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| **Date** | Wednesday, August 19, 2015 |
| **Topic** | In the footsteps of the Prophet Abraham: The patriarch of Monotheistic Religion |
| **Part** | 5 |

Some Muslims scholars say that the universe is a macrocosm and human beings are microcosms because each human being includes in himself or herself whatever the meaning the whole universe communicates in its existence. On the one hand, it seems that these scholars equate human beings to the universe and on the other it seems that human beings are devalued. If we deeply reflect on it, it seems contradictory to equate human beings to the universe because we (human beings) have consciousness (emotions, free choice) whereas the universe/cosmos does not have consciousness. Nevertheless, human beings are more valuable than the whole cosmos. Perhaps these Muslims scholars meant something else i.e. this universe does not consists only of the materials that appear in it.

*How are qualities manifested in the universe?*

In reality, all the properties of an object are represented by conscious beings called ***“angels”***, announcing the manifested qualities of its Creator in and around an object.

* Example: Wind blows and air molecules move. There is an action there; the action does not happen by itself. It is created by the One who creates the whole universe. In this action, **I see manifestations of the qualities of the Creator presented to me by an angel. The angels carries the command/will of the Creator i.e. “Be and it is” and I see it as the manifestation of the Creator’s Will. Furthermore, I can only see the manifestations the Qualities of their Creator if I turn my veil into a screen (please refer to the notes from 08/12/15)**

Analogy: Painter is painting using paint and a brush on a canvas. As a result, painter’s painting is coming into existence. This is an analogy only. In this analogy painter is using already existing things and wanting them to exist in a new form. Similarly, in the universe everything is coming into existence as new at every moment without consuming anything (unlike the paint which diminishes as a result of being utilized). Today’s existence is not dependent on yesterday’s existence. Today I am given a new form, emotional state and understanding. Everything is new in my being at every moment: molecules, atoms and particles are given a new form of existence.

* In this universe nothing is consumed as things are coming into existence. **Things are coming into existence as the One who gives existence to the universe Wills them to be, that is called “*Kun”* (be and it is) i.e. as He wills something to exist, His word is just “be and it is.”**

If I have to build something, I have to follow the already existing order in the cosmos and apply it to the thing that I am building, whereas the universe comes into existence as the will/command of the Creator. If I want something to be a certain way, my whole abilities and qualities manifests there as I will to be, whereas the qualities manifested in the universe seem to be open ended, manifesting at the same time without following any sequence, with no break etc. all of which point to the Absoluteness of the Qualities of the Creator of the universe. We have to understand that the Creator of the universe does not act like any thing of this universe including human beings, though we are conscious beings.

* With this cosmological view, the aspect of creation appears to us as material beings *having certain qualities*. According to the teachings of the Quran, these are nothing but “**angels” created to carry the will of the Creator to us.** **The angels “transform” the Will of the Creator into manifested objects in this created transient world.**
* Only after realizing that the universe includes the angels, which are conscious proclaimers of the Creator’s Qualities, then can we say that each human being is a microcosm, a minute sample of the universe.

*How are we going to read the Quran now? Which kind of attitude should we have when we read?*

It’s our duty in our existence to turn the veil into a screen as our relationship with the Creator is concerned. Everything in my being is the quality of the Creator reflected in me. Creator manifests His qualities as He creates me as a human being. Just as all the qualities in the painting manifest the artistic qualities of the painter, all the qualities in the universe manifest its Maker’s qualities.

Nothing has a physical relationship with the Creator. Every created thing, air molecule, birds, stones, photons, human beings… are the “transformed” forms of manifestations, not parts of the Creator. Universe is a screen; we are a screen as well manifesting the qualities of the Creator. The “scripture” is another locus of the Creator’s expositions i.e. **the Creator discloses Himself to us by Speaking through the Prophets.** Quran teaches us: everything glorifies God, nothing is independent of God and nothing is a part of God either. Just as we cannot say that the painting is exactly the same as the painter and at the same time, we cannot ascribe any artistic qualities we see in the painting to anything else but the painter. This may look like a paradox but it’s not.

*Am I independent of the Creator?* No. *Am I part of the Creator?* No. **I am a manifestation of the Qualities of the Creator.** (“God created human beings in His image” should be understood along this line.)

* My Creator manifests His qualities in me and I cannot say that I am a part of my Creator.
* My Creator manifests His qualities in the universe and He loses nothing from His qualities ***(“Wala yaooduhu hifzuhuma”Qur’an, 2: 255)***.

Example: All the qualities of the leaf we see are the choice or preference of its Creator. These qualities are coming from the Absolute Source. Everything in the leaf occurs at the same time in a perfect fashion as it does in the rest of the universe; therefore the Source must be Absolute. *Can we do anything with the same fashion with no interruption continuously? Can we understand that the Source must be Absolute, continuously renewing with no break, no difficulty, no delay or less perfection?* We need to understand that things are coming from an Absolute Source and taking limited forms in this transient universe. **The manifestations of the Will of the Creator are executed, i.e. transformed from their Absolute origin into this limited forms of the things which constitute the universe, by** ***Angels***.

* **Our view of the universe=** material appearances of universe + angels who are consciously receiving command and transforming it to us in a way that we can see and interact with.
* **The universe exists with its conscious accompanying angels.**

The universe is not coming into existence out of nothing. There is only one way to explain this: the One who gives existence to this universe must be Absolute. **This Absolute One is beyond my scope of perception but at the same time I am sure of its existence.** That is called believe in “***ghaib”*** (**unperceivable, imponderable**). **The existence of the universe itself is the most powerful witness to this: I am made, I have a Creator but He is not within the universe.**

Some Philosophers say: *who created God then?* Well, He is not part of the universe and so this question is irrelevant. A tree is part of the universe and so I can ask *who made the tree? Who made the universe*? When we refer to the Creator of the universe, we can only say that the Creator exists. The essence of the Creator is indescribable. **All the descriptive words will be applicable to this world only.**

* ***Ghaib* (unperceivable) means nothing of the nature of this universe, existence of which is absolutely sure for the human mind that is what we call Creator.**

If we cannot comprehend the essence of the Creator, then we should never speak in a speculative language. We can only confirm its existence. **I should only speak from what I observe and conclude with what my human qualities are satisfied with**. *Can we say that “sometimes” His power is not enough?* No.

* The qualities are not descriptions of the Essence of the Creator**. Qualities refer to the Absoluteness of the Creator.** The One who gives existence to me must have Absolute power, knowledge, will… The Creator is “Absolute” is human logical conclusion

Human beings, universe and scriptures equally explain/expose the absolute qualities of the Creator. They are all screens but if we turn ourselves blind to what they are transmitting to us, we make them into veil and as a result, we don’t see God here. God’s description of Himself in the scripture is a call for us, an invitation for us to look at the universe. The Quran is ***Furqan*** (the criterion to help conclude right or wrong). This criterion provides us with the means of how to use our human qualities to come to the right conclusion.



***“Lo! Abraham said to his father Azar: “Do you take idols for gods? For I see you and your people in manifest error.”* An’am (6):74**

Idols are anything that is claimed to have its own quality. Example: I can see; this quality of sight belongs to me. A bee flies; the quality of flying belongs to the bee. The energy belongs to electron. In reality, **the qualities of the objects do not belong to them. The objects themselves are in need to be given existence.** So, *how can one attribute the qualities of an object to the object itself?*

That is what Abraham is arguing about: ***are we going to attribute the qualities to the object itself or to something else (i.e. Source of their existence)?***  The objects and its qualities are dependent on the Absolute Source. Most of us are in “manifest” error in our practical lives.

Once we know the truth, we should never agree with false. Even if it’s our parents (which symbolize authority over us), we should not agree with them when it comes to confirming that which is false. Just politely say that it is not correct.

**Azar= attributing qualities to the matter itself.**

*In our lives, we can either be Abraham or Azar*; it all depends on our perception of the world. When we interact with the universe, we have to question the existence of every event. Example: The food is delicious.

* *Who created this event?*
* *Who created the taste?*
* *Who created the ability to cook?*

At every instance, **we have to make the truth manifest to us**. ***Ya ayyuhallazeena amanouttaqullaha waqooloo qaulan Sadeedan (Qur’an 33:70)***: make your word straight forward/clear/to the point/in a just manner i.e. whatever we accept/reject must be our own understanding which manifests the truth or error clearly. We have to make our claim/understanding obvious/clear (***mubeen***). In this regard, error can also be ***mubeen*** (clear) for us because we can stand up with assurance/confidence that something is a wrong idea/act. That is the only way we can listen to the speech of the Creator (***kalaam***). When I read the verses, I hear it as the Speech coming to me from the Speaker as His attributes (***Mutakallim-the One Who exposes Himself with Words***).

In order to live like Prophet Abraham, we have to work on ourselves:

**Step 1:** Make the truth manifest to myself.  
**Step 2:** If parents/relatives/others are in error, kindly disagree.

***What are “idols” for me?***

* Anything which I see as acting independently from the Creator. Example: If I observe a bird and attribute its flying qualities to itself, then the bird becomes my idol (and I am the “Azar” now).

God is the Creator of the universe. By turning the bird into the Creator of its own universe, the bird becomes a god. Similarly, I can act like a god as well if I feel that my qualities belong to me. I have to be watchful of this wrong act. Alas, we do not feel the need to work on ourselves because our truth is not manifested within us. If we deeply reflect on our existence (***yatafakkarun***) as recommended by the Quran, our errors/mistakes (***dalal***) must become manifest/obvious to us. That is the only way we may become “conscious human beings” (***ulu’l-albaab***). This universe is made in such a way that the error manifests itself and becomes clear to us (***fi dalalin mubeen***) i.e. the assurance of the mistake when we made it.