

Series of Questions Addressed to Eminent Scholar Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah,
Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir through his Facebook Page (Intellectual)

Answer to Question

The Mind ('Aql), Comprehension (Idrak) or Thought (Fikr)

To: Atmani Atmani Atmani

(Translated)

Question:

Assalamu Alaikum Our honorable Sheikh: what is the difference between previous opinion and previous information in the thinking method. Noting that thought (fikr), comprehension (idrak), or mind ('aql) do not occur except with the four elements: the sensation, the reality, the previous information and the brain capable of linking. What is the difference between the previous opinions and the previous information in interpreting the reality?

Answer:

Wa Alaikum Assalam wa Rahmatu Allahi wa Barakatuh,

1- As mentioned in the question, the mind ('aql), comprehension (idrak), or thought (fikr) is the transferring of the sensation of the reality by the senses to the brain together with previous information by which this reality is interpreted. That is, the intellectual process is not completed until the four elements exist: the reality, the sensation of the reality (the senses), the appropriate brain to relate/connect (rabt), and the previous information about the reality or related to that reality ...

2- In order for thinking to exist in people on this earth, Allah Almighty has provided Adam, peace be upon him, with previous information that explains the current realities on earth under study. It is stated in the book of The Islamic Personality Vol. III:

[As for the saying of Allah Ta'ala: ﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا﴾ **“And He taught Adam all the name”** [Al-Baqarah: 31], the meaning of this is the named things not the languages, i.e. He taught him the realities of the things and their qualities, it means He gave him the information that he uses to judge the things, because feeling the reality is not sufficient by itself to judge the thing and perceiving its reality, but it is inevitable to have previous information by which the reality is explained. So, Allah Ta'ala had taught Adam the names i.e. the named things, so He gave him information by which he can judge the things that he feels...] End.

3- And then ideas arose and followed from the first thought that occurred by Allah providing to Adam with the previous information, and then he used it to explain the reality of the thing under study with the other two elements present with him (the brain and the senses), and life continued to be full of broad areas of thought ... Thus, the correct perception of how the first rational process took place in man will inevitably lead to belief in Allah (swt), and therefore the disbelieving movements that deny the existence of the Creator define the mind or thought by dropping the previous information! Although thinking about reality cannot take place without the presence of previous information that explains the reality, and this is known by necessity, but the disbelieving movements, such as the Communists, deny the previous information so as not to lead them to believe in the Creator, who provided Adam, peace be upon him, with previous information to establish the first thought in this life and then the thinking process followed. This is because the sensation of reality with the brain does not produce a thought without the previous information to explain the reality in question. The sensation of reality and a sensation plus a sensation plus a million sensations, regardless of the multiplicity of the type the sensations, only produces sensation, and no thought occurs at all. Rather, a person must have previous information by means of which he explains the reality he sensed in order for a thought to occur, and then the succession of thoughts, especially the first thought, leads to belief in Allah who provided Adam, peace be upon him, with the previous information ...

4- This is with regard to the previous information. As for the previous opinions, they are judgments on reality that were previously issued by a person, either by his conducting the intellectual process and his judgment on reality, or by receiving those judgments from others through instruction or reading ... etc., the previous opinions are thoughts about reality.

5- Thus, the difference between previous information and previous opinions can be summed up in two main differences:

Firstly: The previous opinions are the previous thoughts of a person that are a judgment on the reality under study, in whole or in part. As for the previous information, it is what can be used to explain reality without judging it, but only to interpret it, and it is one of the factors of thinking without which thinking is not done.

Secondly: The previous opinion is a pre-judgment about the reality that we want to think about, in order to find the right judgment in the opinion of the thinker, it is not right to be used in the rational process. What is used is only the previous information, thus preventing the presence and intervention of an opinion at the time of the thinking process. If the previous opinion (about the reality) was used it might cause error in the comprehension, because it might dominate over the information, leading to its misinterpretation, and thus error occurs in the comprehension. Therefore, it is necessary to notice the differentiation between the previous opinion and the previous information; where only the, information is used to exclusion of the opinion about the reality to be examined... **It was mentioned in the book, *Thinking (at-Tafkeer)*, p 21-3** (In the definition of the rational method (of thinking), a differentiation should be made between the previous opinions we hold about a matter and the previous information about it or that pertaining to it. In the rational method, it is inevitable that no opinion or opinions exist about the reality, rather what is necessary is the presence of previous information about it or related to it. So what should inevitably exist is the information and not the opinion....).

6- The following are two examples to clarify the aforementioned:

a- For example, if a book in the ancient Syriac language was given to someone who has no previous information about the Syriac language, and all his senses were made to fall on the book, by sight and touch, and this was repeated a million times, he still would not be able to understand a single word of the book unless he is given the relevant information about the Syriac language. Thereafter, he will start thinking and understanding... It is not correct to say this is specific to languages; and they are invented by man, hence they need information about them. This is because the subject matter is a rational process, and the operation is a process of the mind, whether in issuing a judgment, or in understanding a meaning or in understanding the truth (Haqeeqah). So, the rational process is the same in everything. ...

b- If you want to discuss a political issue in order to get the right opinion about it, let it be, for example, the issue of Turkey's interference in the events in Libya, sending mercenary fighters and supporting al-Sarraj and the reconciliation government with weapons and information ... and there was a previous opinion that Erdogan's support for the reconciliation government forces is because of his love for Muslims and his concern for the people of Libya and because he supports the armed Islamic movements and provides them with support ... etc., this opinion is a judgment on the issue that you want to discuss and not just previous information about it, and the validity of the research requires you to abandon this previous opinion and study the issue within the available political evidence objectively... and then you reach the right opinion on the issue.

I hope this clarification will suffice, and Allah is Most Wise and He Knows Best.

Your brother,

Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah

04th Ramadan 1442 AH

16/04/2021 CE

The link to the answer from the Ameer's Facebook page:

<https://web.facebook.com/HT.AtaabuAlrashtah/posts/2908437499402255>