

## **What Is the Controlling Dimension of Human Existence?**

### **How Is the Controlling Dimension of Human Existence Determined?**

Usually, in systems composed of different parts, there is a section that plays the role of a commander and leader. Considering that our existence also consists of various parts or dimensions, it is not exempt from this rule, but the questions are: What is the controlling dimension of human existence? Can we have different controlling dimensions? Isn't it said that two suns cannot shine in one sphere? Moreover, what conditions are needed for each part of our being to become the controlling dimension?

We have five dimensions and levels of existence that have been put together based on a mathematical structure and an engineered design. Each of these dimensions and levels requires its own specific nourishment and cultivation, and each has its own specific potentials, beloveds, perfections, and desires. Naturally, each part of our existence that is being nurtured more becomes stronger and can govern other parts. But, how can we determine:

- O Which part is the controlling dimension of our existence?
- O Does the leadership of different parts differ from each other?
- O How our conditions differ when the vegetative part governs other parts and when the supra-rational part is in command?
- O Which one of these dimensions can be a more suitable and deserving leader?
- O Has our Beloved, the Best of Planners, designed a special plan for this role or not?

Due to our personality differences, we value one part of our existence more than the other parts, thus the perfections of that part become the beloveds of our heart; for this reason, we should learn about the prioritization of different beloveds and perfections and to know how this hierarchy of love can affect choosing the controlling dimension of our existence.

In each dimension of existence, we have certain desires, beloveds, and inherent qualities. For example, in the animal part, we desire a good social life, career success, social status, and wealth. In the intellectual dimension, we seek higher education and greater knowledge. And in the supra-rational part, we long for a sure path leading to the Infinite Being.

In this lesson, by referring to the mathematical structure of human existence, knowing the different dimensions of human existence, and the principles of organizing the hierarchy of love, we aim to answer the questions that arise regarding the controlling dimension of human existence.

### **The Importance of Understanding the Mathematical Structure of Creation**

All systems of creation-the material world, the hereafter, the body, and the soul-have a mathematical and numerical structure. This means that there are specific rules and relationships that govern each of these systems. If the rules related to the mathematics of creation are not followed, the structures will deviate from their natural state. Conversely, adhering to these rules results in health, success, and happiness. Our soul and body are also rule-based structures, and neglecting these rules leads to mental and physical illnesses. If we seek spiritual and physical well-being, it is essential to learn about the mathematical structure of our existence.

From one perspective, our existence is composed of a combination of inanimate objects, plants, animals, angels, and humans; from another perspective, it consists of sense perception, imagination, estimation, intellect, and supra-rationality. According to the mathematical system, all levels and parts of our existence are important, but each should be given attention and importance according to its significance, neither less nor more!

Another point about the mathematical structure of creation is that all beings are created in pairs. Each being finds tranquility in the presence of its pair, like the eye and the ear, which only find peace when paired with their corresponding wavelengths and frequencies. Each of the parts and levels of our existence also has its own pair and beloved. The rules and mathematics of all creation revolve around love and affection from the highest level to the lowest. Some examples are as follows: the love of sense perception for sensory objects, the love of imagination for imaginal forms, the love of estimation for estimative forms, the love of intellect for intellectual ideas, and the love of the super-rational part for the Absolute Perfect Being. But which part is the main beloved and the controlling dimension of human existence? To answer this question, we must know ourselves, the dimensions of our existence, the types of inherent qualities and perfections, and their priorities; in other words, we must know the hierarchy of love.

### **The Importance of Regulating the Hierarchy of Love**

After knowing ourselves and the dimensions of our existence, the most important step we must take is to regulate our hierarchy of love. This is because our entire personality is built on our hierarchy of love. Love organizes our desires and directs

our decisions, relationships, thoughts, and behaviors. Without love, we would not have any desire for anything or anyone.

The first step in regulating our heart's desires and our hierarchy of love is to know different beloveds and perfections and distinguish them from one another. If we do not know them correctly, the result will be wrong attachments, but if we correctly recognize our values and perfections, we will spend our lives in a way that is compatible with our human dignity. We will make right decisions and manage our lives properly. It is essential to establish our love on a solid groundwork that leads to optimal results in our decisions, relationships, behaviors, and thoughts. Many people regret their past because they did not make right choices.

The world is programmed in a way that constantly evaluates our hierarchy of love. This evaluation sometimes takes place through difficulties, hardships, and illnesses, and sometimes through joy, abundance of blessings, and sensory, intellectual, as well as human perfections. The superiority of the heart over the mind in evaluating the hierarchy of love is that the mind can deceive us with false illusions, but the heart never lies. The heart, like a mirror, determines our value based on our dreams, imaginations, daily concerns, and desires. For example, if we have religious behavior due to environmental conditions but do not believe in it in our hearts, it is possible that with a change in circumstances like a foreign trip, we reveal our true beliefs and identity. Similarly, if we are wealthy, we may be tested by losing our wealth to see how our happiness, peace, and behavior towards others will change with changing circumstances. Imam Ali (PBUH) also states that the passage of time reveals the true inward self of individuals.

According to principle of the Primacy of Expertise and the necessity of consulting a specialist in any matter, God introduces the healthy and standard hierarchy of love, the primary beloveds, and the lower-level beloveds in the guidebook for humanity, the Quran. According to the Quran, the only way we can be considered a human being is that our hearts hold nothing other than the love of Allah, the Prophet, and *Jihad* (striving in the way of Allah). As soon as something like knowledge, wealth, beauty, power, or sensory, imaginal, and intellectual perfections replace our love for these three primary beloveds, we fall from our human status.

Does this mean that we should not seek other beloveds? No, not at all. When God has assigned a beloved and a specific pair for each part of our existence, it means that, it is permissible to attain and use them. However, the point is that we should prioritize God in all our affairs, including economics, culture, family, child-rearing, business transactions, studying, teaching, etc. We must not let the beauty and attractiveness of God's creations deceive us to the extent that we forget to think about God Himself. Loving and desiring things like children, wealth, trade, knowledge, and social status are inherently desirable and natural. But if these desires conflict with our love for God, they become undesirable.

We are eternal beings, and our lifetime is not limited to the period between birth and death. In moving towards eternity, the arrangement and management of our desires and thoughts must be clearly defined. We must regulate our intellectual priorities based on the value of our goals and desires. Otherwise, we will experience confusion and depression. In this state, we are like a football being hit from all sides by different desires and goals, and we cannot take control of ourselves. If we

consider ourselves as infinite beings and yearn for eternity, we will not allow desires to dominate our hearts.

### **Types of the Controlling Dimensions of Human Existence**

Our soul has five faculties: sense perception, imagination, estimation, intellect, and supra-rational faculty. Our existential qualities are also divided into five categories: inanimate, vegetative, animal, intellectual, and supra-rational. As human beings, we can engage and interact with all these five types of inherent qualities, but we need to see which aspect we have more compatibility with.

Our personality is the result of our decisions, relationships, behaviors, and beliefs. All our decisions are based on the value we give to ourselves. When we do not know our own value, we undergo severe damages, and we make more mistakes. Based on what or who we love or do not love, we can understand at which stage we are: sense perception, imagination, estimation, intellect, or supra-rational stage. In other words, the type of our beloved and its predominance determine our status and personality. Based on these factors, the dimensions of human existence can be divided into five different categories. In the following, we will examine some characteristics of these five types of leadership.

### **The Leadership of the Inanimate Dimension**

We have different dimensions, and we strive to fulfill the needs of each one based on our self-knowledge. If our inclination towards the inanimate aspect is stronger, we spend our entire lives pursuing inanimate perfections such as having a bigger

house, more money, furniture, chandeliers, gold and jewelry, cell phones, clothes, luxurious cars, and fancy accessories. In other words, our dignity, richness, and perfection come from something outside ourselves. If we value these perfections above all else, even to the point of sacrificing other perfections and beloveds, then the controlling dimension of our existence is the inanimate one.

### **The Leadership of the Vegetative Dimension**

Some desires and beloveds in the world are of the vegetative type. Neglecting the perfections of other aspects and striving solely to actualize vegetative potentials nurture our vegetative aspect and allow it to take control. Examples of vegetative perfection include grace and beauty; physical growth, strength, and fitness; nutrition; and reproduction. None of these perfections are undesirable, and in fact, if we use them to achieve our ultimate goal, that is, human status, it is considered an act of worship, for which we will get rewarded. But if we focus on actualizing vegetative potentials and value ourselves based on these beloveds, it means we sell ourselves to vegetative perfections and will suffer great loss.

### **The Leadership of the Animal Dimension**

In addition to inanimate and vegetative perfections, animals have their own special perfections and characteristics such as leadership, sexual desire, recreation, habitat selection, desire for the opposite sex, marriage, striving for the welfare of family, territorial behavior, social life and hierarchy, loyalty, trustworthiness, appreciation of affection, decency, and protective care. All these are considered animal

perfections. If we spend our entire lives pursuing these perfections and forget that they are not our ultimate goal, it means we have allowed our animal part to govern us.

The domination of the animal aspect makes us only think about fame, power, leadership, management, superiority over others, and competition. In the best scenario, if we are good animals, we strive to love, serve, and care for our family, neighbors, and other human beings. We must remember that competing with others to attain animal perfections cannot add anything to our human status.

### **The Leadership of the Intellectual Dimension**

Since the existential structure of angels consists of intellect, they seek knowledge and information. The desire to know, discover truths, and gain knowledge is related to our angelic aspect and our intellectual potential. The influence and domination of the intellectual aspect lead us to pursue knowledge, explore the unknowns of the world, advance sciences such as medicine, engineering, literature, sociology, history, psychology, and economics, and push the boundaries of knowledge.

If intellectual perfections are our priority and we spend our entire lives solely pursuing knowledge and uncovering mysteries, it means the intellectual part is our controlling dimension. In such a state, our value will be measured by the amount of information we acquire through effort and perseverance.

Considering that our angelic aspect lies between the human and animal aspects of our being, it is like a double-edged sword. If it is at the service of lower aspects, it will make us stronger and more savage than other animals. On the other hand, if it

serves the human aspect, it will make us rapidly grow and reach a higher status than that of angels.

### **The Leadership of the Supra-Rational Dimension**

Besides us humans, all other beings have inanimate, vegetative, animal, and intellectual qualities. What makes us the noblest of creations is our supra-rational aspect, through which we fall in love with Infinite and Absolute Perfection. All of us as human beings are interested in acquiring knowledge, power, pleasure, wealth, eternal life, but we are not satisfied unless we reach Infinite and Absolute Perfection. This is called the desire for infinity. The supra-rational dimension of our existence necessitates that we be insatiable and unstoppable, seeking all goodness, pleasures, love, kindness, and perfections on an infinite scale.

For every need within us, there is an external manifestation that fulfills that need. For example, the need for hunger and thirst is fulfilled by food and water. The external manifestation of our desire for infinity is the Absolute Perfection, which is called Allah in Arabic. All of us humans, without exception, are in love with Allah, and as Imam Khomeini puts it, even the president of the United States loves God, but he does not realize it.<sup>1</sup>

Considering the importance of the fifth dimension of our existence, the best people are those whose human part is active; they are preparing themselves for eternal life, the hereafter, and reaching the purpose of creation, which is human perfection.

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<sup>1</sup>. *Sahifeh-ye-Imam*. Tehran: The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, 2008, p. 180.

The supra-rational faculty is their controlling dimension, and it is the most valuable leadership.

Due to our desire for infinity, we constantly search for the true manifestation of infinity, which is Allah. Separation from our Infinite Beloved takes away our inner peace, and inevitably, we seek to satisfy our desire for infinity with other existential perfections. However, since these perfections have no affinity with our human essence, they do not bring us lasting happiness and peace.

If worldly matters and material aspects- inanimate, vegetative, animal, and even intellectual- do not have a supra-rational and eternal side, then they are worthless, like number zero. But by placing a number before zero, these matters become valuable. Supra-rational activities play the role of that number before the zero.

In this lesson, after referring to the mathematical structure and the five dimensions of our existence, we discussed the importance of organizing the hierarchy of love. Managing the hierarchy of love is necessary and important because the type of our beloveds determines the controlling dimension of our existence. To know which aspect is in command, we need to collect a list of our desired perfections and categorize them into inanimate, vegetative, animal, intellectual, and supra-rational groups. Each type of perfection that sparks our joy or sadness determines our value because everyone's value is determined by his desires, wishes, and main beloved.

If our decisions, relationships, speech, behavior, and, in a way, our hierarchy of love are correct and standard, we are balanced individuals. In fact, we achieve balance when our supra-rational faculty manages and guides our lower faculties. This serves as an indicator for us to understand whether our decisions and relationships have been right or not.

When the status of the three main beloveds that God has introduced in the healthy hierarchy of love is lowered in our hearts, and we prioritize our lower dimensions over our supra-rational one, it means our inanimate, vegetative, animal, and intellectual dimensions are being nourished more. The improper nourishment of the lower aspects makes the supra-rational aspect sick.

What clues, in your opinion, do people's behavior, thoughts, and words give us to determine the controlling dimension of their existence?