TOPIC 9: THE KET OF EXPERIENCE

Allah sends us different situations, trials and tribulations in our life all the time. From our perspective, as a believer, it is often the case that these things shape us to come back to Allah in repentance and bring us closer to Him. These experiences we face could be positive experiences or negative ones. They could be a spiritual awakening! What is important to note is, sometimes these experiences are not rationalized! There is no reasoning involved – they are a "feeling" that awakens your soul. The same could be said for unlocking the fitrah of a non-Muslim.

Allah gives us an example of experience that some face: "He is the One Who enables you to travel through land and sea. And it so happens that you are on ships, sailing with a favourable wind, to the passengers' delight. Suddenly, the ships are overcome by a gale wind and those on board are overwhelmed by waves from every side, and they assume they are doomed. They cry out to Allah 'alone' in sincere devotion, "If You save us from this, we will certainly be grateful." But as soon as He rescues them, they transgress in the land unjustly. O humanity! Your transgression is only against your own souls. 'There is only' brief enjoyment in this worldly life, then to Us is your return, and then We will inform you of what you used to do." (10:22-23)

| knows - Allah is your only ultimate helper. It was instinctual. There was no moment of "let's try and rationalize this first". It's like the moment you put your hand under a hot water tap, your brain instinctually tells you to move it away! You don't wait and ask yourself how you feel about |
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| it. You just do it. Calamities, death of a family member, loss of health, financial problems or |
| immediate threat to death (like the one Allah mentions) are all negative experiences that may trigger a person's fitrah to become unlocked. |
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Similarly, a positive experience can also do the same. For instance, someone who hears the adhaan, positive experiences with Muslims, seeing your child being born etc. How many people do we know who have accepted Islam just because of the brotherhood they felt? Abdullah ibn Salaam's positive experience of just looking at the face of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was enough for him! He said "When the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), came to Medina, the people rushed toward him and it was said, "The Messenger of Allah has come!" I came along with the people to see him and when I looked at the face of the Prophet, I realized that his face was not the face of a liar." (Tirmidhi)

Answering of prayer is also enough to awaken the fitrah. Allah says, "When you sought help of your Lord, and He answered you." (8:9). Also, during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), a bedouin asked the Prophet to pray for rain, since crops were perishing and people were starving. The Prophet prayed to Allah for rain, and almost immediately clouds began to gather and it began raining heavily. (Bukhari)

| REFLECTION |
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| Think of some other experiences (whether positive, negative or spiritual) that you could use to awaken someone's fitrah. It may also be useful to think about some personal experiences that |
| happened to you or a loved one and changed their lives (i.e. Hajj trip). Personal accounts are often more powerful because they can open up a real connection. |
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