

Where Is My Doctor? – Tabib Qulubina

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This text approaches in a very simple but clear manner the answers to crucial questions like the real identity of a human being and the scope of life in this world. It further explains some important Islamic concepts in order for the readers to understand human souls and work to fulfil the purpose of our existence and ask for help to the right people to heal our souls and be steadfast on the Right Path.

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Dedication

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Thanks to Allah (SwT) that I was born a Muslim.

Thanks to Him (SwT) for giving me unlimited opportunities to turn back.

Thanks to Him (SwT) for guiding me to the right path.

Thanks to Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) for being there for me in the hard times.

Thanks to them (‘a) that they never let go of me, even though I did.

Thanks to them (‘a) that they care for me beyond words.

Note For Readers

In this era of information explosion and the internet, people have accustomed themselves with simple styled reading. Gone are those days when books were published only for academic purposes and content with terminologies and superfluous words would fill the pages. While the authors took pride in their in-comprehensible content the readers took pride in being able to analyze the content and present their multifaceted understanding of it. We still find from time to time a quote or so hanging on people's walls like "Know thy self" or "I think therefore I am".

However, today people read for different reasons, they read to relax, they read to enjoy, they read because they like reading, they read because they wish to know more, or to learn something new, or to understand difficult things easily, or to understand the simple thing in even more simple ways.

The purpose of this book and the books to come is to present the matter to the readers in a simple form such that it can be easily, understood, digested, and implemented. The idea is not to flaunt ones writing skill or collection of verbiage but to attain a simple purpose, the purpose of ensuring a clear understanding of the content by the readers. One may aim for the content of the book to be understood by all, however, I believe one should aim at "none misunderstanding it."

With that said, I wish you the joy of reading, for nothing can replace the joy of reading and learning, especially when the learning leads you closer to the ONE and only infinite entity Allah (SwT).

Chapter 1: Race To Win

Progress has become the norm of the world and man in this progressive world may feel that they are heading in a particular definite direction, while on the other hand they also feel a little lost. Especially when they are faced with simple questions, either they choose not to give way to these questions or that they choose to ignore them when they arise.

However, time and again it is these simple or fundamental questions that matter the most. These are the questions that ensure that we are headed in the right direction, they are like our guiding compass.

Questions like why am I a Muslim? What makes me a Muslim? Why was I created? Why does Man exist? What is the purpose of life? What if I live my life without a purpose? If there is one God then why are there so many religions? And So on

After 1400 years of Islam, if an ordinary Muslim is asked, Why are you a Muslim? What do you think

their answer would be? If they are asked 'why do you worship your God?' What would they reply? It is these questions that we avoid, it is these questions that we run from.

As a child, I had hundreds and thousands of questions and at every given opportunity I would reach out to the Imam e Jamat or an Islamic scholar and ask them these questions. They would either very calmly reply 'You are too young for these questions', or they would say 'You would not understand the answer', or they would say 'One must not ask questions regarding Allah (SwT) and Ahl al-Bayt ('a)'. Which lead me to believe that Islam does not have answers to all my questions. By the time I was in my teenage, I had come to believe that Islam does not have answers to any questions at all. Islam is a blind faith and you have to blindly believe in Allah (SwT) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

However, these questions never went away, they might have been on the back seat, but they were there and after a decade they came back again. I chose to ignore them and get busy with my educational life. Especially with the intense competition in the university, one cannot take the risk of diversion or distraction. I convinced myself that I will definitely get back to these questions when I get some time on hand, let me first get over with my exams and maybe, get a good job and then InshaAllah I'll have enough time in hand, where I can sit back and give a thought to these questions.

But life just seemed to be stuck in a vicious cycle, a kind of a never-ending rat race, where every time we think that we are at the end of the racecourse, we realize that the race is about to begin. We have to gear up and get ready else we will lose the race. No matter how hard we try, the cycle never breaks and the race never ends. We try harder hoping to finish the race, however, we forget that everybody is trying harder at the same time, everybody wants to finish the race. Not just finish it but win it. We barely realize what we've missed on the way, or what we've sacrificed, until its too late.

My wife used to work in a multinational corporation, one day her boss asked her to come past midnight to attend a client call and she said it is not possible for her to work at such hours. He lashed back at her stating "With this kind of approach, how do you expect to grow in your career? Learn something from your seniors. Look at me, I invest so many extra hours at work that I lost count of them, I leave home before my son wakes up and by the time I am back, he is already asleep, one has to dedicate oneself to work." My wife politely replied "Tomorrow if your son asked you 'Father what was more important to you, your work or your son?' what would you reply?" and she left the room.

We talk about all the sacrifices one had to make to achieve success in their career or life, which include their peace of mind, their quality time with family, etc... however, what we forget to mention is the amount of religion we have sacrificed to gain the worldly pleasures.

We barely pause to think about our life, Am I living to work or am I working to live happily? Again, it's these questions that we avoid and run from. This book is aimed at asking questions that we have been avoiding and running away from. So, today let me invite you to the world of questions, where we are free to ask anything and everything and free to learn the answers that my heart has been yearning for years

to know. I invite you to the joy of asking and learning, I invite you to the bliss of knowledge.

Chapter 2: Who Am I?

It was a long time before the little kid blinked his eyes, he was staring away through the glass, lost, oblivious of the world around him. His eyes would move from one corner to another as if He is following something and then suddenly his eyes would jump to the other subject and then lost again for moments. He would every now and then shout something, as if trying to gain the attention of the entity on the other side of the glass, but by the looks of the kid I presume no one answered him. On the other side of the glass, the fish were busy with their lives ignoring the inquisitiveness of the kid, every fish had something to keep themselves busy with.

The kid shouted again 'Fish Fish, I am here, come here...' and then a little goldfish swam towards the kid and replied, "Yes little one, what is it? What do you want?" The kid was thrilled and he started talking and asking many questions. While the fish joyfully replied to all his questions, there was one particular answer that surprised the kid. He asked "how do you feel in the water, do you like it?" and the fish replied "What water?" the kid said, "the water that you are living in!!! look around you." And the fish swam here and there, turned around looked up and down and said "What water? I can't see any water." It is then that the kid realized, that the fish was so busy living that it has become oblivious of the source of its life, the source of everything it is, and the source of everything it can be. The most important thing in its life, the water.

This is more or less the story of man, the story of you and me. We got so busy in our lives and in the rat race that we have forgotten the true source of all that we have, the most important element of our life i.e., Allah (SwT); and we did not stop at that, but we have also forgotten who we are!!!

So, who is Man? Who are we? Who am I?

Man is an entity for whom Allah (SwT) says in the Holy Qur'an that all that we have created in the world is for Man.

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ

It is He who created for you all that is in the earth, (2:29).

Man has two parts to its existence body and soul, while all the Abrahamic religions agree upon this, the philosophers from the western world deny all forms of metaphysical existence, which essentially lead to

the mainstream belief that only that which can be sensed with the five senses exists. I presume being a believer of Abrahamic religion (Muslim, Christian, or Jew) we agree upon the fact that man is body and soul. This necessarily leads us to ask some fundamental questions First one being 'Which is the real me in them? Is the body real ME or is the Soul real ME? The next question would be 'Which of the two is primary and essential and which among them is secondary? Or which one is more important, body or soul?

Why are these questions so important for us? They are important so that

- 1) it becomes clear for us who the real me is?
- 2) so that it becomes clear, whose needs should we address first? Whose needs are to be prioritized over the other?
- 3) So that it becomes clear which of them should be taken care of more than the other? Which among the two should be preserved, while the other can be compromised? and finally
- 4) Which of them truly contributes towards my success in this world and the hereafter.

One might say that it's not necessary that, the answer to all the above questions be the same. Let's say if the answer for the first one is the soul, then the answer for the second may not necessarily be the same, it could be the body, and based on these answers our behavior may vary towards everything around us.

Let's look at each question and evaluate the important aspects regarding them.

Let's imagine a scenario:

Mr. Rizwan got into his fast car and was speeding away to his office. Unfortunately, he met with an accident (May Allah (SwT) protect us from calamities) and was rushed to the hospital. The doctors after evaluating the damage concluded that due to the severity of the accident, the person has suffered multiple organ damage, and hence needs to go through organ transplants.

Alhamdulillah the surgery was successful and he underwent a kidney, liver, spleen, lung, and heart transplantation. And each organ was donated by a different person, now when the Mr. Rizwan's family comes to meet him, do they see him a different person, a mix of five people? Or the same old Rizwan? Is the entity of the person only related to his outer looks and face. Rather we should pose a deeper question, would Rizwan feel like the same old Rizwan with the same memories, and personality type? or will he feel mixed with memories of the five different people and a mix of five different personalities and lives?

If we say that He would feel the same as before, then we can safely conclude that the reality of a person is not his body but his soul. If the true entity of the person was his body, he should feel a mixed

personality right now. However, we know it for sure that Mr. Rizwan before the accident and Mr. Rizwan after the surgery is one and the same. He is the same jolly person, the same helpful and kind person, the same dedicated and hard-working person with a good respectful sense of humor. Though his physical heart has been transplanted, but his metaphysical heart is still filled with love for his family, it's still filled with respect for his parents, it's still filled with the kindness for the poor and needy. Hence the true Mr. Rizwan is not the physical person that went through the surgery but the metaphysical person who is still the same.

So really, who am I?

Am I the soul or the body?

I am a soul who has been granted a body for a specific purpose.

What purpose? Well, we will see if we can arrive at the answer to that question if at all there is a purpose for us?

The subsequent question we face is which one of the two is primary or essential? and which one of them is complementary?

What is primary? and what is complementary? and what difference does it make? After all its 'ME' put together.

Primary in simple is something that is core and essence of the entity and complementary or secondary is something that contributes towards its completion.

If someone claims that body is primary, then it can be argued that if it's primary how come it perishes after 80–100 years of life while the soul lives on for eternity after death. The complementary cannot exist by itself while the primary perishes. (Someone may raise doubts about the hereafter itself, which inshAllah we will discuss in the subsequent books.)

Hence the primary cannot be short-lived than the complementary, rather it's the other way round, that the complementary depends upon the primary for its existence. So, if the body is primary, then the soul depends on it for its existence, and with the destruction of the body, the soul perishes too. However, we know for sure that it's the other way round that soul continues to live-on even though the body perishes. Hence, we can safely conclude that the soul is primary while the body is complementary. The life span of the body as of today is between 80–100 years. However, the soul lives on forever, for eternity.

Chapter 3: Comfort Vs Comfort

The father was pacing up and down the hall-way, He would constantly look at the watch as though every moment is precious for him, his forehead was perspiring, he has forgotten that he has not eaten anything since morning, as though he doesn't feel the hunger anymore. It was evident on his face; as the moments passed by, his concerns grew stronger. It was almost evening now and the wait was unbearable for him.

He noticed the nurse pacing towards him and he froze in his place like he had no life left in him, as the nurse came close, he grew nervous and his heart started pounding harder. The nurse stood right in front of him and he broke into tears when the nurse handed him over the joy of his life wrapped in a soft white towel. It was what he had waited for a long time, little Irfan was long-awaited and finally, he was in the arms of his father, like a soft pink ball of happiness and joy, staring in the blurred eyes of his father. He was smiling and crying as though he did not know if it was a moment to cry for his wait was over, or a moment of joy as the love of his life is in his arms.

Irfan's father was an ambitious person, he had great plans for Irfan, as Irfan grew, so did the plans of his father. He wanted Irfan to be a nano-tech engineer. He made sure that, Irfan was groomed and trained for this challenge right from his childhood. He would buy all the educational games for him, all the games and activities that would constantly challenge his intelligence and contribute towards its development. Irfan was equally involved in these activities and showed a positive response towards all the efforts his father had put in.

It was not that Irfan was a gifted child, but he was being treated like one. It had a great impact on him. One of the best schools were made available for Irfan to pursue his studies. Irfan performed well in the school. After school hours, the father would constantly engage him in intellectual activities.

One day father sat down Irfan and said, "Irfan you have to do well in school, you have to put in your best efforts and be among the toppers of the school."

Irfan asked "Why father? Why is it so important?"

He replied, "Its important because if you do well in your school you will get into a good college."

Irfan again asked, "Why is that important?"

"Because if you get into a good college then you can get a really good job.", replied the father.

Irfan asked, "And what after I get a good job."

Father said, "Then you will have a good career with good pay."

"But father if I want to top the school I have to work harder and after that, If I get into a good college there would be very strong competition, which means I'll have to work even harder than school."

"Yes, my son, hard and smart work is the key to success. Some people put in 10–12 hours or even more to attain success in their life."

Irfan was inquisitive and asked, "What after I get a good job?"

"Then you will have good pay and you can retire peacefully, you will not only have a comfortable work–life but also comfortable retirement, the life after work."

Irfan gave a thoughtful look to his father, for he had understood the mantra of success. The mantra of success was hard work and smart work. The mantra was 'results equal to the amount of effort we put in', 'results equal to the amount of dedication'.

Irfan wrote a poem and stuck it on his wall, it went as...

You know you are nothing

And you work hard, to mark your presence

You fight and struggle until you are the best

But still, you believe you are nothing at all

It may take nothing at all and it may take everything

The most it would take is you, for you to be GREAT!

Every morning he would look at the poem to remind himself that the true goal is the greatness, and it would take all of him to achieve it.

He worked hard through his school and college years. He continued his struggle through his work life and finally retired peacefully. He was proud of the life he lived and was looking forward to sharing it with his grandchildren.

That was the success story of Irfan. Is that the success story of Irfan?

When one looks at his life, one is forced to ask this question to Irfan and his father, all your hard work and efforts were to make the retirement (after–work) life comfortable, which is about 20–30years. And to achieve it you have worked innumerable hours. Surely, you must have sacrificed plenty of things including a certain degree of comfort during your study and work life. Am sure you believe it was a worthy and wise choice.

Now if someone has put in so much effort to make their last 20–30 years of life comfortable, which in

reality means that one has worked tirelessly for 60–65 years, put in 10–12 hours every day to make last 20–30 years comfortable.

The question we forced to ask is "For a life that is billions and billions of years, rather eternal, how many hours should one put in every day to make it comfortable?" If for the comfort of 30 years we put in 10–12 hours a day for 60–65 years; then how many hours a day and for how many years, should be invested for eternal life? Rather which life takes higher priority, the life of 80–100 years or the life of billions and billions of years? What should I be focused upon? Should I focus upon the comfort of the world or the comfort of the hereafter?

Comfort Vs Comfort...

It is for you to decide.

Chapter 4: I Have Needs And Desires

The grand day was here, the day that I have waited for many long years, As I look at my reflection the glass doors slid away and I was struck with the awe of the beauty of the place, huge hall with shiny walls as I walk in, I am welcomed by a well-dressed, decent man. However, I was so distracted that I barely paid any attention to him, I kept walking towards it, and its irresistible beauty just dragged me to it. It reminded me of Gollum from Lord of the rings, my heart was pounding hard and at the back of my mind I could hear those whispers "My preciousssss" "My Preciousssss".... Rather "My Mustangggg" "My Mustangggg"....

I was then disturbed by the same decent man, "May I be of help to you sir?". I said, "Ah yes, I am interested in this Mustang." He looked surprised to hear it from me. He asked "What do you know about this car?" and I rattled out all the information I had about it, starting from its design to its engine to its speed... He said "But you are quite young yet! Have you driven a car before?"

Well, He was right I was quite young and I never sat behind the steering wheel of any car let alone a mustang.

The man looked at me and said "A good car like this deserves a good driver. It's the driver that matters the most, the car is secondary. One can have the best car, but if they do not have the driving skills, the car is worth scrap, on the other hand, a good driver can make a masterpiece out of an average car."

I guess he was right, it doesn't matter what car I have if I do not know how to drive. However, If I had mastered the driving then even an average car is good enough and if I get a good car, it's the cherry on the cake.

Probably it's a message for Irfan to pay attention to, maybe the words of that man had more depth to it than Irfan had thought.

We know that our existence has two aspects to it, the body and the soul. However, the question remains, which among them is the car? and which is the driver?

Is the soul the car and body the driver, or is the body the car and soul the driver? Am I supposed to take good care of the car? or am I supposed to take good care of the driver?

Clearly, every car has certain needs, rather every 'body' has certain needs, like basic needs, security needs, and social needs.

Abraham Maslow in his need Hierarchy states that apart from other needs, every man has 'Basic needs' like food, water, and shelter; 'Security needs' and 'Social needs'. If these needs are addressed the body is in comfort.

However, should we forget that every driver has needs too? Or rather every soul has needs too. Should we be focused only towards the comfort of the body and ignore the needs of the soul totally?

One might say Ahem! Ahem! Sorry, I do not understand. Does a Soul have needs? What needs? And how come I am unaware of any such thing?

Well, let's look at the man once again with a new perspective. Man has two aspects to its existence body and soul. The physical and the metaphysical. The body is blessed with certain senses through which we sense the needs of the body. We call them physical senses like our five senses. Sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch, however, there are other senses too, through which we sense our joy, sadness, emotions, hunger, etc. (There is more detail to it, which inshAllah we may deal in our subsequent chapters or books.)

However, a physical body lacks the ability to sense the needs of the soul. None of the five senses can sense or evaluate the health status of the soul. That is so because the physical body lacks the ability to sense the needs of the metaphysical existence. However, if one works on their metaphysical being (purification of the soul and self-discipline) and strengthens it then it's a different story.

Let's look at an example from the Holy Qur'an, Allah (SwT) says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا.

“Indeed, those who consume the property of orphans wrongfully, only ingest fire into their bellies...” (4: 10).

From the above verse we understand that those who usurp the property of the orphans are essentially

eating fire, however, do they feel the fire in their bellies? Or are they absolutely oblivious about it? Does the physical body sense the burns and seek treatment or cure for it? Do we seek a cure for our souls?

There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an that point towards this aspect that the soul (nafs) suffers from sickness. However, we rarely find anyone striving hard to save the soul or treat and cure it.

So, what are the needs of the soul?

The scholars have argued that some of the essential needs of the soul are its desire to attain perfection, its desire for pure knowledge, its desire to grow, its desire for religious spirituality. Unfortunately, these needs cannot be perceived by the 5 senses of the body, Hence, we never realize their absence and never work towards attaining them. This results in malnutrition and a weak soul. A weak soul cannot attain perfection.

How good is a body if the soul is very weak or almost dead?

How good is a super-fast car if the driver has absolutely no driving skills?

Let's be clear here, we are not denying the body, we are not denying the existence of the body, nor are we saying that the body is not important. We are trying to understand the relationship between the body and the soul and the importance of the soul in relation to the body.

It's not enough to have a healthy body, but its also necessary to have a healthy soul. If one of them is weak, we cannot attain the desired results. Especially if the soul is weak, it's impossible to attain the desired outcome i.e., perfection and kamal.

This is the reason why Allah (SwT) invites us towards Salat(prayers), Sawm (Fasting), Du'a, and Qur'an. because it strengthens the soul and helps us attain the kamal.

Allah (SwT) in the Holy Qur'an says:

اَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

"Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and maintain the prayer. Indeed, the prayer restrains from indecent and wrongful conduct, and the remembrance of Allah is surely greater." (29:45).

Maintaining the prayers will restrain from indecent and wrongful conduct, cause indecent, and wrongful conduct impacts the soul and weakens it. Restraining from indecent acts strengthens one soul and leads them towards perfection.

So, I (body+Soul) have needs and desires and if I do not fulfill them, I(body+Soul) and would grow weak

and die.

Imagine this. A mother is trying to feed her playful three-year-old baby, after every bite, the baby runs away, with much pleading and pleasing the baby comes back for the second bite. However, halfway through the baby refuses to eat anymore. The baby hasn't eaten well in the last whole week, the mother has noticed that the baby is turning pale. Now the mother has to use alternative methods to get the baby to eat. As a first step, the mother goes, food is important you should eat your food and finish it, If the baby doesn't respond positively, then the mother tries to attract the baby with a reward. if you finish the food, I will reward you, a special fruit, candy, or some gift. After much effort, if the baby still refuses to eat, then the mother has to warn the baby, that if you do not eat, you will fall sick, then you want be able to play or go to your friend's house. If the baby still refuses to eat then the mother has to scare the baby, that if you do not eat then I will have to take you to the doctor and he will give you injections. If the baby still doesn't listen to the mother, then the mother has to catch hold of the baby and forcefully feed the baby.

A passerby, unaware of the background, watches the mother feed the baby and thinks, what a heartless mother, which other in this world treats their baby like this.

So, does this mother truly hates its baby? Is she an enemy of the baby or is it the motherly love that has made her scare the baby with injections and then actually forcefully feed the baby?

If you ask the baby, the baby would say, 'I hate my mother, she always forces me to eat food, sometimes through reward or sometimes through punishment. She just doesn't understand that I do not like to eat food.' However, if you ask the mother, she would say 'The baby needs to eat food, if it doesn't eat food, it would grow weak and sick and die and I cannot watch my baby die. Hence, I have to make sure that it eats food every day, even if it means that I have to scare it with injections and doctors. The baby is too dear for me to see her suffer.'

Man is body and soul when the body needs nutrition or is growing weak or falls sick, it lets us know, and our senses inform us that we are hungry or thirsty or need certain special nutrients or that we are sick. However, when the soul grows weak or is sick, we do not feel its sickness. Since we do not feel its sickness, we ignore its needs. Allah (SwT) is aware of how oblivious man is regarding his soul. Thus He (SwT) first warns us if you do not offer prayers, or fast or observe hijab, or pay khums, your soul will grow weak, so follow the rulings of Islam. However, there is one group that still continues to disobey, then Allah (SwT) tries to attract them with a reward, if you obey me, I will reward you with heaven, it has great mansions in it made of gold and ruby and emeralds. Some people get attracted to these rewards and obey Allah (SwT). However, there are still a few who refuse to obey Allah (SwT), then He (SwT) tells you that if you do not obey hellfire is waiting for you(injections), it is hotter than the sun, boiling iron will be casted in your ears¹, etc. IS this because Allah (SwT) is our enemy, He is a vengeful, arrogant God? Is he a taskmaster? That if we do not listen to him, He (SwT) loves punishing us? Or it is His (SwT) infinite love for us, That He (SwT) cannot bear to see us suffer in the hereafter, hence first He (SwT)

tries to attract us with rewards and if we still do not obey then He (SwT) warns us with punishment. So that we continue to feed our soul and it doesn't grow weak and die. Cause He (SwT) cannot bear to see the man, slaughter its own soul.

1. There is a concept of physicalisation of our intentions and acts in Islam, which states that every act we do, takes a physical form in the metaphysical world. Hence if we send salawat, it takes a beautiful form in the hereafter and if we commit sin, it comes to us as an ugly deformity upon our body in the hereafter.

Chapter 5: Where Is My Doctor?

The last thing I remember is answering a call at my desk and the next thing I remember is being pushed by nurses frantically shouting, emergency!! Emergency!! A male nurse running along with me trying to make notes. I don't know if I was dreaming or was it real, however, the images would constantly go blur and I would lose track of things around me. I guess I was fainting.

It sounded more like an early morning alarm; however, it had a different tone, more like a beep! beep! On the other hand, I felt quite tired. So tired that I couldn't open my eyes. Quite odd because I generally wake up all energetic. However, today was different, the alarm just kept ringing, I tried to reach out to it, to turn it off. But for some reason I felt my hands were ten times heavier than normal, I just could not move them. The beeps just kept blaring in my ears, I could not take them anymore. I focused all my energy on my eyelids and finally managed to open them, only to realize that am not in a dream, but in a reality. A reality that I was scared to accept, or witness or be part of.

I was lying on a bed in a hospital. It was surprising that the number of equipments connected to me were more than the tech gadgets I had on my office desk. I had a pulse oximeter, oxygen supply, suction machine, and what not attached to me. Each one had its own beeping sound. Every now and then a nurse would hurriedly walk-in take the reading and rush out.

Am I quarantined?

Am I...?

Before I could finish my next thought a bunch of people walked in, they seemed quite worried, I could barely make out what they were talking. I just heard some partial words "How long?" ... "Not much time" ... "Call him again" ... everything went into a spiral again, blurring away into oblivion, I guess I was fainting again.

It felt like an elephant thumping on my chest. When I opened my eyes, I saw the male nurse pressing my ribs, I am sure he is not trying to break them, however, I had never experienced such sharp pain. I

could hear partial words and the rest of the sentence would fade away “Heart arrest...”, “Slipping into coma...”, “Hang on...”, “Don't give up...”, “Don't give up on us...”, “Stay...”, “Stay...” ... And then everything zoomed out, seemed more like a Charlie Chaplin movie. People moving, running around, shouting but no words, no dialogs only worried facial expressions. Why does everything keep fading...

I could not finish my previous sentence, I guess I fainted again. Things did not seem positive. It seemed like I was there for a whole day. Finally, I managed to speak a word and ask the nurse a question. I don't exactly remember what I asked, but I saw her making an action, asking me to stay calm and silent. Then she explained what is going on here.

I was in a rare state, for reasons unknown my organs have started failing, however, suddenly they start responding and fail again. The doctor who deals with such cases was attending another case in another hospital out of the city. He has been informed about me and he is on his way. However, it will take at least 60 minutes for him to reach here. While I do not have that much time. If the doctor does not get here soon, it is really difficult to keep me in the current state; either I slip into a coma, or I die.

I don't know if she was being melodramatic or was it me but her last words echoed in my ear, and I looked at the clock it was 10:15 am. I have sixty minutes or less and I need my doctor now.

Well, Blessing or not, but I kept slipping into blur visions and fainting. This helped me lose track of time. And I hoped that the time would quickly pass and the next time I open my eyes, I guess it was the fifth time, I would have my doctor looking at me and comforting me that everything is going to be alright.

But I guess I was not so lucky, I looked at the watch and in the last 30 minutes, it has just moved seven minutes or should I put it this way that every minute seemed like an hour. The time just would not pass. I looked at the watch and after some time I look at it again and it has moved only 30 seconds. What happened to the time, am I into another dimension where the time operates differently or that I am so desperately waiting for my doctor that I am actually looking at the watch every 10–15 seconds.

It's already more than 30 minutes now and 30 minutes to go. I have never felt so rushed in my life before, I just couldn't take my eyes off the clock. Every minute mattered, rather every second mattered. I was unconsciously counting every single second on the clock, every tick the hand would move mattered.

20 minutes to go...!!!

I think I am going to die waiting for him, the wait is more painful than the actual diseases, I am on oxygen supply, however with every second that passes, I feel I am short on breath, I feel heavy in my heart, there were not just hundreds but millions of butterflies in my stomach. Am I gonna die? Am I gonna die? That's the question that kept ringing in my head. Oh God please don't let me die. Please don't let me die.

I guess my worrying up was worsening my state, the nurse jabbed a syringe right into my heart and

squeezed in the yellow liquid, maybe adrenalin... I do not know... but I guess it's going to give me some more time.

10 minutes left on the clock.

My hands and feet were growing colder, I knew this is the end if he could not make it in the last 50 minutes, its a very lean chance that he would make it in the next ten. Tears started rolling from my eyes. I had never imagined that this is how I would end. I had never imagined that my life would so desperately depend on one person. I had never imagined that I would so desperately wait for one person.

5 minutes to go.

My eyes were stuck to the clock, totally zoomed into the second's hand. I could see it move slowly like a millennium would pass between each second. The only thought that echoed in my head was "Where is my Doctor?", "Where is my Doctor?".

Beeeeeepppppppppppppppppppppp.. .. everything went blank....

This is a tragedy of an unknown man, who knew that he was sick and knew that only one man can save him. However, he died desperately waiting for that one man. Imagine if my soul was as sick as this man's body. Would I have waited for my doctor this desperately? What If I am told that my doctor would come at an unknown time? Imagine my predicament.

This could be the tragedy of an unknown man; however, this is also the reality of every single Muslim of this ummah. We are so focused on our body that we have neglected our souls, plunging it into a state of oblivion.

If the body falls sick, so does the soul. If the body needs the doctor, so does the soul. Because we do not perceive the pain of our soul, we tend to ignore it, and not pay any attention to it. Until it dwells to the lowest of low. Such That it is no more humanistic, but more of a cattle, rather worse than cattle.

The Holy Qur'an says:

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

Certainly, We have winnowed out for hell many of the jinn and humans: they have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, they have ears with which they do not hear. They are like cattle; indeed, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless. (7:179).

If we do not attend to our soul its condition would be like the man in the hospital, multiple organ failure, multiple sense failures, it has a heart, but will not understand or comprehend the truth, has eyes but will not see the truth, has ears but will not hear the truth, it would be like cattle which lacks absolute commonsense. Rather more astray than that.

Hence there is little doubt that we need a doctor for our soul, and without this doctor, we would lose the track of straight path (الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ) and go astray.

What are the sickness' of the soul, conceit, pride, arrogance, show off, misery, lavishness, extravagance, jealousy, hatred, revenge, etc... (InshaAllah will deal with these topics in a later book).

Who is our Doctor?

Our doctor is our Holy Prophet (S) and His Ahl al-Bayt ('a). They are the doctors of our soul; they are the ones who cure the diseases of our hearts and souls. That is why they are called 'طبيب قلوبنا', doctors of our heart, doctors of our soul.

When the Holy Prophet (S) proclaimed his prophethood, the Arab world was plunged into the darkness of ignorance, polytheism, and sins. It was Him who purified them, purified their hearts and souls, and elevated their positions from the lowest of the low to an honorable nation, an honorable existence. And when he left, he assigned this post to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), "I leave behind two weighty things, The book of Allah and my progeny the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), never let go any of them, else you will go astray".

I know my soul is sick, it is suffering from multiple diseases, I urgently need to provide medical assistance and support to it. However, irrespective of all the equipment I plug-in, there is still a very important aspect missing, that is my doctor.

Where is my Doctor?

Where is my Savior?

Where is the one who is going to cure my heart and soul?

Where is the Imam of my time?

We say we are waiting for Him (atfs). Some say, there is active waiting and there is passive waiting. If we are actively waiting for him (preparing grounds for him), then He(atfs) will come. Passive waiting however will only delay His (atfs) arrival. I would say even if we are passively awaiting Him (atfs), are we waiting for Him (atfs) like that dying man? Are we counting, not minutes, or seconds but the fractions of seconds? Are we waiting for Him (atfs) in a way that if he does not make it in time, our soul would die and we would have nothing on the day of judgment? We would be but empty-handed.

Where is my doctor?

Where is my doctor?

That is the question I should be asking every moment of my life. That is the question I should ask the moment I wake up, when I go to work, when I pay my taxes, when I go to the bank, when I eat, when I pray, and when I sleep.

The only concern that should bother my entire existence is “Where is my doctor?”

Chapter 6: What Is The Face Of Your Soul?

As the cart pulled through the village, the screams of a desperate woman seeking help echoed in the air, but in vain. Not because the people of the village were heartless, but because it was the abandoned section of the village.

The cart pulled in front of a broken cottage, the woman with much struggle alighted the cart and went into the cottage and after much struggle and pain, finally delivered. However, to her much surprise, they were quadruplets. She knew it was more than one baby, but she never thought they would be four.

As time passed and the kids grew each had a unique characteristic in them. One of them was a smart analytical kid who would evaluate all information rationally and arrive at proven conclusions. His decision makings were well calculated and universally accepted.

The other one was a daydreamer, he would dream of dragons, castles, flying mountains, magic portions, fairies & magic wands, super-beings with superpowers, etc... His decisions were based on fantasy, with no rationale in it, and would not appeal to common sense. Apparently, no one would approach him for guidance and advice, however, he had a way with words. He would so beautifully present his thoughts and ideas that it would keep the people involved, take them away from the reality of their lives. People would sit and listen to him for hours and hours, such that they would forget that they are hungry or that they have a shop or family to attend to. Sometimes they would get so involved in the stories, that they began to believe that the story is their real life. While their true actual life is a hurdle in living their fantasy life.

Another one of them was extremely greedy. He had this undying desire to get as much as he can, of whatever he can. He had no limitation to his wants, he wanted more food, more clothes, more land, more money, more power, more everything. If he could, he would have had more of ‘more’ too.

And the last one of them was unique in his own way. He could not understand or rationally think, however, he believed that all problems can be solved by the fist. He would probably hit first and talk later, if someone would wish him a good morning, I guess he would punch him back and say “Yeah now

its good morning for me.” Maybe I should put it in simple words that the last one was no brains and all might kind of a person.

Years passed and now they are fully grown up, they set out in search of work to earn a living. While passing through a country they come to know that the King is seeking a vizier to help him rule efficiently. Each of them bearing a unique ability decided to give it a try.

The first one to approach the king was the ‘All might and no brains’.

He said “My Lord, I will make the best vizier for you, for your kingdom is vast and rich and such a kingdom deserves to be protected. I will design the defense system for you that is impenetrable, no one would dare to approach your land. No one will ever dream of invading your kingdom. Not only that but I would make strict laws for homeland security. Ensuring that there is no internal threat to your position or kingdom.”

“My Lord, any head that rises will be immediately put down, any hand that points will be immediately cut down, any voice raised will be immediately suffocated. You will rule powerfully and peacefully for years to come.”

Though his ideas were appealing, however, the king felt a certain discomfort due to his hostile approach. The king was looking for a better option.

Next, the greedy one approached the king and said “My king! I will make the best vizier for you. While your kingdom is vast and rich, yet there are lands to be conquered, there are riches to be gained. The royal treasures can become the grand treasure that has no comparison. We would march our armies into our neighboring countries. We will invade the faraway lands. We will get the riches from across the world. The king needs a new queen and I know exactly where will you find one. My king, you are too lenient with your people, we should increase the taxes and build mansions and castles with the extra revenue. You would be the King like no other and I will be the vizier like no other.”

Then came the daydreamer and said “My lord! Look no further, for your needs will be fulfilled by this humble servant, who humbles himself in your lofty presence. My Lord, If I be your vizier, your kingdom would be spoken of for 1000s of years to come, history will record your kingdom as a kingdom of magnanimity. The boundaries of which would spread from the east to west, the sun would never set in your kingdom, it would be the land of dreams and opportunities. People from far and near would come to your kingdom to achieve their dreams. Your palace will overflow with mastery, fine-arts, gold, and jewels. People would bow to your greatness and graciousness. People would swear upon your royalty and honesty. Poets would praise your lands as the heavens on earth and your esteemed self as a God. Look no further My lord, it is time to fulfill your dreams and the dreams of your people....”

The king was highly impressed with him and highly inclined to appoint him as his vizier. However, he also wanted to give a fair chance to the smart one.

While the smart one started his argument, the other two asked the 'daydreamer', how are you going to achieve all that you said?" He replied "with the help of you two. That way not only I get to be the vizier, but you get to be my partners."

The smart one started "O Great King! Let's be practical here, your kingdom needs a vizier, not an ordinary one but the one who can understand the needs of the Kingdom, the king, and the people, who can analyze the situation at hand and provide an appropriate and rational solution. While it's true that a King needs to maintain His treasury to respond to any contingencies or an emergency, however, this does not mean that the king is at the liberty to harass and oppress his own people by taxing them heavily. My Lord, there is nothing better than peace. Hence, while expanding the country could be one option, the other option can be to maintain peace with the neighboring countries. That way the internal economy would grow and it would lead to international trade as well. War by itself costs money, over and above it destroys the morale of the citizens and hampers the economy dramatically...."

And he went on to explain with his rational approach why the king should or should not take certain decisions. The king was highly impressed and had arrived at the conclusion of appointing the smart one as the vizier when the 'daydreamer' interrupted and said, "My lord! Why don't you ponder over this matter and declare your results tomorrow?" Then he turned to the other two and said "Come what may my brothers, the smart one should not become the vizier, for he may not leave any post for us in this kingdom."

Hence began the enmity of 'Aql (Intellect/reason), Shahwat (Greed), Ghadhab (Anger), and Wahm (Fantasy). By now you must have understood that who among the four is 'Aql, Shahwat, Ghadhab, and Wahm?

The soul is like the king of the body. The body obeys the command of the soul. However, the question is who is the adviser of the soul? Is it Shahwat the 'Greedy' one, Ghadhab the 'All might & no brains', Wahm the 'Daydreamer' or 'Aql the 'Smart one'.

Whoever it is the soul acts according to it and commands the body to act in accordance with it. If the Vizier is Shahwat, Ghadhab or Wahm then the state of the soul is that of ammara which seeks to fulfill the animalistic desires and does not care for the others. Another great challenge here is that if any of the three take the post of vizier they would ensure that 'Aql is annulled and would not allow it to play any role at all.

However, if the vizier is 'Aql (intellect) then Shahwat (greed), Ghadhab (anger), and Wahm (fantasy) takes the directions from it and obeys it, instead of ruling it and this is the most correct way, that 'Aql should direct and not be directed. When 'Aql takes over from any of the other three, the soul moves into a new state called 'Lawammah' and after a long rule of 'Aql, the soul moves into the final state called "Mutma'innah" (content or at peace).

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ

O soul at peace! (89:27).

ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

Return to your Lord, pleased and pleasing! (89:28).

Clearly, if the wahm takes over the soul, it would keep you busy in your dreams and fantasies and if the greed takes over the soul, then we get busy in life trying to earn more money, get a bigger house, get a better position, work for a better company, drive a more luxurious car, etc... and if Ghadhab takes over the soul then we are arrogant, hasty, and brute in our decisions, without being considerate towards others.

However, the more challenging question is what happens when the ‘Aql (Intellect) takes over the soul?

Our great scholars have discussed this in detail, when one of the faculties takes over, they become the primary decision maker and summon other faculties at their service. Hence if wahm is the vizier then Ghadhab, shahwat, and ‘Aql all have to play to its tune, and the same goes with the other faculties. If one of them becomes vizier, others have to play to its tune. However, let me emphasize again wahm, Ghadhab, and shahwat are always in concurrence with each other. While ‘Aql is always at loggerheads with them.

If ‘Aql becomes the vizier it summons the other faculties to serve it. When ‘Aql calls for service, it restricts their extremism and maintains their performance at a balance or optimum level. If Ghadhab is out of balance then either it is an outrage or its timidity and if it is well balanced then it is courage. Hence, it’s the ‘Aql that maintains the balance of all the faculties and its ‘Aql that deserves to act as vizier to our soul. If ‘Aql takes the throne, then Ghadhab is mediated at courage, shahwat is mediated at chastity, wahm is mediated at justice and ‘Aql attains wisdom¹.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِّأَنْفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

So be wary of Allah, as much as you can, and listen and obey, and spend [in the way of Allah]; that is better for yourselves. Those who are saved from their own greed—it is they who are the felicitous. (Holy Qur’an, 64: 16).

¹. Al-Maqamat al-A’liya, summary of Mi’raj us Sa’dat – Hajj Sheikh Abbas al-Qummi, pg 8.

Chapter 7: “I” Vs “Me”

There are verses in the Holy Qur'an that points out the viciousness of one's soul. If any of the faculties other than 'Aql (intellect/reason) rules the soul, the soul descends to the level of (ammara) carnal desires. The Holy Qur'an says that your greatest enemy within you is your nafs al-ammara, no one can escape it lest Allah (SwT) shows his mercy towards this person.

وَمَا أُبْرِئُ نَفْسِي ۚ إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

***'Yet I do not absolve my [own carnal] soul, for the [carnal] soul indeed prompts [men] to evil, except in as much as my Lord has mercy. Indeed, my Lord is all-forgiving, all-merciful.'* (12: 53).**

There is always an ongoing war within my existence, the war to drag me down to the ammara (carnal) level, or raise me to the mutamainna level(contentment). It's a war between truth (Haqq) and false (Batil), between 'Aql and the rest of the three faculties. It's not a war between the body and the soul. The body is a slave, it obeys what the soul commands, it all boils down to who is ruling your soul.

One might claim that it's the 'Aql that rules my soul, however, how do we verify, which of the four faculties is ruling our soul? Allah (SwT) has set a very simple yardstick to measure, it's the actions of the person, that will determine if they are the followers of truth or falsehood. Whether the intellect is ruling our soul or the other faculties.

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

By your Lord, We will question them all (15:92).

عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

concerning what they used to do. (15:93).

If our actions are in sync with our claim that, we are on Haq, then we would be the felicitous ones, and if it is the otherwise then we would be the wretched ones.

وَالْوِزْنُ يُوَمَّذُ الْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

The weighing [of deeds] on that Day is a truth. As for those whose deeds weigh heavy in the

scales – it is they who are the felicitous. (7:8).

So, the most essential question here is who wins the war 'I' or 'ME'. If 'I' win the war 'ME' loses it and vice versa. Let me put it this way, which level of my soul wins the war? The carnal level or the content level, the ammara level, or the mutma'innah level. If the carnal level wins, then I am doomed for eternity. However, if the content level wins then I am felicitous for eternity.

Do I have a say in it? Can I decide who wins the war?

Absolutely!!!

It reminds me of the blind mother and her four children. A blind woman gives birth to four children.

Bringing up four children is a challenging task, and bringing up four children when you are blind is a herculean task. She could not have abandoned her children, after all, she was the mother. Hence, she would set out every morning looking for simple chores in the neighborhood. She would wash clothes or utensils at people's houses and earn a penny or two. With that little income, she used to buy some bread and head back home to feed her kids. She would sit them up in a line opposite to her and would feed them in a sequence, one bite per person and then begin the second round.

Years passed and the kids grew up, healthy and strong. She then tells her kids, I have grown old and weak now, and you are all grown up. You must look for a job and earn some money, and take care of me, the way I used to take care of you when you were little children.

The young lads set out in search of a job. Each of them finds a good job and starts earning well. However, instead of returning home, they choose to settle down in their respective town. The old mother grows weak and ill waiting for her children to return and take care of her. After waiting for a week, with no one to feed her or take care of her. She calls out for help. 'Is anyone there? Is there anyone who can help me?' and she hears a faint feeble voice, 'Yes Mother, I am here, but am too weak to help you. I wish to help you but I can barely move, I can barely breathe.'

The blind mother immediately recognizes the voice that it's the fourth child. She inquires about his condition 'What happened to you, my son? How did you end up like this?'. He then narrates what went by in the last 15 years.

O mother! You are the most loving and caring one. You have struggled through your life to give us comfort. You have sacrificed all you had to bring us up. You tried to feed us justly and equally. However, mother, since you are blind and you couldn't see the other three sons, ate my share of food. They all teamed up against me and every time you would bring forth a piece of bread as my share, they would cover my mouth and one of them would take the bite from your hand. Over the time, I grew weaker and weaker, so much so that I couldn't defend my self anymore and they grew stronger and stronger. Today they have abandoned you for their own pleasure and joy and I am here still with you. Though I wish to

help you, I have no energy left to help you.

O, Mother! I love you more than I can say and I can sacrifice my life for you and it pains me to see you in this state, however, I am helpless.

Think about it, whose fault is it? Who is responsible for the miserable state of the mother and the son?

Clearly, we would like to blame the other three sons and truly they are the primary reason for it.

However, to some extent, the mother is also responsible. Since she just kept feeding the wrong kids blindly, presuming that she is following the order and justice.

This is our story, the story of me and my faculties. It is me who decides which faculty rules my soul, based on whom do I feed more. If I feed wahm more, it rules my soul, if I feed Ghadhab more, it rules my soul, If I feed shahwat more, it feeds my soul, and if I feed my 'Aql more it rules my soul.

Unfortunately, I feel that I am being JUST by feeding the right faculty with enough dosage. However, unknowingly I am feeding the wrong faculties, strengthening them against 'Aql. Such that when I utmost need help from 'Aql, it has become weak and powerless. It cannot guide me anymore. Why? Cause we fed our desires and allowed them to rule our 'Aql.

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يُتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِنَ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

...Know that they only follow their desires, and who is more astray than him who follows his desires without any guidance from Allah? Indeed, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing lot. (Holy Qur'an, 28:50).

However, If I would have been careful and made sure that I do not overfeed the other faculties, instead would have kept them under check with the help of 'Aql. Then I would have been in a much better place today.

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الطَّامَةُ الْكُبْرَىٰ

When the Greatest Catastrophe befalls (Holy Qur'an, 79:34).

يَوْمَ يَنْذَكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا سَعَىٰ

the Day when man will remember his endeavors (Holy Qur'an, 79:35).

وُزِّرَتْ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَنْ يَرَىٰ

And Hell shall be placed in full view for (all) to see (Holy Qur'an, 79:36).

فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَىٰ

as, for him who has been rebellious (Holy Qur'an, 79:37).

وَأَثَرَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

and preferred the life of this world (Holy Qur'an, 79:38).

فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

Then surely Hell will be the abode. (Holy Qur'an, 79:39).

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ

As for him who is awed to stand before his Lord and restrains his soul from [following] desires (Holy Qur'an, 79:40).

فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

Then surely Paradise will be the abode. (Holy Qur'an, 79:41).

Again, the choice lies with me, who do I want to win? The carnal desires or the rational intellect.

إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

Indeed, the worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the deaf and dumb who do not exercise their reason. (Holy Qur'an, 8:22).

Let's choose now who wins the war? 'Ammara' or 'Mutma'innah'¹?

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ

'Felicitous is he who purifies himself (Holy Qur'an, 87: 14).

[1.](#) We are left with an important question. What about dunya then? Do I let go of it? I lose the dunya to gain the akhirat? InshaAllah we will address this question in our subsequent books.

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