

Two Lives

Allahﷻ gave mankind two lives. One which ends with death. Another which begins with death. One which is limited. Another which is unlimited. One which is temporary. Another which is permanent. One in which we have limited control. Another over which we have total control. One in which we are accountable. Another in which we will be paid according to that account. One in which you sow. Another in which you harvest. One is the life of this Dunya. The other is the life of the Aakhira.

This means that Dunya (this world and our life in it) and the Aakhira are not two separate things but a continuous process whose beginning is Dunya and the end, Aakhira. The relation between the two is the same as between cultivation and crop. As between an investment portfolio and its capitalization. As between your retirement plan and its enjoyment.

We plough the land, then sow the seeds, then irrigate, then look after the field till such time as the crop is ready. Then after reaping it we feed ourselves with it comfortably throughout the year. We will naturally reap whatever we have cultivated in the land. If we sow wheat, only wheat will grow. If thorns are sown, only thorns will grow. If nothing is sown, nothing will grow. Whatever mistakes and errors are committed by us in the course of ploughing, sowing, irrigating and looking after the field, their cumulative effect will become visible at the time of harvesting the crop. But if we carried out all the necessary things properly without any mistake, we will see its benefit also at the time of harvesting. This is exactly the position in respect of this world and the Aakhira.

The world is like a ground for tillage. Man has been sent into this field for the purpose of raising a crop for himself with his own efforts and hard work. He has been allotted time to do this task from birth till death. Whatever type of crop he has grown during this period, he will reap the same crop in his next life beyond the grave, and the produce will be his provision for his life in the Aakhira."

أرني كل شيء كما هي

"O Allah! Show me things as they (really) are."

Everything has a purpose of creation. And it is considered successful only when it fulfills that purpose. Even if something is used for a purpose other than its purpose of creation; it will not be judged as successful based on the alternate use but on the purpose for which it was created. To give you an example; one of the very creative uses of washing machines is that they are used in the manufacture of Haleem. But if you want to judge the performance of a washing machine you will not see if it mixes Haleem properly but whether it washes clothes well.

Allahﷻ told us what the purpose of our creation is. He said:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ
 مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعِمُونِ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

Dhariyaat 51: 56. And I (Allah) created not the Jinn and humans except they should worship Me (Alone). **57.** I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provision for themselves or for My creatures) nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures). **58.** Verily, Allah is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong.

And about our sustenance Heﷻ said:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ
 فَوَرَبَّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مِثْلَ مَا أَنَّكُمْ تَنْطِفُونَ

Dhariyat 51: 22. And in the heaven is your provision, and that which you are promised. **23.** Then, by the Rabb of the heaven and the earth, it is the truth (i.e. what has been promised to you), just as it is the truth that you can speak.

The key however is to believe what Allahﷻ told us. I know we all do that intellectually. But that is not enough. It is only when we believe it viscerally, intrinsically, deep down in the core of our beings and act on it, that the results manifest themselves in terms of peace of mind and the bounty of Tawakkul. It is then that Allahﷻ shows us the meaning of:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا
 وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

Talaq 65:2.....And whosoever has Taqwa (fears to displease Allahﷻ and acts accordingly) He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). **3.** And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him.

Allahﷻ sent us guidance about the best actions which help us to fulfill the reason Heﷻ sent us as well as to do great things for ourselves in the Dunya. Allahﷻ didn't compel us to do one thing or another but gave us choice to choose what actions we want to do each of which has an effect. Heﷻ said:

Balad 90:10 And shown him the two ways

Allahﷻ didn't send us with anything material and we can't take anything material with us when we go from one life to another. Heﷻ gave us the life of the Dunya to build the life of the Aakhira. For that Heﷻ gave us the ability to choose and make effort about which He'll question us. E.g. He'll question us about the effort we made to accumulate wealth...not about how much wealth we accumulated.

Allahﷻ sent us with abilities to act and judgement about what to do in this life. Heﷻ called this the real test for which Heﷻ created the cycle of death and life. Death is mentioned first as before we came into being, we were in a state of nothingness. Heﷻ said:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَفُورُ

Mulk 67: 2. Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deed. And He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving;

Allahﷻ said that the test is to see who does the best deeds. Not who accumulates the most material. Both these lives are linked as I mentioned earlier. Success in one is success in the other. Firaun and Qaroon failed in the Aakhira and also destroyed their Dunya. Yusufﷺ chose the prison over disobeying Allahﷻ so his Aakhira was made and Allahﷻ gave him Dunya as well. The Anbiya and Rasoolullahﷺ's Sahaba succeeded in the Aakhira and are the most honorable in the Dunya also.

Allahﷻ's decisions are made on the basis of A'amaal (actions). Not on the basis of Maal (material wealth). But mankind spoils A'amaal to accumulate material wealth...Maal. About such people who chose the Dunya over the Aakhira Allahﷻ said:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ

Baqara 2: 86 Those are they who have bought the life of this world at the cost of the Aakhira. Their torment shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped.

Allahﷻ said that these shortsighted ones ask only for the Dunya. Heﷻ said:

فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ

Baqara 2: 200 But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Rabb! Give us (Your Bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter.

And about those who understand the reality of life:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Baqara 2: 201 And of them there are some who say: "Our Rabb! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Aakhira that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!"

I remind myself and you to take account of the A'amaal you earn, just like you take account of the Maal you earn. A'amaal are the real wealth. The real wealth that'll go with us into our graves. Whereas all our material wealth will stay behind. That is the reason it is the height of foolishness to buy what is temporary in exchange for that which is permanent. To do things that give temporary pleasure but destroy permanent happiness. To make bargains where we give up real wealth for the images of wealth. If someone paid cash to buy pictures of buildings (real estate), gold, silver, cars, planes and called it his wealth, you would call him crazy. He gave up real wealth to buy pictures of things that the wealth can buy. But it is even more crazy to give up real wealth – opportunities to please Allahﷻ and instead indulge in things that displease Him. Is this intelligence?

That is why Allahﷻ reminded us about such people and their fate (may Allahﷻ protect us) and said:

أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ

قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِن شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ كَبِيرٍ

وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

فَاعْتَرَفُوا بِذَنبِهِمْ فَسُحْقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

Mulk 67: 2 Every time a group is cast therein, its keeper will ask: "Did no warner come to you?"
9. They will say: "Yes indeed; a warner did come to us, but we belied him and said: 'Allah never sent down anything (of revelation), you are only in great error.'" **10.** And they will say: "Had we but listened or used our intelligence, we would not have been among the dwellers of the blazing Fire!"
11. Then they will confess their sin. So, away with the dwellers of the blazing Fire.

Let us assure ourselves that we are indeed intelligent and be among the intelligent who don't sell the valuable in exchange for the expensive.

Akbar Allahabadi says:

DUNYA MEYN HOON DUNYAA KA TALBGAAR NAHEEN HOON

(I am in this world but not desirous of it)

BAZAR SEY GUZRA HOON KHAREEDAAR NAHEEN HOON.

(I passed through the market. I am not a buyer)

There is no conflict between Deen and Dunya. Dunya is not the opposite of Deen. Deen is the way to live in the Dunya. There is no Deen after death. So there is no friction or contradiction between the two. On the contrary, you can only attain excellence in Deen through excellence in Dunya. Sadly, people don't see this and they preach the opposite which is a confusion with Hindu theology – Sanyas, leaving the Dunya for spiritual growth. There is no Sanyas in Islam. Rasoolullah ﷺ said, 'La Ruhbaniya fil Islam.' (There is no asceticism in Islam).

Love of Dunya that people talk about has nothing to do with wealth. It has to do with the love of wealth to the exclusion of the love of Allah ﷻ. A beggar on the street is not the most spiritual of beings. As a matter of fact, he may be far less spiritual than someone who has a lot more wealth but is focused on charity. The beggar loves what little he has and believes that he has to beg all day so much that he doesn't bother to pray. When did you ever see a beggar praying, even when they all go to the nearest masjid on Juma to beg? So though he is a Muslim, he doesn't beg Allah ﷻ but leaves Allah ﷻ, to beg from people. Ask how many of us are similar to that beggar in our own way, though we don't beg in the street. So love of Dunya has nothing to do with how much of it you have. It has to do with how much you love it in relation to how much you love Allah ﷻ. As long as you love Allah ﷻ more, you can be the king of the world but the Dunya will not distract you from Deen. As was the case with Sulaiman ﷺ and his father Dawood ﷺ. As was the case of Rasoolullah ﷺ and his Sahaba. There are numerous stories in the Seerah and the lives of the Sahaba to show how they always preferred the Aakhira to the Dunya. So there is no friction between Dunya and Deen. They are intrinsically linked and completely indispensable for success in each other.

Secondly Dunya is the only way that we can attain perfection in the Aakhira. Dunya is the only way to earn Jannah. You don't earn Jannah by leaving Dunya but by using Dunya. Telling someone to leave the Dunya to build his Aakhira is like telling someone sitting in a car, 'The best way to reach your destination is to get out of your car and walk.' You may still get to your destination but you will get there with great difficulty and very slowly. But if you remained in your car and drove on the right road, you would get there much faster and much more comfortably. This is what the Sahaba did. They had the best of both worlds. The problem is that people only tell you stories of the Sahaba in the days of the inception of Islam. Stories of deprivation and struggle. Not the stories of how they handled Dunya when the conquests started and there was literally money to burn. Did they fall into evil? Did they forget Allah ﷻ? Did they leave Salah and sit in their shops? Did they neglect Islam for their worldly affairs? Or did they establish Islam on the face of the earth?

Dunya, lived according to the Deen, is Ibaadah. It is Deen itself. It is the reason for the Deen. If this Dunya didn't exist there would be no need for Deen. To live in this Dunya according to the Deen is the most powerful way to do Da'awa. Dunya is the way to attain the pleasure of

Allahﷻ. Dunya is the tilth for the Aakhira – as Rasoolullahﷺ reminded us. How are you going to get a harvest if you leave your fields fallow? You want a good harvest you have to spend every waking moment in your fields, ploughing, winnowing, planting, watering and praying for success in the harvest.

You should love the Dunya – but for the right reasons. You should run behind the Dunya – but for the right reasons. You should use the Dunya – in the right way.

Finally, and most importantly our greatest wealth is the Kalima. We have the only thing which can save people from the Jahannam. The only thing that will spell the difference between everlasting rest and pleasure and everlasting pain and suffering. Allahﷻ gave us this wealth with a responsibility. As people of wealth we have a responsibility to those who don't have wealth. What would you say to the one who has food regarding those who are starving? What would you say to the one who has knowledge regarding those who're ignorant? What would you say to the one who has cures (doctor) regarding those who're sick? What would you say to the one who can see regarding the one who is blind? What would you say to the one who has Imaan regarding those who don't have Imaan? What would you say to the one who knows Allahﷻ regarding those who don't know their Creator?

It is therefore our responsibility to introduce Allahﷻ to His slaves. That is the work of this Dunya which has the highest return. That is the concept of ROI that we use in investment analysis. Invest in that which gives the highest return. Here the returns are guaranteed without any chance of loss. My brothers and sisters I remind myself and you to understand the reality of this Dunya as the greatest opportunity that we can ever have. Thank Allahﷻ for every day of life that Heﷻ gives us and make the best use of it to earn rewards in the Aakhira. To track this as we track our material wealth because this is our real wealth. I ask Allahﷻ for His Mercy.