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Lesson 48: The Survival of the Spirit, a Sign of the Resurrection

When the philosophers began to express the philosophy of humanity, they mentioned the spirit as being an important element in relation to other elements.

From then on, all philosophies presented a point of view about it to the point where some of the Islamic scholars have presented a thousand reasons for the truth of the presence of the spirit and issues relating to it. Much has been stated in this area but the most important issue which should be noted is that the answer to this question is:

Is the spirit material or not? And in other words, is it independent or not? Or does it have special chemical and physical properties like the brain and nerves?

Some of the materialist philosophers have said that the spirit and spiritual phenomena are both material and non-material and it is like the special cells of the brain and when the human being dies, the spirit disappears just like a watch which when broken, no longer works.

Alongside these philosophies are the philosophers of the divinely revealed traditions and even some of the materialist philosophers who believe in the originality of the spirit, believe that at the death of the body, the spirit does not die and continues to live.

In order to prove this, that is, the originality, independence and subsistence of the spirit, there are many complicated reasons. Here we will present some of the clearer ones in clear and simple terms.

1. A Great World Cannot be Placed Within a Small One

Assume that you are seated beside the sea and behind it are extremely high mountains. The roaring waves and the shaking of the water against the shore and with great strength, return to the sea.

We look at this scene for a moment. Then we close our eyes and see this scene in our minds with all of

its greatness.

This shows that other than a body and cells of the brain, another jewel exists which can reflect any design no matter how great and at any scale. Clearly, this jewel must be something which is beyond the material world because we find nothing like it in the material world.

2. The External Particularity of the Spirit

We have many chemical and physical properties in our bodies, the motion of the heart has a physical quality but the effects on food is a chemical substance and examples like this are many in our body.

If the spirit, thought and reflection were all material and had physical and chemical quantities of the brain cells then why among them and our other physical properties is there a great deal of difference?

Our thoughts, ideas and spirit relate and correct us to the external world and make us aware of that which passes outside but the chemical particularities of the stomach and the physical motion of our eyes and tongue and heart never has such a state.

3. Experienced Proof of the Originality and Independence of the Spirit

Fortunately, today scholars by various scientific and experimental means have proven the originality and independence of the spirit and permanently answered those who deny the truth of the independence of the spirit and all people who believe it to be material.

Hypnotism is among the clear reasons for this which the experiments have proven this.

We see dreams and scenes appear in our dreams which sometimes speak of the future and sometimes they clarify something which had been ambiguous in such a way that it cannot be called chance or accident which is a further proof for the independence of the spirit.

These examples show that the spirit is not material and that it is not the result of special physical or chemical properties of the human brain but rather it is a metaphysical truth which does not end when the body dies but, instead, prepares itself for the Day of Resurrection and the Hereafter.

Think and Answer

1. What is the difference of opinion between the Divine philosophers and the materialists as to the spirit?
2. What is the meaning of the non-conformity of something large with something small? Which is among the major reasons for the spirit?
3. How can truthful dreams be proof of the authenticity and independence of the spirit?

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