

DESTINATION OF MAN

- A Qur'ānic Perspective -



«This Book, without doubt, is guidance for the God-conscious»
[2:1]

The first verse of the second chapter in the Holy Qur'ān identifies itself as guidance for those who are God-conscious. For those who are conscious of the Divine will find that the purpose of Mankind is defined in the following verse:

«Jinn and Mankind were not created save [to know Me] through worship» [51:56]

The seeker is encouraged to seek out and perform acts of worship. If the seeker sets out with the intention to find Allah then Allah will place in the seeker's path opportunities to increase in worship thus opportunities to know Allah through those acts of worship. This is highlighted in the following verse:

«We shall show them our signs on the horizons and in themselves, until it is clear to them that He is the Truth» [41:53]

When a seeker is on the journey then the seeker begins to understand that every part of creation is a sign of the creator, the same way each part of any created thing bears the mark of its maker. However, the seeker is only able to recognise the cosmos within the seeker and outside of the seeker as the road map to Allah through constant reflection which will lead to unveilings from Allah. There is a point in the journey in which the seeker not only sees the signs but begins to see Allah through His Attributes:

﴿Wherever you look, there is the Face¹ of your Lord﴾ [2:115]

Once Allah unveils the secret of His Oneness to the seeker he looks upon the world anew. Where once he observed the ordinary sequence of events that unfold throughout his life he now witnesses the Divine acting in each and every moment. Wherever he turns he only witnesses the Creator, and he now sees things as they really are. He is like one who was previously blind and is now given sight. The heart, body, intellect and soul settle and become tranquil and become cognizant:

﴿Be conscious that, truly, there is no deity except Allah...﴾ [47:19]

Can a person simply see and recognise such signs? How much worship does one perform before beginning to know Allah? Can the ﴿Face of your Lord﴾ be seen by a mere act of looking? How does one know, truly, that He is the One?

﴿They were not ordered except to worship Allah in sincerity...﴾ [98:5]

This verse clarifies that sincerity is the key to success when undertaking acts of worship. The action alone will not suffice, and good intention is required for the acceptance of that action. This is highlighted in another verse:

﴿...So, whoever hopes for a meeting with his Lord – let him do righteous work and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord﴾ [18:110]

This verse states that the performance of good deeds solely for

1 'Face' is not understood literally. An explanation is 'signs'.

Allah's sake can lead a person to enter Heaven and even been given the honour of the Beatific Vision of God. Thus fulfilling the destiny of man.

Just as there are verses encouraging sincerity and virtuous acts. There are also verses discouraging and forbidding disliked actions:

﴿Say: my Lord has made forbidden vile deeds, both those that are apparent and those concealed﴾ [7:33]

Such acts can lead to the distancing of the seeker from his Lord because of vile deeds which increase the veils between him and the Truth.

﴿In their hearts is a disease, and Allah has caused their sickness to intensify﴾ [2:10]

These verses demonstrate that as well as vile outward acts being forbidden they move one further away from God. From this it must be established what those diseases of the heart are in order to rid oneself from them. Examples of diseases of the heart include: blind hatred, ostentation, envy, hypocrisy, suspicion and doubt, desire, allurements and wantonness amongst others.

How can anyone expect to be blessed with closeness to God with a diseased heart? How does one remove such diseases? Couple this with the question: can anyone 'know' God or see His Signs with an 'unclean' heart?

The heart is central in the journey to God and reoccurs throughout any discourse about Sufism. It is not merely a coincidence that the heart is mentioned in the Holy Qur^{ān} and within this context.

﴿The Day when wealth and sons avail not (any man) save him who come to Allah with a sound heart﴾ [26:88/89]

﴿When he came unto his Lord with a whole heart﴾ [37:84]

Thus, there is a purpose for mankind. This destiny helps to

place into context life itself. It brings to the forefront matters of great importance and reduces to the background matters of little significance. One can navigate through life with the comfort that at each breath one draws closer to Lord. This drawing closer can even be thought of as Him gently pulling you towards Himself.

Do you want to be part of this serene and purposeful journey?



Niche of Lights is seeking to promote traditional and practical *Tasawwuf* (*Sufism*) and its relevance in modern times.

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