THE NATION OF ISLAM
STUDY COURSE

WEDNESDAY CLASS
WEEK 32

STUDY GUIDE 18

RIISING ABOVE EMOTION
INTO THE THINKING OF
GOD
(PART 2)
This study course is designed to be done both in a course room, mosque, study-group or self-paced at home. Certain parts of this course (Key Word Study) will be done with a partner. Other parts will be done independently (by yourself). When its time to partner, you and your partner (twin) are to follow the steps provided in this guide. The study course is laid out in the order you do them. It is important not to skip any steps of the guide. THESE INSTRUCTIONS ARE TO BE FOLLOWED IN OUR CLASSES.

**Purpose of this Study Course Guide:**

The purpose of this study course guide is to guide you through this course of study.

**Time to Complete:**

Although the hour and a half that we have for study this evening will hopefully allow you to progress through most of this study, however it is strongly recommend that you continue to work on this study course at home at your own pace.

**Important Note:** During the study course session, if you have any questions raise your hand for assistance. Each believer (student) should have a copy of this handout and its instructions to take home and continue studying on their own. All steps may not be completed in the class sessions in its entirety.

**Study Course Steps**

**Step 1: Key Word Clearing**

Key words are important words related to key concepts found in the reading. Having a good understanding of the meanings of these words will help each student better understand the important concepts and ideas of the study, as well as eliminate misunderstandings that come with misunderstood words. Use the key word list and definitions found in this packet to do the drill (exercise) a and b.

1.) Select a partner (closest to you) and study the Key Words together, through reviewing the questions and answers to master. (If done in course room or mosque/study group the time allotted is 30-45 minutes)

2.) First time through: The student has the questions and answers in front of him or her. The partner asks the student the question, and the student answers it. He/She can look at the answer if needed. The answer does not have to be word-for-word or memorized; just the concept must be correct.

3.) Second time through: Once finished with the drill the first time, you start again from the beginning, this time without the answers in front of you. Your partner asks the question and you answers. If the answer is incorrect, your partner shows you the answer. Look at the answer again and repeat until you have grasped the concept, then continue to the next one.

**Step 2: Independent Reading**

After completing step one, you may begin to read the selected reading materials.

**Step 3: Check Your Understanding Questions:** **Time Frame: 30 min**

Review the lists of questions. Each question is formulated to check your understanding of the key concepts and ideas found in the reading. Answer each question on a sheet of paper and be prepared to discuss your answers at the conclusion of this session. Sufficient time may not be given during class session to answer all of the questions. If you do not finish in class, please continue this step at home.
What is an emotion? 
An emotion is any strong feeling, as of joy, sorrow, or fear.

What is consciousness? 
Consciousness is the state of being conscious; awareness of one's own existence, sensations, thoughts, surroundings, etc.

What does cognitive mean? 
Cognitive is of or pertaining to the act or process of knowing; perception.

What does volition mean? 
Volition is the act of willing, choosing, or resolving; exercise of willing; the power of willing.

What is intense mean? 
Intense means existing or occurring in a high or extreme degree, force, or strength.

What is the meaning of mother? 
Mother means the greatest or most notable example of; give origin or rise to.

What does it mean to facilitate? 
To facilitate is to make easier or less difficult; help forward; to assist the progress of.

What is the limbic system? 
The limbic system is a ring of interconnected structures in the midline of the brain around the hypothalamus, involved with emotion and memory and with the homeostatic regulatory systems.

What is the cerebrum? 
The cerebrum is the anterior and largest part of the brain, consisting of two halves or hemispheres and serving to control voluntary movements and coordinate mental actions.

What is the brainstem? 
The brainstem is the portion of the brain that is continuous with the spinal cord and comprises the medulla oblongata, pons, midbrain, and parts of the hypothalamus, functioning in the control of reflexes and such essential internal mechanisms as respiration and heartbeat.

What is the septum? 
The septum is a thin partition or membrane dividing two cavities or soft masses of tissue in an organism.

What is the pituitary gland? 
The pituitary gland is a small, oval endocrine gland attached to the base of the vertebrate brain and consisting of an anterior and a posterior lobe, the secretions of which control the other endocrine glands and influence growth, metabolism, and maturation.

What does constitute mean? 
Constitute means to be (a part) of a whole; made up of.

What does it mean to be primitive? 
Primitive means to be in the first or early stage of formation or growth; rudimentary.

What does electrochemical mean? 
Electrochemical means of or relating to chemical reactions brought about by electricity; the interchange of electrical and chemical energy.

What does “hypo” mean? 
Hypo means under or below. (hypothalamus)

What is an antigen? 
An antigen is a toxin or other foreign substance that induces an immune response in the body, especially the production of antibodies.

What is a countermeasure? 
A countermeasure is an action taken to counteract a danger or threat.

What does it mean to protect something? 
To protect something means keep safe from harm or injury; to shield

Practice saying these scientific terms before reading the text until you are comfortable pronouncing them.

Ce-re-brum
Hip-po-cam-pus
Tha-la-mus
Hy-po-tha-la-mus
a-myg-da-la
ad-re-no-cor-ti-co-tro-pic
pha-go-cytes
EMOTION: AN INTENSIFIED FEELING

The dictionary defines “Emotion” as “an affective state of consciousness in which joy, sorrow, fear, hate, or the like is experienced, as distinguished from cognitive and volitional states of consciousness. Any strong agitation of the feelings actuated by experiencing love, hate, etc., and usually accompanied by certain physiological changes, as increased heartbeat, respiration, or the like and often overt manifestation, such as crying or shaking.”

Emotion is an intensified feeling. It can become so strong and overpowering that it masters the mind or judgment.

Though “Love” is generally defined as an emotion, I would say that Love is not an emotion; Love is the Mother of Emotion. Love is the Creative Force out of which all things come. Love can be broken down into four principles: Freedom, Justice, Equality and Obedience to the Will of Allah (God). We call our intense feeling of like or dislike “Love” and “Hate”. But Love is not just an intense feeling. That is a limitation that this world has placed on it, making it our emotional reaction to something.

The Creative Force is separate from the intense feeling that we have toward the created thing. Allah (God) created the jackass, yet He states in the Holy Qur’an that the most hateful sound to Him is the braying of the jackass He created. He created the hog, yet He has an intense dislike for it. The Devil is made out of the Creative Force, and He certainly has an intense dislike for the Devil.

The jackass, the hog, the Devil, all serve as a means to facilitate the Creative Act of Love, Beneficence, and Mercy. Allah (God) does not desire disease on His planet. So He makes a detestable thing, the hog, which is used to extract a medicine to remedy some of the effects of a diseased thing that He has allowed to run wild and loose on the Earth; its presence facilitates a Divine Purpose.

We must not narrow Love to an emotional reaction. But when we say, “God is Love”, the word “is” is represented by the “=” symbol, then Love has to be complete, because God is not an emotion. All of His Attributes are embodied in the Creative Force we call Love; and intense like for something is only one of its manifestations.
WHERE EMOTION COMES FROM

The Brain is not only an organ of intellect and logic; it is also the source of Emotion. Emotions are brought to life in what is known as the “limbic system”. The limbic system is a collection of parts that constitute approximately 20% of the brain’s area. The forces of pride, fear, joy, grief, anger, lust, hatred, envy, jealousy, arise from this region of the brain.

The limbic system is found surrounding the most primitive part of the brain and is found in almost the same form in all mammals. It is that part of man that is hardly distinguishable from beast.

God says, in the Bible, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:7

The limbic system works with both the cerebrum above and the brainstem below. Its connections with the brainstem help maintain a state of emotional balance and alertness. Its connections with the cerebrum allows a person to temper emotion with reason. The goal is for the two processes to work in harmony, but the balance can be easily upset. The limbic system can become so highly activated that it overpowers rational thought, making a person speechless with anger or joy. On the other hand, through conscious effort, a person can resist the natural urge to eat or drink, can fight back tears, or suppress sexual desire.

There are nerve pathways interwoven throughout the limbic system which send a continuous flow of electrochemical impulses that direct human drives and emotions. The “hippocampus” converts information from short-term to long-term memory. It constantly checks information relayed to the brain by the senses and compares it to experience. The “thalamus” serves as a major relay station, passing information from sensory and motor nerves to the brain.

Nestled between the thalamus above and the brainstem below, there is a small cluster of nerve cells called the “hypothalamus”. It has one of the richest blood supplies in the entire body, though it is only the size of a thumb tip. From the “hypothalamus” arise intense feelings or emotions. Pleasure and pain, sexual arousal, aggression, rage, as well as hunger and thirst, all emanated from this point.

The hypothalamus is also a complex thermostat system that reacts to messages from skin receptors and heat-sensitive nerve cells, as it maintains the body’s internal balance, holding the temperature at approximately 98.6 degrees. For this reason, our emotional reactions cause a change in temperature. The phrase “heat of passion” refers to the climb in temperature.

Hunger and thirst centers in the hypothalamus track glucose levels in the blood. When supplies of glucose (energy food) are too low, the brain, not the stomach, generates hunger pangs. The sensation of thirst does not originate in the throat, but here in the brain, when receptors indicate the salt level in the blood is too high.

Above the hypothalamus is the “amygdala”, a mass of nerve cells that are specifically related to
feelings of outrage and aggression. The “septum”, linked to the hypothalamus at the front of the limbic ring, contains a pleasure center.

The hypothalamus has connections to the pituitary gland so it has an effect on growth and sexual behaviour. It actually orders the pituitary to organize the endocrine gland’s release of hormones into the blood.

Our response to fear in times of emergency is also controlled by the hypothalamus. If a gun is pointed in someone’s face, the emotional stress is of such magnitude that his body undergoes immediate changes. First to react is the hypothalamus, which organizes a chain reaction of defenses with a single purpose: to place the body in maximum condition to survive the impending threat.

The chain of command is as follows:

1. Hypothalamic chemicals signal the pituitary gland of danger, possibly fatal.
2. Pituitary signals one of its endocrine gates to bolster defenses. It does this by flashing a message, secreting a stress hormone which finds its way through the bloodstream to important stations.
3. The stress hormone, ACTH (adrenocorticotropic), first travels to the fighting adrenal glands on the kidneys. Another adrenal chemical begins converting fats and proteins into sugar.
4. The adrenals spew out adrenaline and noradrenaline, causing the heart to pump faster, blood pressure to rise and the pupils of the eyes to dilate wildly for improved vision.
5. The combined surge of hormones relaxes the bronchial tubes for deeper breathing; increases the blood sugar to supply maximum energy; slows down the digestive process to conserve muscular energy; shifts blood supplies so they are able to clot more easily on an open wound.

In a matter of seconds, a threatened body becomes a tight coil of altered substances, prepared to meet the challenge. In this state it can perform feats of strength and endurance far beyond normal capacity.

It is important to note that what triggers this chain of reactions is the brain’s interpretation of external forces as life-threatening. It is not a question of whether we are actually threatened, but whether we think we are threatened.

According to Western scientists, individual neuronal circuits are just as unique as fingerprints. This means that the same situation may activate different clusters of nerve cells in different people.

Every biological act of the physical body is directed to one predominant goal: to stay alive. To do this, every organism must preserve itself in the face of external forces which threaten its existence; and when it ceases to work energetically on its own behalf, something finally will destroy it. There are many forms of disaster: poisons in the environment, temperatures beyond limit, food supplies fail, competing organisms move in and take over its living space.

*As part of the defense against external forces, the organism walls itself off from alien elements. The skin is such a wall, forming a natural barrier between the individual and the environment. But no barrier is completely effective, and the human body, which is a large community of cells, is vulnerable to attack like any other community. Foreign substances sneak in and attack the internal
systems, endangering the body.

There is a second line of defense which stands ready to repel any invaders which breach the protective barriers. Manning this line is a certain type of white blood cell called the lymphoid. These defenders swim through the blood ready for action when trouble occurs. They respond aggressively to invaders, producing a different weapon or countermeasure for each type of intruder.

When antigens get into the bloodstream the body is alerted to the presence of invaders. Each antigen stimulates the lymphoid cells to manufacture proteins on a large scale and dump them into the bloodstream. It is these proteins that lead the defense against invaders.

During the period of war, there is activity inside the lymphoid cells. Some of these cells manufacture molecules which form a match with the contours of germ antigens. These substances, called antibodies, pour into the bloodstream, attach themselves to the germs and cause a chemical change in the germs making them vulnerable to the next step. The next step is carried out by a crew of wandering scavenger cells called phagocytes. They attack specific types of germs which have been tagged by the antigen–antibody interaction and eliminate the invaders by swallowing them whole. The combined offensive by the antibodies and phagocytes continues until the disease or illness subsides, or, until the body’s defenses prove inadequate and death results.

In the same context, there is a defense mechanism which serves to protect the peace of the community of our beliefs. Our beliefs support us in our actions and overall approach to life. Any principle or fact, whether real or imagined, that we encounter in life, either supports our beliefs or threatens them.

Once something is perceived as a threat to our accepted beliefs, there is a reaction in the brain similar to the body’s antigen–antibody reaction, and instead of lymph cells, it is our emotions which rush to the defense of our threatened belief.

Thus, the emotional reactions to persons, events and circumstances are a defense mechanism, which quickly surrounds the accepted belief to protect it from succumbing to a new one. We may react with one of many different emotions, depending upon the nature of the threat ----fear, anger, pride, etc.----but in any case, the emotion rises with great speed to ward off that which disturbs the community of beliefs. This is what is meant by the phrase, “rush of emotion”. It requires great and concentrated effort to take control over our emotions.

TO BE CONTINUED…
Questions For Discussion:
1. Why is Minister Farrakhan taking time to discuss the physical manifestation and origin of emotions in such detailed scientific terms? What does he want us to realize?
2. In what area of the brain do emotions arise? What kinds of emotions come from this area?
3. What is the effect (mentally and physically) of emotion on the human being?
4. What are common misunderstandings as it relates to "love"? What is love and if God is love, what does this mean?
5. How does the jackass, the hog, the Devil, all serve as a means to facilitate the Creative Act of Love, Beneficence, and Mercy of Allah (God) since He (Allah) has an intense dislike or hate for them.? Where is God’s love in permitting the existence of each?
6. What is the function of the brainstem and cerebrum? What is the result of imbalance in these areas?
7. What’s important to know as it relates to how the hypothalamus responds?
8. In learning the defense mechanisms of the human body, what are the defense mechanisms, which serves to protect the peace of the community of our beliefs? Explain you answer with examples.
9. What is the difference between a real or perceived threat as it relates to the mind?

Questions For Further Study:
1. What is meant by this bible verse: “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”
2. What is the function of the hippocampus? What’s the function of the thalamus?
3. Why is the hypothalamus such an important part of the limbic system? What does it do?
4. What part of the limbic system helps us to respond to threats or danger?
5. What is the predominate goal of the physical body? Explain and give an example.
6. Reread the paragraph with the (*) symbol next to it. How can you relate this physical occurrence in spiritual terms?
7. When do the white blood cells (lymphoid) take action? What is its function?
8. How do the antigens and the phagocytes work together to protect the body?
9. Why must we rise above emotion?