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

• قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

- Are the ones who know equal to the ones who do not know?" Surely only the ones endowed with intellect would remind themselves.

Lecture 1

Karbala: Prescription for Reform.

“...represents a brief flight that our spirit makes along with Husayn's spirit.....”

– Ayatollah Mutahhari

Lecture 2

Power of Intentional Living

Own free will.

Path which others fix for us

Path Allah chooses for us.

Topics to Come

1. **Karbala – an instrument of reform**
2. **Power of Intentional Living**
3. **The power of Critical Thinking**
4. **Time is life's capital**
5. **Value Proposition of insaan**
6. **Emotional Intelligence – EQ v/s IQ**
7. **Living a purposefully and Relevantly**
8. **Nurturing the Next Generation**
9. **Concept of the Society of Believers**
10. **Life is a Journey – Islam is the vehicle**

Power of Critical Thinking

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ^{قَالَ} إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Are the ones who know equal to the ones who do not know?"

Surely only the ones endowed with intellect would remind themselves.



*"If doing right pleases and
doing wrong displeases you,
then you are truly a believer."*

– [Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)]

Poverty of Thought

إِنِّي مَا أَخَافُ عَلَى أُمَّتِي الْفَقْرَ وَلَكِن أَخَافُ
عَلَيْهِمْ سُوءَ التَّدْبِيرِ

I am not anxious about the incursion of poverty among my community; that about which I am afraid for them is crooked thinking.

That which poverty of thought will bring my community is much worse than that which economic poverty will bring them. [P]

Faith, Morality & Reason

- Gibrail to Adam
 - Aql - Intellect
 - Imaan – Faith
 - Haya - Morality

Imam Ali (As)

- *God has characterized the angels by **intellect without desire** and anger, and the animals with **anger and desire without reason***
- *He exalted man by bestowing upon him all of these qualities.*

Faculties of the soul

- 1. The power of intelligence
 - (*al-quwwah al-aqliyyah*) - angelic.
- 2. The power of anger
 - (*al-quwwah al-ghadabiyyah*) ferocious.
- 3. The power of desire
 - (*al-quwwah al-shahwiyyah*)- animalistic.
- 4. The power of imagination
 - (*al-quwwah al-wahmiyyah*)- demoniac.

Levels Human perfection

- Man stands between two extreme points
- below the level of beasts
- surpasses high station of angels.



Critical Thinking

Intellect

**A faculty we share with
angels**

Critical Thinking

- Thinking – A religious Obligation
 - Not to do so is to betray one's fitra
 - Where will Mother Teresa go?
- Thinking is not an option!
 - how to think correctly an important effort.
- Bahloul and Junaid
 - **Speak, Eat Sleep**

Thinking – A religious Obligation

- Allah has given us capacity to think.
 - We have a religious obligation to use our minds to think correctly

• لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

- "God does not burden any soul save to its capacity." (2:286)
- Reach the conclusions through one's own intellectual struggle - not someone else's

"Intellectual knowledge –

- Cannot learn it by accepting it on the basis of authority.
- Intellectual knowledge
 - mathematics,
 - logic,
 - philosophy,
 - theology.
- Discovered by the intelligence by asking "Why?"

Not just accepting the answers but questioning answers

No Taqlid in Usul

- Matters of Islamic Law - required to follow a mujtahid.
- Intellectual sciences - can not follow a mujtahid.

Follow a mujtahid in what you practice but not in what you believe

Tahqiq

- Accept that $2 + 2 = 4$ on the basis of someone else's expert opinion?
 - **You need to understand it**

Belief with Understanding

- I believe in God because my mujtahid told me so !!
- Performing salaah doesn't mean understanding of the One you are praying to.

Not Thinking - not an option!

- *Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.*
 - ~ *Malcolm S. Forbes*
 - **Nasruddin and Walnut & Melon**
- **What defines "correct" thinking?**
 - Creative Thinking – Clever Devils
 - Umar Khayyam – Ghalib
 - Thinking Ahead
 - Nasruddin refusing to write a letter

No Taqlid in Usul

- Tawheed is believing that He can not encompassed in imagination and
- **'Adl is that there is no accusation towards Him. -**
 - Imam Ali (A.S.)

Let us think Critically!

- If Allah did do something unjust then :
 - **Knowingly** - would make Him unjust (***Dhalim***).
 - **unknowingly** - would make Him ignorant (***Jahil***)
 - **forced to do it** would make Him reliant (***Mohtaaj***)
- **Allah is neither *Dhalim, Jahil, or Mohtaaj***
 - So the question of doing something unjust does not arise

“Is humankind free in their actions?”

- Imam Musa Kadhim (A.S.) :
- There are only 3 possibilities -
 - Allah is fully responsible for the human actions
 - Both the human being and Allah are partners in the responsibility of actions.
 - The human being is fully responsible for his/her actions

"Is humankind free in their actions?"

- If Allah is the originator - punishment for sins would be unjust
- If both the human being and Allah are partners in sin than that too is gross injustice - the weaker partner is punished for an action committed together.
- So the only logical argument is that the human being acts according to his/her own will.