ALI 534: The Concept of Love in Islam

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Love is transcending the dichotomy between the self and the other

Three different types of love

1. Worldly Love
2. Human Love
3. Love of God

Loving for the sake of God

To see everything as a reminder and gift from God
1. The connection between love and knowledge

2. Getting to know God through the Quran

3. God’s love for us (human beings)

Questions?
Neither My Earth nor My Heavens can contain Me, but the heart of a Believing Servant, contains Me

Humans are capable of knowing and loving God

Symptoms: remembrance, contentment, devotion and self-surrender
I was a hidden treasure; I loved to be known. Hence, I created the world so that I would be known.

Love and knowledge cannot be separated.

You cannot love God unless you know God.

When you know God, you cannot help but love God.
Hearts are conditioned to love those who are kind to them and hate those who are cruel to them.

Imagine how they would feel towards Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim.

Love (feminine) + Knowledge (masculine) = The creation of the world.

Questions?
Getting to Know God

- No Goodness comes to us except by the Grace and Mercy of God

- O ye who believe! follow not Satan’s footsteps: if any will follow the footsteps of Satan, he will (but) command what is shameful and wrong: and were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, not one of you would ever have been pure: but Allah doth purify whom He pleases: and Allah is One Who hears and knows (all things). (24:21)

- We have forgotten the power of patiently waiting with faith or surrendering to God
Getting to Know God

- Our affairs are attached to the destiny decreed by Allah, and even our best plans may lead us to destruction (Imam Ali)

- Do not elevate yourself to be remembered. Learn and conceal, find safety in silence, you will please the righteous and you will outrage the wicked (Imam Ali)

- We still have to make an effort --- Start with dua

- And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should answer My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way. (2:186)
Getting to Know God

- Human love = metaphorical love

- Talking to God, getting to know God and spending time with God

- All three of these actions are encompassed within the Quran
Getting to Know God

- Revelation is God telling us who he is so that we can know Him
- Making Dua = us talking to God
- Reciting Quran = Listening to God
- Entering into dialogue with the Divine
Getting to Know God

- The more you talk to God, the more you spend time with God
- The more you spend time with God, the more you get to know Him
- The more you get to know Him, the more you fall in love with Him

Questions?
Approaching the Quran

- Need to know how to approach the Quran

- Like all things, it can lead us closer to God or further away

- We send down (stage by stage) in the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe: to the unjust it causes nothing but loss after loss. (17:82)
Approaching the Quran

- Do some self-reflection: what are you bringing to the Quran?

- You will find what you are looking for

- Empty yourself out so that God can fill you up

- Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.
Approaching the Quran

- How do we approach the Quran in a state of quiet surrender?

- We have been given the teachings that guide our religious practices

- The paradox of approaching the Quran through the Quran

- How does this work?
The Transformative Power of the Quran

- Reciting the Quran brings the presence and greatness of God near us
- This presence melts away our worldly problems and our worldly selves
- The heart gathers rust like iron. Remove this rust by the recitation of the Quran (Prophet Muhammad)
The Transformative Power of the Quran

- The more you recite the Quran the more God’s presence will enter your heart.

- You will become aware of His perfect Reality at all times.

- This will fill you with love and knowledge of God and you will begin to see God in everything.

- Oh God, I don’t know when to praise you more, when I am healthy or when I am sick (Imam Zain al-Abideen)
The Transformative Power of the Quran

- Making Dua, Reciting the Quran and perpetuating the dhikr are all preconditions and symptoms of the knowledge and love of God.

- Questions?
God’s Love for Human Beings

- The object of God’s love is human beings

- The most important step is for God to love us and not the other way around

  *If ye do love Allah, Follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (3:31)*

- God’s love is for those people who act in a beautiful or Godly way
Loving God

Love is, when God says to you, “I have created everything for you” And you say, “I have left everything for You”

Questions?

Thank you!