Halaqa: Saturday, October 12, 2013

Topic: From transience to eternity

“We have placed all that is in the earth as an adornment thereof that we may try them: which of them is best in conduct. And We will indeed make whatever is on it arid dry soil.” (kahf: 7-8)

The All-compassionate Creator, the munificent Provider, the All-Wise Maker made this word in the form of a festival and celebration for the World of Spirits and spirit beings. Adorning it with the wondrous embroideries of all His Names, He clothes each spirit, great or small, eleveated or lowly, in a body decked out with sense, suitable to it and appropriate for benefitting from the innumerable, various good things and bounties in the festival; He gives each a corporeal being and sends it to the spectacle one. And He divides the destical, which is most extensive in regard to both time and space, into centureies, years, seasons and even days and their parts, and makes them all exalted festivals in the form of parades for all the groups of His creatures with spirits and for His plant and vegetable artefacts. Especically the face of the earth in spring and summer, it is a series of festivals for the groups of small beings so glittering it draws the fazes of the spirit beings and anfels and the dwellers of the heavens in the high levels of the world. For those who think and contemplate it is a place for reflection so wonderful, the mind is powerless to describe it. But in the face of the manifestations of the Divine Names of Most Merciful and Giver of Life in this Divine feast and dominical festival, the Names of Subduer and Dealer of Death appear with death and separation.

Decoration is for human beings who have been given the tools to appreciate these decorations.

* The beauty around us, is for reflection

How do we reconcile the enjoyment in this life with the inevitable ‘end’ that is to come when death strikes?

* Death apparently contradicts the the all-embracing mercy of our Creator ( My mercy encompasses all things – Araf: 156)

All the beauty and desirable things in creation are a means of trial (as presented to us the verse)

Physical actions only have meaning if there are accompanied with human qualities and performed under the guidance of human qualities.

* Otherwise, physical actions have no meaning

Conduct (*amal) –* We have to pay attention not just to our ‘physical’ actions but our conduct internally.

All the bounties in creation address our human qualities, not our animal qualities.

* Even animals eat food but as far as we are concerned, we have to understand the beauty in creation by reflecting on our human qualities
* Which one of us will have the best conduct (in human qualities)

How do we respond with our human qualities?

By interpretating, understanding and reflecting back to the demonstrations that we witness.

* Eating is not human
* In the materialists’ eyes, fruits are there for us to eat
	+ But eating is the animalistic side of our being
	+ The human side is for us to derive meaning from the demonstration
		- Where is the food coming from?
		- Why do I have the qualities to evaluate this?
		- Establish communication

When I use my human qualities to respond back to the sender the ‘food’, the ‘food’ has fulfilled its function in my life.

Analogy: When you visit a fair, the products on display are just meant for display so that visitors can introduce the product to the market.

* If you want the product, you have to place an order for it
* Similarly, we have to place our order (recognizing the manufacturer of the products)

People are showing all the products in the fair and they don’t give it to me.

* Similarly, people get angry and say: God is showing me all these things and not giving it to me
* The real purpose of the fair is to make the visitors realize that the manufacturer is able to make all these gadgets and to make you feel comfortable that you can get it if you ask the manufacturer
	+ If we don’t acknowledge the manufacturer, we will get angry at the fair because we cannot get anything from it and instead proclaim that it causes us torture

Besides feeling dissatisfied and deprives but I am also tortured because I see all that is available and yet being unable to get it.

* This life is only that of ‘tasting’
* We are here just to taste and to recognize what the source is capable of
* This is the display in the fair

The ‘taking away’ is the means of calling us to come to the source so that we may acknowledge Him.

* If you get all the chocolate you want from the fair, you will forget the source and will feel no need to contact the source.

‘test’ (*lenab-lu-a-ham):* Filling out the product order form (so that you can get all that you see in the fair)

* Once you have filled out the order form, the fair can wrap up but your order form with the manufacturer remains
* The display in the fair is just a guarantee that the firm can produce all these gadgets and products

The fair is really guiding us as to how we can benefit from this demonstration.

* The more ‘order forms’ you fill out, the better for you
* ‘order forms’ = acknowledgement that this world is just a demonstration and that the product is from the manufacturer.

Towards the end of the fair (life) we see that people begin feeling tired

* All that we want to do is to go home and rest
* But before we leave, we should fill in the order form so that the products will be at home when we reach back
* Filling in the order form has no price (just acknowledge the source)

If you fill in the form imitatively, you just fill in your details but don’t return it to the manufacturer’s your forms have no use

* Ritualistic actions, without consciousness, do not reach God
* You have to acknowledge the manufacturer

What makes the form valuable?

* Acknowledge who is the producer
* “The manufacturer can produce all these things, and I want the manufacturer to send me all these products.”

How can be sure that there is an endless factory?

* Because we see that at every moment, things are produced, displayed and taken away
* At every moment, we are experiencing a display
* The One who established this fair (universe) is sustaining the fair, although He changes it continuously

Extinction: Man’s misbehavior has caused corruption in Earth but at the same time, there is the constant order in the universe.

The order and production line is established but the production keeps getting better.

- We see that a perfect order is taking place in the existence of every moment and in every moment.

- Although some creatures are no longer be created, it is not because of the lack of capacity of the creator

- We see that everything is happening within an order, that when you kill excessively, the object will disappear

The production line is working to make people consume, not necessarily for the benefit of their human qualities.

* When we make wrong choices, the order (Creator) demonstrates that what we are doing is wrong

I am diabetic and I cannot eat brownies

* But enjoying the brownies only appeals to me animalistic qualities
* The fact that I know the brownies are delicious is enough to make me acknowledge the Source
* Eating or not eating it, is not important
* What is important is to acknowledge the quality of the manufacturer

There is no fake production in the universe

* Everything brings news about its Source
* All that I see tells me what the Source is capable of (*My Mercy encompasses everything)*
	+ We can only see His mercy by tuning in to our human qualities

People who have seen the moon or the galaxies using highly magnified telescopes may experience some psychological shift because of the amazing creation out there

The very existence of the desire to be able to see the galaxies (or to own a machine in the fair) is enough for me to acknowledge the manufacturer

* The desire is given to you as a promise from your Creator that He is not going to cheat you
* If He is going to cheat you, why would He give it to you

We have to pay close attention to our human ualities. They are witnesses for us because they tell us what the Creator is telling us.

* Whatever you desire, you will be given
	+ The desire has been given to you
	+ The One who has given you the desire (made you in this form) is the One who made this universe and put you in contact with this universe
	+ We cannot isolate ourselves from the universe
	+ Whoever gave existence to the universe, gave existence to me and put all the endless desires within me
		- These desires are essentially ‘detectors’

I don’t like fire – so fill in the form, acknowledge the creator and tell Him you don’t like fire and not to send you there.

Using our human capacities, and emotions, is so very important for us!

* Saying that things are happening accidentally is silly and stupid

Everytime a child is hungry, it cries

* Where do they learn to express themselves by crying?
* They have been given this ability and the grown-ups are given the ability to respond to these cries
* The relationship is conscious

Have you got any evidence that the universe is NOT created?

* No. But we are used to brushing it off and saying that it is impossible.

We think that we see because we have eyes

* But in reality, we exercise the power of sight that has been given to us by using the eyes we have been given
* No one can demonstrate to me the power of sight. I can only experience the effect of sight.

Everybody experiences the feeling of not wanting to be tortured. The fact that you have the feeling is an ‘effect’. Similarly, I can demonstrate the proof of my free will by ‘EFFECT’.

* It is self evident that I don’t want to be tortured
* No one can ‘prove’ to me that I don’t want to be tortured.

***Amal* in the Quranic terminology means conduct.**

* **People tend to simplify by saying that it is action**
* **Quran = word of God**
* **God speaks to me in order to teach me the reason of my existence here**
	+ **We don’t need God to teach me how to perform my ‘animalistic’ side**
	+ **The purpose of the Quran is to teach me how to fulfil my existence in this fair (universe)**
		- **My actions are the means/vehicles to fulfil this purpose**
		- **Quran speaks to this dimension of the action, not just the action itself!**
		- **As long as we acknowledge that your Lord is the one that deserves to be worshiped, your physical needs will get fulfilled.**

You want paradise because you always want more than you experience in this world.

* We always desire for something better
* I desire paradise, right here in this world
* Our desires go beyond the limits of this universe
* We have to use ourselves (according to the proper definitions in the Quran)

By giaving you the ability to express yourself (in the form of speech), use the same ability to express your need for food

* THe source of existence belongs to the host of the universe entirely
* Physical and spiritual side has been given to you by the same source.