

جامعة
المصطفى
العالمية



ISSN : 2319-2291



AL MUSTAFA ISLAMIC RESEARCH SOCIETY

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHTS

Vol. 1, No. 11, Winter 2021

In the Name of Allah

International Journal of
RELIGIOUS THOUGHTS

Vol. 1, No. 11
Winter 2021

Al-Mustafa Islamic Research Society
(New Delhi, India)

International Journal of Religious Thoughts (IJRT)

ISSN 2319-2291

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Office : Al-Mustafa Islamic Research Society

G-46 Nizamuddin West, New Delhi – 110013, India

Printer & Publisher: Dr. Syed Fayaz Hussain

Address: F-128, G. Floor, Shaheen Bagh, Abul Fazal Enclave-II,
Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025

Printing Presses: H. S. Printers, C-29, Sector A-7, Part-1, Tronica City, U.P.

E-mail: almustafa_irs@yahoo.com , **Website:** www.miuindia.in

Articles have been selected by the group of scholars.

These articles in the book do not reflect the view of Dr. Syed Fayaz Hussain

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Preface

The base of Prophetic teachings and the essence of all religions is monotheism. If monotheism is explained, the rest religious cognitions even the principle of resurrection and the Day of Judgment also becomes clear.

If the monotheism is demonstrated and explained, the ethics will prevail and the ethical life would also be established.

All the problems of human societies regarding the method of worship and the lifestyle turn to this principal **“lacking cognition of God and knowledge of his Excellency and in fact non-acceptance of monotheism in all aspects and conditions”**

It must be acknowledged that many people who are followers of different religions and sects believe in unity of God in creation in some sorts but they have problem in Divine Unity of Lordship and they hold the belief of separate Lords for every existent and this has a root in lacking the true cognition of God, his names and attributes.

They also affirm that there is no creator except God thus Allah, the Glorious says: *وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مِّنْ خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ*

If you ask them, ‘Who created the heavens and the earth?’ they will surely say, ‘Allah’ because they were accepting a sort of the unity of God in creation but the main problem is in Divine Unity in Lordship.

The people involved in atheism are very few in numbers therefore the most of Quranic verses are related to Divine unity in Lordship and divinity. Divine Unity of essence or the very essence of God is less considered. Only the verses like: *نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ*

‘There is nothing but the life of this world: we live and we die, and nothing but time destroys us’ such type of verses consider the

disproval of the imagination of atheists otherwise the rest verses deal with demonstration of Divine unity in Lordship.

Apart from this, God considers the essence as inherent and sees no need of discussion about it even though if a few verses talk about the topic of inherent knowledge of God, those are just for awakening and reminding not for reasoning. أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

'Is there any doubt about Allah, the originator of the heavens and the earth?! Means if you truly contemplate, God is not subject to suspicion. It is not possible to suspect about the origin and the very cause of the existence of human being.

The phrase in Quran "ما قدروا الله حق قدره" **'They do not regard Allah with the regard due to Him'** point out to the same means if God was regarded and his names and attributes were cleared for everyone, the humans would not gone out of the way of his love and affection totally and all humans would come on the path of monotheism in any way.

Therefore it has been sought to demonstrate the views of few religions about monotheism in this issue but it is right to discuss this topic and its branches in the upcoming issues continuously so this task will be continued by the grace of All-truth, his Excellency.

Hojjatul Islam Dr. Reza Shakeri

Director IJRT

Chief Representative of Al-Mustafa International University in India

Editorial

Another Issue of 'International Journal of Religious Thoughts' is with you. With every succeeding Issue, the response that we are getting in the form of letters, mails and contributions from the learned authors has been encouraging for us. It is an indication in itself as regards the popularity of 'Religious Thoughts' that it has achieved. Our main goals in publishing this journal have been to inform the educated class about the common points of religions regarding the morality, mysticism, spirituality, peace and security, so that we can reach an ideal, progressive, and stress-free society. Another point that may be of interest to our worthy readers is that 'Religious Thoughts' has now been allotted ISSN number and we are trying to get the ISI standard for this journal soon. It is a milestone in our journey, which started with the realization of the need to publish a Journal that presents discussions on Inter-Faith and various positive aspects of religion to Indian and Iranian readers. The publication is a sincere attempt by Al-Mustafa Islamic Research Society to highlight those different paths and processes of thought exist in the world. We believe that initiating the process of dialogue and expression of different views and thoughts always adds to sustenance of mutual understanding. In a world, where difference of opinion offer leads to misunderstanding and conflicts, we wish to use the tools of dialogue and interaction for better understanding and human relations. We intend to and have tried to take a deeper look at various existing religions and to develop a spirit of togetherness. Study of culture and religion shows that, peace oriented, convergent and scholarly approaches are welcomed by the right thinking people in India and Iran both. While thanking the scholars and experts on the subject, we earnestly hope that they will continue to patronize us in this momentous task through their constructive criticism and suggestions.

Dr. Syed Fayaz Husain
Editor-in-Chief IJRT

Monotheism in Islam

Dr. Reza Shakeri

Chief Representative

Al- Mustafa International University in India

Introduction:

جهان را بلندی و پستی تویی ندانم چه‌ای، هر چه هستی تویی

You are the beginning and the end of the universe/I do not know what you are but you are everything.

When Hakim Ferdowsi speaks about God, he has recited one line of poetry that Hakim Sadr-ul-Muta'allehin mentions that line with glory and honor in his book *Al-Mabda 'wa Al-Ma'ad*, and uses that verse.

The glory of this verse is in its second line that means God is the Creator of the heavens, the Creator of the earth, and whatever is in the heavens, earth, and between heaven and earth, is the creation of God.

And Almighty God confirms this undeniable truth from man in Dhar world (a world before coming to this materialistic world), so the man does not face the negligence and forgetfulness.

Am I not your lord? They said yes (الست بربکم قالوا بلی)

Therefore, man always needs monotheism and seeks for his lost

(هر کسی که دور ماند از اصل خویش / باز جوید روزگاری وصل خویش)

Anyone who stays away from their origin / seeks to reconnect one day

Anyone who is far from the spiritual world and from the presence of God (his origin and beginning), is looking for a way to return to the origin and the days of his connection.

In other words (We are from the sea and we are going to the sea / we are from the top and we are going up) ما ز دریایم و دریا می‌رویم / ما ز بالا می‌رویم و بالا می‌رویم

Man is created on the basis of monotheistic nature and stands continuously with the monotheism, which calms down the raging sea of human existence and therefore at the Day of Alast and in the Dhar world, man testifies this natural and essential instinct before the true God that there is no Creator and Lord except Almighty God.

Undoubtedly, Monotheism is the essence of all divine religions; especially Islam and the root of monotheism enjoys a high status among the principles of beliefs, as other religious belief are based on this root.

Imam Reza (AS) said in the narration of the Silsila-tuz-zahab (Golden chain of narration)

“(The phrase) no god except Allah (لا إله إلا الله) is my fence and whoever enters my fence is safe from my torment ...,

Then while he was passing, proclaimed: but it has conditions, and I am one of its conditions.”

Therefore, in this article, we intend by studying monotheism in Islam and explaining its types, elaborate the Islamic approach to this undeniable fact and on the other hand, while quoting the sayings of the elders, want to point out the main cause of difference between Islamic sects and Islam with other religions.

Definition and types of monotheism:

Monotheism means oneness of God.

This Oneness (monotheism) deserves consideration in many respects, the most important of which is:

1-The unity of the Divine essence, 2- The unity of God’s essence and attributes 3-The unity of Divine actions 4-The Unity of God in worship.

1- The unity of the Divine essence:

The unity of the Divine essence means the oneness of God as the Creator of the whole universe, which is the origin of all things.

The unity of the Divine essence means cognition of the absolute truth as one and unique. The first knowledge that everyone has of Almighty God is his richness and needlessness i.e. he is an essence who does not need any creature in any aspect and in the worlds of Qur'an, he is "needless" and everything needs him.

O mankind! You are poor in your relation to Allah and Allah! He is the absolute, the owner of praise.

يا ايها الناس انتم الفقراء الى الله و الله هو الغنى (فاطر/١٥)

And according to philosophers, he is necessary existence.

This is the first cognition and the first idea that everyone has of God i.e. everyone who thinks about God and proves or denies, and acknowledges or rejects, has such a meaning in his mind that is there any reality that is not dependent on other, all realities depend on him and originated from his will and he has not originated from another origin?

The unity of the Divine essence means that this "reality" doesn't carry duality and it is not plural, he is unparalleled. Nothing exists in the status of his existence.

The unity of the Divine essence is one of the four branches of monotheism that has been discussed in the Qur'an to prove it. The unity of the Divine essence means the negation of any inner and outer multiplicity of the God, in the sense that not only God has no partner in creation and His uniqueness and incomparability negates the existence of any other, but his essence also lacks any internal components and composition; Thus, unlike other creatures whose essence is the sum or some of the rational, imaginary, and external combinations, the essence of the Lord has real simplicity and lacks any composition.

The unity of the Divine essence was matched with Qur'anic verses in two words and two meanings, and these two words are “the needlessness of the divine essence” and “His uniqueness in all respects”.

2-The Unity of Divine attributes:

The meaning of the unity of Divine attributes is that the attributes of God are the same as His essence;

That means, if we say: God has knowledge, it does not mean that the essence of God is separate, and His knowledge is separate, but it means that God is the same as knowledge. Similarly, when it is said that God is omnipotent and alive, it does not mean that ability and being alive are out of His essence, but it means that His essence is the same as power and life; Because otherwise, the result is that God is composed of two components (essence and attribute) and the combination requires need and indigence, and the need for God, who must be rich and needless in every aspect, is not compatible.

In other words; whenever we say that God came into being from a combination of "essence" and "attribute", then God becomes a compound that needs its components; i.e. if any of these two components would not exist, there would be no god.

This is where they say based on philosophical argument: the essence of God is the same as His attributes and His essence is the same as His knowledge, power and other essential attributes, and just as the essence of God is the same as His attributes, so each of His attributes is the same as other attributes i.e. the reality of his knowledge is not other than his power, to say: a part of his essence consists of his knowledge and the other consists of power, but all of his essence is his knowledge, power and other essential attributes, and also his attributes are same as each other; Because if this is not the case, then the issue of the combination of essence arises from two components (e.g. Knowledge and power) and the combination, as mentioned, is not compatible with being God.

The Holy Qur'an says as an expression of God's purification from any polytheistic description,:

“Glory be to your Lord; Glorified be the Lord from the attribute (descriptions) they give” (سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ)

Absolute perfection and infinity of God’s essence:

God is an infinite and absolute being in every aspect. Therefore, there is no perfect attribute outside His essence, and whatever exists, is included in His essence. And if our attributes, like knowledge and power, are extra to our essence, it is because of our limitation that one day we lack them and one day we possess them, and also the attributes of knowledge and power in our essence are separate from each other; because power belongs to our body and knowledge to our soul. But in the absolute essence of God, which is absolute perfection and the second is inconceivable to him, no attribute outside him can be imagined.

Imam Ali (A.S) says about the negation of attributes outside God’s essence:

He who attributed him (with attributes extra to his essence) made him limited, and whoever made him limited has counted him, and whoever has counted him has nullified his eternity, and whoever said how is he, has asked for his description, and whoever says where is he, He has bounded him in a place. He is all knowing but nobody knows his essence, he is cherisher but not cherished by someone, he is all powerful but none has power over him.

There is no Composition in the essence of God:

The result of the unity of essence and attributes is that the essence of God is free from any component, while if we consider His essence other than His attributes and the two are considered as accidental and its subject or we know his attributes separate from each other, it will be resulted in duality and composition. And the being composed of essence and attributes needs its components, while it has already been proved that any external and rational combination has no way in the essence of God and He is free from all needs and indigence.

Complete and pure monotheism is his purity from attributes (extra to essence); because every attribute testifies that it differs from its substantive and every substantive testifies that its existence is other than the existence of an attribute. So whoever describes God (and considers His attributes extra to his essence), then He has associated him with something (other Eternal) and as a result, he has considered him dual and he who considers him dual (and says His essence is distinct to his attribute), has considered a part for him, and whoever conceives parts for him, he has not known him correctly.

Does the multiplicity of attributes contradict the simplicity of essence?

Due to the simplicity of the essence of God and His purity from any component, now the question arises how we prove various attributes such as knowledge, power, life etc. for God. And would the multiplicity of attributes be resulted into the combination of God's essence with these various attributes? In response, it should be said: Although God is a simple essence, in which there is no multiplicity but the human intellect considering a type of perfection ascribes them to God with the condition of absoluteness. And due to this limitation of our intellect, we ascribe many attributes to God otherwise there is no attribute other than Gods' essence in external world and this distinction exists only in the world of conception.

Imam Sadiq (as) states describing God:

Our Lord is the full of light; all his essence is the knowledge, all his essence is his Needless from all.

The theory of the distinction of God's attributes from His essence:

One of the views on the attributes of the God is the theory of a group called Ash'arites (followers of Abul Hassan Ash'ari) who has said: The divine attributes are something outside the essence of God and they are always concomitant to the essence of God and they are eternal like him. They believe in the "eight eternal" which consists of the divine essence, in addition to the seven other eternal attributes.

Criticism of this theory:

The first objection to the Ash'arites' theory is that if each of the divine attributes is assumed to have instances outside of the divine essence and without the need for a creator, then the eternal and necessary being would not be exclusive to God and instead of single eternal, one should believe in the eight necessary beings and eternals. And this is not compatible with the unity of Divine essence and causes polytheism in the essence of God, which no Muslim can be committed to.

Hussain ibn Khalid says: I heard from Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Reza (a.s) that he stated:

Almighty God since the beginning had knowledge and was omnipotent, living, eternal, hearing and seeing.

So I said: O son of the Messenger of God! A group says that Almighty God is knowing by a knowledge from the eternity and is powerful through a power, has life, he is an eternal by an eternity and hearing by a hearing quality and seeing by the attribute of seeing.

The second objection to the Ash'arites' theory is that if each of the divine attributes has a separate instance and objective reference.

Or is it that their instances are assumed to be within the divine essence, which necessitates that the divine essence be composed of parts, and we have already proved that such thing is impossible?

Or that their instances are thought to be outside of the divine essence and creation of God, which necessitates that the divine essence, which presumably lacks these attributes, has to create them and then be attributed to them while it is impossible that the existential cause, in its essence, lacks the perfection of its creatures.

Or to seek help from his creatures and to be needful of them in order to attain the attributes such as knowledge, life and power.

Abu Basir says: I heard that Imam Sadiq (as) was saying:

Our God has been always existent and His knowledge is his essence, although there was not any known. And hearing was in his essence, although there was no audible (heard). And seeing, was in his essence, although there was nothing seeable. And power, was in his essence, although there was nothing belonging to power.

3-The unity of Divine actions:

The unity of Divine actions, which is sometimes interpreted as Unity of God in creation, in the term of philosophers means that all systems and traditions and causes and effects are the action of God and his work and they are emerged by will of God. The beings of the universe, just as they do not have any existential independence from God in their essence, do not have independence in terms of influence and causality

As a result, just as God has no partner in His essence, has no partner in action as well. Every doer and cause possesses its own reality and own influence and activity from him.

The Creation and bringing into existence is one of the attributes of God. This attribute is the expedience of the proofs of existence of God because the gist of those arguments are that God is the origin and the cause of the causes of all beings. The discussion is about that God has no partner in the creation and the creator of the world is none other than God, so one of the branches of monotheism is the unity of God in creation.

In other words: the unity of God in creation means that we do not have more than one original and independent creator in the universe, and the creation of other causes is in the sequence of his creation and is performed with his permission and command.

In this branch of monotheism, all systems, traditions, causes, effects, are the action of God and his work, and they are emerged by the will of God. The beings of the universe, just as they do not have any existential independence from God in their essence, also do not have independence in influence and causality. As a result, God has no partner in action, just as he has no partner in his essence.

The unity of Divine actions is exactly the example of the blessed verse "There is no power but from God". Which is expressed in philosophy as a principle "None has influence in existence but God."

According to the Ash'arites, the meaning of phrase 'is there a creator other than God' and likewise is that nothing in the world has an effect and action by himself. The fire that is put on cotton has no difference from water in its essence; But God's custom and habit is that when fire is placed on cotton, for example, he will directly ignite without the intervention of fire. For this group, the world and the causes and effects are nothing but an apparent veil, and there is no causal relationship between objects.

According to the Mu'tazilites, God is the only creator of the essence of things; Rather, he is the creator of the origin of the universe at the beginning of the work, and his will no longer interferes in the work of the universe, just like a mason who builds a building and leaves it; But according to the Shia philosophers, the unity of God in actions and creation cannot be denied and the words of the Mu'tazilites are nullified; But the unity of Divine actions does not necessitates that any being cannot affect another being. The unity of Divine actions means that at the same time the objects are the causes of their effects and the relation of their effect to them is real, God is the doer of that effect and this attribution is also true.

According to the Ash'arites, the attribution of an action to God is real, and its attribution to other than him is virtual, and according to the Mu'tazilites, the attribution of any action to the perceptible doer is real and to God is virtual.

This rule also applies to human actions: The action is of God's action although it's ours at the same time.

According to us (Shiites), the unity of God in creation means that everything manifests its effect by the will and permission of God.

In the Holy Qur'an, in various topics, while attributing effects to doers, the word 'by the permission of God' is also used.

We say: God is the absolute self-existent: (He is live and everything depends on him), and the nature of all causes and effects are in the hands of his power and will. The world moves according to [his] will:

Hence, it must be admitted that the exclusiveness of creation in God does not mean the denial of traditions among natural phenomena, because the system of cause and effect in the components of the material world does not mean the independence of causes in causation and creation, rather God has made this law in nature and he himself has created this principle. The sun and the air are effective in the growth of the earth, the water is also effective in the growth of the plant, but its effective existence and influence are all by the permission of God and one of the manifestations of the divine traditions in existence. Those who have interpreted the unity of God in creation by denying the system of causes and material relations between the parts of the world have erred.

A few verses of the Holy Qur'an also confirm the Unity of Divine actions, such as:

(بقره/165) إِنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا Indeed, all powers belongs to God.

The holy verse considers all powers to be exclusive to God and thus explicitly implies the unity of Divine actions.

ماشاءالله و لاقوه الآبه، ولا حول و لاقوه الآ بالله العلي العظيم

Whatever God wills and there is no power except God. There is no power but from God, the exalted, the grandeur.

This prayer directly attributes all powers to God and directly implies the unity of Divine actions.

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا (سوره انبياء ٢٢)

If there were in them (Heaven and Earth) gods besides Allah, certainly the heaven and earth would be ruined.

The rational argument in this verse is formulated as follows:

1. If existence had more than one cause, it would not be possible for a causal relationship to be made between its components; because every effects depends only on its own cause and is not affected by other causes.

2. Existence follows a single system and order and there is a connection among its all components.

Therefore, existence has a single cause and created by single creator.

- قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

Say: God is the Creator of all things, and He is the unique, the dominant.

- اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ؛

God is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian of all things.

- ذَلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ؛

That God is your Lord and Creator of all things, there is no god except Him.

- هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ؛

Is there a creator other than God?

- رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ

Our Lord is who has given existence to all things, and guided them.

Upbringing impact of the unity of Divine actions

In some theological books, few results have been stated for the unity of Divine actions; which include the unity of God in worship and trust on God. One who believes in the unity of Divine actions, does not consider any being worthy of worship other than God; because only a creature can be worshiped who is the Creator and Lord of man.

Also, since only God is influential in the universe independently, according to the unity of Divine actions so he is only trustworthy,

and therefore: in verse 4 of Surah Al-Hamd, which says: (You [alone] do we worship, and to you [alone] do we turn for help), these two are the Upbringing results of the unity of Divine actions.

4-The Divine unity in worship:

The Divine unity in worship (Tawheed E'badi) means ultimate submission to Lord (The ultimate truth) by believing in the divinity of the Almighty and that he is cause of the causes and that no one but the essence of God will be entitled to it.

Importance of the Divine unity in worship:

For the importance of discussing the Divine unity in worship, it is enough that the main purpose of sending prophets (peace be upon them) and sending down books was inviting to the Divine unity in worship. And many verses in the Holy Qur'an have stated this point.

“Certainly we raised an apostle in every nation [to preach:] ‘Worship Allah, and shun fake deities.’ ” (Nahl: 36), it clearly testifies that the Divine unity in worship is the essence of the invitation of all the prophets and the cream of their programs. For this reason, more care must be taken in expressing its extent and characteristics.

The Qur'an considers the Divine unity in worship as a unanimous principle in all divine laws and invites the Jews and Christians to protect this principle and says:

“Say, ‘O People of the Book! Come to a common word between us and you: that we will worship no one but Allah” (Al-Imran: 64).

With such importance, how the commentators and lexiconists have not considered while defining this word and explaining its features, as it deserves.

All Muslims say this slogan many times during the day and night and repeat it in practice (You [alone] do we worship)

There may be disagreements among Muslims in the unity of Divine attributes or in the unity of Divine actions, but no Muslim ever

doubts that worship should be performed exclusively for God and polytheism in worship can never be fitting with being monotheist, it seems that Divine unity in worship is one of the most important principles before all Muslims.

This branch of monotheism is so important that it is the only purpose of the creation of jinn and humans (*اخلفت الجن □ الانس الا ليعبدون □* (اي ليعرفون

Although this worship may be interpreted as cognition but the meaning of cognition is not the cognition of the unity of Divine essence and the unity of Divine attributes, rather it means the cognition of "The Divine unity in worship".

Because the Divine unity in worship has an aspect of belief, which is the same belief that worship is exclusive to Almighty God, and has no partner in this regard,

And it also has a practical aspect that worship must be performed practically only for the sake of God. And this cognition expresses the same belief aspect of the Divine unity in worship.

And most importantly, the first obligation in the holy religion of Islam is the testification of the holy phrase " لا اله الا الله ", which means the testification of monotheism in worship and is the criterion for people to be Muslims.

In addition, the issue of the Divine unity in worship, apart from the aspect of belief, has many upbringing effects, and therefore has advantages and privileges over other types of monotheism. For this reason, when Ibn Sina states the issue of people's need for religion, divine law and prophetic mission; enters through the necessity of repeating man's attention to God and the five prayer that these worships cause people to adhere to justice and the rule of law.

Complete worship and its conceptual analysis:

Muslims, despite the differences in perceptions of the concept of monotheism, agree on the Divine unity in worship and the exclusiveness of that worship for God but the main point of disagreement begins when the concept of worship is misinterpreted

and, as a result, leads to excommunication and its negative consequences affect Muslims.

In logical expression, the difference is in the minor premise of the analogy. That means in the interpretation of this statement that "Is such an act worship or not"?

All Muslims agree on the major premise of analogy and do not permit the worship of anyone other than God.

Seeking help of the friends of God (Awliya-e-ilahi) and asking them for "prayer", "intercession", recourse etc. are some examples; which can be considered as worship of non-divines and create the ground for excommunication in case of misinterpretation.

The majority of Muslims do not perform such acts except for the purpose of proximity to Almighty God and honoring the friends of God.

The most important issue that has led Wahhabism to take a stand against other Muslims, whether Shias or Sunnis, is the issue of "The Divine unity in worship" and according to some authors, it is the key to all disagreements among Muslims.

Ayatollah Jawadi Amoli says: The polytheists typically accepted the existence of the originator that the necessary being exists and they have accepted that he is the creator of the heavens and the earth, the man and the relation of man with nature, but they did not accept that the Lordship of these beings was entrusted to God.

He asserts that: But they believed in conferring and said that every creature has a separate lord for himself, who cherishes him; there is a Lord for the sky, a Lord for the earth, a Lord for human being and so on And because they were polytheists in the Lordship, they also became polytheists in worship, so they worshiped those false lords.

That means disbelief in the Divine unity of Lordship causes polytheism in worship.

He further said: What the Holy Qur'an speaks about is the unity of God in Lordship. And the Divine unity means there is nobody

worthy to be worshipped other than God; because the Lord is none other than God and they refer the Divine unity in Lordship to the Divine unity in Creation. Why there is no Lord other than God? Because there is no creator other than God. On the question of why there is no creator other than God? It is no longer disputed because they typically accepted, and this is also true, they also accept that there is no creator other than God. Why is there no creator other than God? It is no longer disputed because they typically accepted, and this is also true, they also accept that there is no creator other than God.

Therefore, God Almighty says: (If you ask them, 'Who created the heavens and the earth?' they will surely say, 'Allah.) and likewise. Because they typically accepted the Divine unity in creation,

The Divine unity in Lordship and the Divine unity in worship has always been the subject of discussion.

Those who involved in atheism of the essential entity are very few in numbers; so many verses of the Holy Qur'an are related to Divine Unity in lordship and monotheism in divinity. The unity of Divine essence or essential entity is less discussed.

Therefore, even if some verses reiterate the issue of inherent nature, it is just a reminder; not an argument (Is there any doubt about Allah, the originator of the heavens and the earth?!) it means that if you think right, God is not in doubt. There can be no doubt in essence and the origin of human existence.

Therefore, since the prophets were afflicted with the Divine Unity in Lordship and the Divine unity in worship, so more verses are in that context, whether the verses that narrate the stories of the past prophets or the verses that narrate the protests of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H).

So, it does not talk about the essence of God. The polytheists (Whether the people of divine books or non-books) were lame in the Divine unity of God and the unity of God in lordship. The difference was in the scarcity and multiplicity of this false tool, otherwise in polytheism itself they are same.

Christianity involved in Trinity and Judaism was afflicted with the Deuteronomy, and likewise, the polytheists of the Hejaz were afflicted with a plurality of gods and various lords.

Neither one nor two; because it gained the aspect of aristocracy so whoever was more powerful had a special idol in his house, besides the public pagoda where the idols of all were gathered and the idol that was revered by all, they were collecting there, Whoever was more affluent, he would make and weave a separate god himself.

Therefore, in some wars, the sons of the Abu Sufyan, in addition to coming from the side of Ka'bah seeking help of those idols, went back to their own homes, also sought help from those special idols, and then put their hands on the grip of swords. This was an ignorant illusion, so no talk is about two gods and three gods in Hejaz.

Pointing out the fifth verse of Surah "Sa'd"(Has he reduced the gods to one god? This is indeed an odd thing!) He says: The saying of the polytheists of Hejaz was that this person who claims to be a prophet says that there is no god in the universe except one, because the first word of the prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was this "there is no god except one and unique". Then he said that I brought nothing great as the phrase "there is no god except one and unique" And not a single perfect human being among the prophets and the friends of God brought such great phrase "there is no god except one and unique".

These noble hadiths (traditions) have been narrated by late Sadooq (R.A) in his valuable book "Tawheed" in the chapter of "sawabul mowahhedeen" (rewards of monotheists). Because all knowledge turns back to monotheism and since the first word of the Messenger of God was the issue of monotheism, the polytheists said that this Man has united several gods, and He believes in monotheism, we believe in multiple deities. The Discussion was in monotheism and multiplication (it was in unity of God and plurality) The Messenger of Allah said: God is one and unique, they said: Gods are many; these words were also said from two groups.

Keeping in mind that the polytheists of Mecca were neither denying the creation of God nor the Lordship of God, although what was their problem and what role did they give to the idols?

Say, 'Who provides for you out of the sky and the earth? Who controls [your] hearing and sight, and who brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living, and who directs the command?' They will say, 'Allah.' Say, 'Will you not then be wary [of Him]?' (Yunus (10), verse 31)

The answer is that monotheism has degrees and levels; just as polytheism, which is opposite of monotheism, has levels and degrees, and unless a person goes through all the levels and stages of monotheism, he is not a real monotheist.

Therefore, Ayatollah Jawadi Amoli, stating that the majority of people are involved in polytheism in Lordship and divinity, the spirit of their speech apparently refers to the unity of God in lordship, not the Divine unity in creation i.e. if they have a difference, they have a difference in the Divine unity of Lordship; Not in the Divine unity of Creator.

Interpreting the verses number 163 and 164 of Chapter Baqarah (Your god is the One God; there is no god except Him, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful. Indeed in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and the ships that sail at sea with profit to men, and the water that Allah sends down from the sky – with which He revives the earth after its death, and scatters therein every kind of animal – and the changing of the winds, and the clouds disposed between the sky and the earth, there are surely signs for a people who exercise their reason.) He emphasizes the secret of the Divine unity in lordship and says: The basis of the teaching of all prophets in general and Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in particular is the issue of monotheism. If the Divine unity in lordship and Divinity is clarified well, all issues and teachings followed by monotheism will be secured. Those who deny the resurrection, did not really know the origin, and also those who deny revelation, prophet hood, and prophecy did not know the

origin. If Almighty God is known by His beautiful names, both the issue of resurrection and the issue of revelation and prophetic mission will also be solved. Therefore, Almighty God says about the deniers of the Resurrection or the deniers of revelation and prophetic mission: They did not know God as he deserves.

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Let's Learn about God

Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi

Translated by: Laleh Bakhtiar

Before studying about God and starting any discussion about him the first question, which arises in our minds is that why do we think about God and study the ways of knowing the Creator of the universe?

We can give the following reasons for this discussion:

1. Love of awareness and becoming familiar with our world is within all of us.

We all want to know, in truth: Did this elevated heaven, with its beautiful stars, this extensive earth, with its heart-rendering views; these various creatures; beautiful birds; various kinds of fish, the seas and flowers ; the blossoms, plants, abundant trees, whose tops reach towards the heavens; did all of these things come into being of their own free will or were all of these wonderful forms designed by an expert, a powerful artist or designer?

Beyond all of this, the first question which comes to mind for all of us is: Where did we come from? Where are we? Where are we going? If we know the answers to these three questions, how happy will we be! That is, if we know where our life began and where it will finally end and what duties do we have now, our searching spirit tells us: you must not sit quietly until the answers come.

Thus, the first thing which sends us looking for God and understanding of the creation of the world of existence is our very thirsty spirit of search.

2. A sense of thankfulness: Suppose that you have been invited to a very important meeting and all means of

convenience have been provided for you but, since you have been invited through your brother, you do not know the host well. The first thing you will want to do, when you enter the gathering is to find the host to thank him.

When we look at this wide-spread created world and the multiple blessings which have been provided for us: eyes which see, ears which hear, -sufficient intelligence, various physical and psychological abilities, various means for living and for earning our livelihood, we automatically begin to think about trying to know that who has given us all of these blessings, even though he does not need our thanks, we still thank him and until we do this, we are unhappy with ourselves and feel we have not done a duty. This is another reason why we begin to search to come to know God.

3. The bond between things to our benefit and things to our harm: suppose that we are going on a journey and we reach a cross-road in which there is a great deal of commotion. Everyone warns us not to stop at this cross-road because there is great danger there.

Each group invites us to go its way. One group says, "The best way is to go east." Another says, "Go West. It is the best road." The third group invites us to a road or a way which is between the other two, saying, "This is the only way of saving yourself from danger and reaching your home safely.

This is the way that will give you happiness and security and be a place of refuge for you."

Would we allow ourselves to choose a way without study? Will our mind allow us to stop there and not choose any way? Clearly not.

Rather, our mind and our wisdom tells us to begin immediately to study and research, to listen to the words of each group carefully and accept whichever way has the most correct signs, speaks the truth and has convincing reasons for taking that

way. Having assured ourselves of the right way, we take it and move forward.

In life in this world, also, we have such a condition.

Different religions and schools of thought invite us to take their way, but as our fate, our fortune and misfortune, our progress and backwardness depends upon our study and making the best choice, we are obliged to think about this and prevent ourselves from falling into misfortune, corruption and difficulties.

This is yet another reason which invites us to search for the Creator of the world. The Holy Quran says:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ...﴾ الزمر، 18

"So give good tidings to my servants, those who listen to the sayings and follow the best of it ..." (39: 17-18)

The benefits of knowing God

1. Knowing God and the Progress of Science

Suppose that a friend has come from a trip and has brought a book as a present for you. He says that it is an excellent book, because the author of this book is full of information and a very great scholar, who is accurate, an expert and a genius in his own field.

You will most certainly not study this book carelessly. Rather you will concentrate on every sentence and even the choice of words made and if there be a sentence there that you do not understand, perhaps you will spend hours and even days, whenever you can, studying it until the meaning of it becomes clear to you. Why? Because the 'author of this book' is not a normal average person but rather a great scholar who considers every word he uses carefully.

The world of creation is also like a great book in which every creature forms a word or sentence of that.

From the point of view of a person who worships God, every atom of this universe is worthy of study. A person who has faith in the

ray of the light of worshipping God, will make use of a special sense of curiosity in studying the secrets of creation and it is this very fact which helps science and human knowledge to progress - because he knows that the Creator of this universe has endless knowledge and power and everything he does is based on a wisdom and a philosophy.

Thus, he studies with greater care, more profoundly in order to be able to understand the secrets better. But a materialist has no reason to discover the secret of creation for he believes that nature is senseless.

2. Knowing God, Endeavoring and Hope

Whenever a difficult and complicated event takes place in the life of a human being, whenever all doors are somehow closed, someone feels weakness, hopelessness and loneliness, when confronted by these difficulties, a person with faith in God then seeks His help, which He gives.

A person who has faith in God does not see himself or herself as being alone or powerless. He or she does not despair. He or she does not sense' weakness or inability, because God is above all difficulties and everything is easy for him.

With hope in His kindness, support and help, he or she will struggle against the difficulty and will use all of his or her energies. With love and hope, one will continue his or her endeavors and efforts and will overcome the difficulty.

3. Knowing God and the Sense of Responsibility

We know a doctor, when poor people visit him, not only doesn't take money from them for the visit, rather gives them money and drugs and if he feels a danger for that person, he will stay all night in his home. These are people, who worship God and have faith.

But we also know a doctor who, until the money of the visit is not paid, will not take the first step for the sick person because he does not have a strong faith.

So, a person who has faith, no matter what his or her profession is, feels responsibility, knows his or her duties, does good, readily forgives and constantly sees a spiritual policeman within his or her soul who watches over one's deeds.

4. Knowing God and Peacefulness

Psychologists say that mental and psychological diseases are greater in our time than in any other. They say that one of the factors is anxiety over future events, anxiety over death, anxiety over war and anxiety of fear and failure. They add faith in God among the things which can take anxiety away from a person's spirit because whenever an anxiety wants to penetrate one's spirit, faith in God pushes it away.

A God Who is kind, a God Who helps one, provides for one's needs, a God Who is aware of His servants' condition and if they turn towards Him, He helps them and frees them from anxiety.

Due to this reason, a real believer always has a sense of peacefulness and no anxiety exists within his or her spirit. Whatever such a person does, is for God. Even if someone suffers a loss, one seeks its replacement from Him. Such a person even enters the war front with a smile.

The Holy Quran says:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴿الأنعام، 82﴾

"It is those who believe and confuse not their beliefs with oppression - that are (truly) in peacefulness, for they are on (right) guidance;" (6:82)

After proving the necessity of knowing God, the question arises that how many possible ways are there to know our God?

To answer this question, Scholars suggest two possible and clear ways of knowing God.

Two clear ways of knowing God

From the earliest of times until today, books have been written about coming to know God and a great deal has been said by scholars and non-scholars.

Each one chooses a way in order to come to understand this issue but from among all of the ways, there are two ways which can help us to grow near to this great Creator of the universe:

First, an inward way (the closest way) Second, an outward way (the clearest way).

With the first way, we get in touch with our deep, inner self and we hear the echo of monotheism from within the depths of ourselves.

With the second way, we explore the expansive created world, and we see the signs of the Creator in all creatures and in the heart of every atom. Each one of these two ways requires a great deal of explanation, but what we will try -to do is to briefly study each one of these two ways.

The Inward Way

Let us think about the following:

1. Scholars say that every human being who thinks, from whatever class or race one be, if left alone, receives no special training, not even hears the, words of people who worship God nor will the words of materialists, that person naturally become aware of a force or power which is above nature and which rules all of the world.

In the corners of one's heart and spirit, one will sense a very subtle sound, which is full of kindness and, at the same time, clear and firm, which calls one towards the great source of the universe and the power that we call God. This is that very pure, divinely-created human nature of people.

2. It is possible that one becomes occupied with the commotion in the material world and one's daily life and the lights and attractions of life and one may temporarily neglect to hear this sound, but when one finds oneself facing problems and difficulties,

whenever a natural catastrophe like a flood or an earthquake or a hurricane comes, yea, at this time, when one is curtailed from all means of material life, and when one finds no place of refuge, this inner sound gains strength. One feels that within one's self, a power is calling one, a power which is superior to all forces, a secret force and all difficulties and problems seem simple before it.

It is rare to find a person who in such difficulties does not automatically turn to God. It is this issue which shows how close we are to Him and how close He is to us. He is in our spirit and our very soul. Of course, the echo of instinct (nature) is always within a person but at times like this, it finds greater force.

3. Our history shows that even the powerful rulers who, at the time of peace and calm, refuse to even mention the Name of God, when the bases of their power begin to shake and they see that they are about to lose all of their power, they turn to God and they hear the voice of their Divinely created nature.

History tells us that when Pharaoh saw that he was drowning in the waves of the sea, he said, "I confess that there is no god but the great God of Moses." This voice came from his soul. Not only Pharaoh, but all people who are in a state or condition like he was, cry out the same thing he did.

4. If you study the real reasons for this, you will agree that a light shines from there which calls you to God. Perhaps there have been times when you have met with difficulties and problems and all of the usual ways of solving problems do not work. At that moment, most certainly, you have seen that there is a force in the world which can easily solve it.

At this moment, a hope mixed with love fills your spirit and soul and it removes the clouds of darkness from our soul. Yeah. This is the closest way which a person can take to God.

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلِّ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿العنكبوت،

"Now, if they embark on a boat. They call on God, making their devotion sincerely (and exclusively) to Him; but when He has delivered them safely to (dry) land. Behold, they give a share (of their worship to others)!" (29:65)

Only one question

Here it is possible that this question arise that this inner voice which we call the voice of Our 'God-given nature' (fitrat) is the result of things which we have heard from our environment and our mother and father have told us or from school and it has become very normal and common for us.

The answer to this requires a brief introduction.

Customs change:

We cannot find a custom which has not been changed throughout history among all nations. Thus, when we see that this is something which exists among all nations, has existed at all times and during all ages, without exception, we should realize that its roots are in fitrat and the it is woven into the spirit and soul of human beings.

For instance, the love of a mother for her child. This can in no way be said to come from propaganda or habit or custom because in no tribe or nation, or at any time or age, can you see that a mother does not love her child.

Of course, it is possible that a mother, due to a mental disturbance, makes her child away with herself or a father during the age of Ignorance in Arabia (the time before the appearance of Islam) buried his girl children alive. But his thoughts were wrong and based on superstitions although these are very rare cases.

Looking at this introduction, recalling how people in the past and in the present worship God, we see as stated by sociologists and historians, there has been no time in history when belief in God and faith did not exist among people. Rather, in every age and time and at all moments of this world, some form of belief existed and this,

itself, is clear reason why the worship of God is from the depths of the spirit and its' source is fitrat of human beings, not that it is a result of customs we have accepted because if it were the consequences of habit and custom, it would not be so extensive and eternal.

We even have proofs which show that tribes who lived before written history began, had some kind of a belief system. Of course, there is no doubt that at times, when people had forgotten God as the Being Who is above nature, they searched for Him and looked for Him among creatures in nature and they made idols for themselves of things in nature.

Some of the well-known psychologists clearly and directly say that the human spirit or soul has four senses:

First, the sense of knowledge: which sends a person after science and knowledge and makes one's spirit thirsty for knowledge, whether or not this has any material benefit.

Second, the sense of goodness: which is the source for moral and human issues in the world of humanity.

Third, the sense of beauty: which is the source of poetry and literature and art in their real sense.

Fourth, the sense of belief: which invites the human being to come to know God and to implement His Commands. In this way, we see that the sense of worship is one of the senses with the deepest roots of the spirit. That is why they are never separate from each other.

We can conclude from what has been said that:

* A love for God has always existed in us and will always continue.

* Faith in God is an eternal flame, which warms our heart and spirit.

*In order to come to know God, we are not obliged to take a long and complicated way. We quickly turn inward and see that we have faith in Him.

The Holy Quran says in this regard:

نَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ ﴿ق، 16﴾

"We are closer to the human being than his Jugular vein."
(50:16)

A True Story

We have said before that in the depths of the spirit of those who deny God with their tongue, a faith in God exists.

There is no doubt that victories and successes-especially for individuals with few possibilities - develops pride and this very pride becomes the source for forgetfulness, to the point where often a person even forgets his or her own opinions. But the moment that a storm of difficulties throws their life into chaos and the strong wind of difficulties attacks that person from all sides, the curtains of pride and selfishness moves away from their eyes and divinely-created nature (fitrat) and monotheism (the belief that God is One) appears.

History gives many examples of individuals who were like this, whose lives were full of deceit:

There was a minister who was very strong and powerful in his age. He had taken control of most of the power and no one opposed him. One day he entered a meeting in which a group of religious scholars were present. He turned to them and said, "For how long will you continue to say that God exists? I have many reasons to prove otherwise."

He said this with special pride. As the scholars who were present knew that he was not a reasonable or logical person and that power and strength had made him so proud that no words of truth would affect him, they ignored him and remained silent, a meaningful and humble silence.

This event passed. After a time, the minister insulted someone. The ruler of the time had him arrested and thrown in to jail.

One of the scholars who was present at the gathering thought to himself that the time to awaken him had come. Now that he has gotten off the horse of pride and the curtain of self-interest has moved away from his eyes, and the sense of accepting the truth was awakened in him, if he contacts him and gives rum words of advice, it may produce good results.

He received permission to visit him and he went to the prison. As he neared rum, he saw that he was in a room all alone, walking back and forth and thinking and he was recalling a poem which said, "We are all like drawings or paintings of a lion which are painted or drawn on a flag. When the wind blows, it moves and perhaps even attacks, but in reality it has nothing from itself. Its strength is the wind which gives it power.¹ We, also, as we gain more power, have nothing from ourselves. It is God who has given this strength to us and whenever He wills, He can take it from us."

The above-mentioned scholar saw that under these conditions, not only does he not deny the existence of God, but he has become ardently aware of God. After greeting him he said, "Do you recall how you said you have many reasons for the non-existence of God. I have come to answer those many reasons with just one response, "God is He Who, with such ease, took your power away from you." He hung his head in shame and did not answer because he knew that he had been wrong and he saw the light of God within himself.

Therefor the Holy Quran says:

وَ جَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ وَ جُنُودُهُ بَغِيًّا وَ عَدُوًّا حَتَّى إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْغَرَقُ قَالَ آمَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنْتُ بِهِ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ وَ أَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿يونس، 90﴾

"We took the Israeli tribes across the sea, Pharaoh and his has is followed them in pride and insolence. At length, when

¹ . It is said that the badge of a lion was drawn on the national flag so whenever wind was blown, the lion was also moved by wind, not by itself as it was just an image and non-living.

overwhelmed with the flood. He said. 'I believe that there is no god except Him whom the Israeli tribes believe in. I am of those who submit (Muslimeen).'" (10:90)

The Second Way of Coming to Know God

The Outer Way

With a quick glance at the world that we live in, we realize that the world is not in chaos and disorder. Rather, all phenomena are in motion moving towards a clear and determined direction. The facilities of the world are like a great army which has been divided into well-organized units which move in a determined direction.

The following points will clarify any ambiguities:

1. In order to come into being and to remain, every living creature must be a part of a series of laws and special conditions. For instance, for a tree to be, water and suitable earth and a specific temperature are necessary for us to plant seeds and nourish them and each seed to become green and grow.
2. If these conditions do not exist, there is no possibility for growth and the choosing of these conditions and proving the necessary preliminaries requires an intellect and knowledge.

Every creature has a special effect which is exclusive to it. Water and fire each have their own particularities which do not separate from them and they constantly follow permanent laws.

3. All of the members (organs) of living creatures work and are coordinated with each other. As an example, this very human body, which is itself a world, all works together consciously and unconsciously in a special coordination. For instance, if a danger arises, all are mobilized for defense. This relationship and co-operation is another sign of the order in the universe.

4. One look at the world scene makes it clear that not only all organs of one body of one living creature are in co-ordination with each other, but all the various creatures of the world are also in special co-ordination with each other. For instance, for the nourishment of

living creatures, the sun shines, clouds bring rain and the earth and resources of the earth also help. This all shows the existence of one clear system in the universe.

The Relationship of Order and Intellect

This truth is clear for everyone's conscience that whenever order exists in a facility, this shows intellect, thought, a plan and a goal.

Because whenever a human being sees order, permanent laws and a reckoning of things, he or she knows that beside that source, knowledge and power must also be sought and in understanding this, in one's conscience, he or she does not see need for reasoning.

He or she knows that a blind person or an illiterate person can never type a good essay or write a social or critical article, that a child of two years old can never paint a beautiful and valuable painting by the drawing of lines on a piece of paper. Ratner, if we see a good essay or read a good article, we know that a person who is literate or if we have seen very beautiful paintings, we will have no doubt that an expert artist painted them, even if we have never met or seen that artist.

Thus, wherever there is a sense of order, besides that, there has been an intellect and however much larger that system be, it is more accurate and more interesting, the knowledge which brings that into being in the same proportion is greater.

Sometimes, in order to prove this issue that every system needs a source of knowledge, the law of probabilities, which has been achieved in high mathematics, is used to prove that, for instance, if an illiterate individual wants to type an article or an essay or a poem by accidentally pressing on the keys of the machine, according to the law of probabilities, this will take millions of years to attain for which one lifetime is not sufficient.

The Holy Quran says:

سُرِّيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ أَو لَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿فصلت، 53﴾

"Soon we will show them our Signs upon the horizons and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth. Is it not enough that thy nourisher is aware of all things?" (41:53)

Examples from Creation

Throughout the world, 'order', 'goal' and 'design' are apparent. Now pay attention as we study some examples of this. We will present some large and some small examples for you.

Fortunately, today, with the progress made in natural sciences, the discovery of the secrets and wonders of the world of nature, and the subtleties in the existence of human beings, animals and plants, the wondrous structure of a cell or an atom and the wondrous system of the stars, the doors of knowing God have been opened to us in such a way that one can clearly say that all books of natural science are books about the oneness and unity of God which teach us great lessons about the great Creator. Because these books remove the veils or curtains which cover the interesting order of the creatures of this world and show how important the Creator of this world is.

The center of administration of the country of your body

Our skull has been filled with grey matter called the brain. This brain forms the most accurate and exact system of our body because it commands all of the powers of our body and it manages all of the organs of our system.

In order to understand the importance of this great center, it would be a good idea for us to explain the following for you.

The newspapers had printed that a Shiraz University student in Khuzestan was in an automobile accident and his brain was damaged but it seemed that nothing at all had happened to him. All of his organs were healthy but strangely enough, he had forgotten all of his past life. His mind worked well. He could study but if he saw his mother and father, he did not recognize them. When they said to him that this was his mother, he was surprised. They took him to his home in Shiraz. They showed him the handicraft work he had done and then hung on the walls of his room. But he looked at

it all in amazement and said that he was looking these things for the first time.

It became clear that in the brain damage he suffered, cells which were, in reality, transitions between thought and his memory were no longer working and like a blown out fuse which cuts off the electricity and brings darkness, his memory of the past had been disconnected.

Perhaps the point which no longer works is no bigger than the size of the top of a pin but what an effect it has had upon his life and from this it becomes clear how complicated and how important our brain is.

Our brain consists of two separate parts: first, the part which is controlled by our voluntary will which controls all of our voluntary motions like walking, looking, speaking etc. Second, the involuntary part which controls the movement of our heart, stomach, etc. and if one part of this section of the brain does not function, the heart or another organ will no longer function.

One of the most wondrous parts of the brain

The cerebrum is the center of will power, consciousness and memory. In other words, it is one of the most sensitive areas of the brain and many of the reactions of the inner senses like anger, fear, etc. relate to it.

If we take out the cerebrum in an animal but we leave the other organs as they are, it will remain alive but its understanding and consciousness will be totally eliminated. They have removed the brain of a pigeon. It remained alive for a while but it could not eat seeds that were placed in front of it. Even though it was hungry, it would not eat. If it was allowed to fly, it flew until it hit a barrier and fell down.

Another wondrous part of the brain is the sense of Memory

Have you ever thought how wondrous our sense of memory is? If our sense of memory is taken from us for even one hour, what a difficult situation we will be placed in.

The center of memory which forms a small part of our brain is where all of our memories of our lifetime are stored. Whoever is related to us, the particularities of that person as to size, form, color, clothes and spirit, are kept in storage in their own area and a special file is formed for each one. Thus the moment we confront that person, our mind removes him from the file and immediately, completely reviews what we know about him and then it commands us as to what reaction we should have.

If it is a friend, respect and if it is an enemy, the showing of hatred but all of this is done so quickly that there is more or less no lapse of time.

The wonder of this becomes more apparent when we try to recall what is stored and draw it or write it down or record it in a tape recorder without any doubt, it will require a great deal of paper or a great number of tapes which can fill a large storage room. Even more wondrous than this is when we want to find one drawing or one tape among them, a file clerk will be necessary but our sense of memory does all of this work very simply, easily and quickly.

How can an unconscious nature create a conscious one?

Many books have been written about the wonders of the human brain. Can you believe that such an extraordinary system which is so subtle, accurate, complicated and mysterious be made from an unconscious nature? More wondrous than this is to believe that an unintelligent nature could create intelligence.

The Holy Quran says:

﴿ فِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ وَ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴾ [الذاريات، 20-21]

"On the earth are signs for those of assured faith as also in your own selves: will you not then see?" (51: 20-21)

A World of wonder in a Small Bird

In this lesson, we want to leave aside the large country of our body, which we have only very briefly touched upon, and turn to a look at the wonderful order of other creatures.

We look at the sky in the darkness of night. We see an exceptional bird which is searching for food with all of its energy. This bird is a bat. There are many wondrous things but flying at night is among the most wondrous.

The swift flight of bats in the darkness of the night without hitting anything is so wondrous that no matter how often one studies this, new mysteries of this are revealed. This bird flies with the same speed and accuracy as a pigeon does in the day time.

If it flies into a dark and narrow tunnel which is full of smoke and twists and turns, it will fly through all of the twists and turns without hitting any of the walls and not the smallest amount of smoke will be found on its wings.

This strange ability, of the bat is proof of an effect within it which is similar to radar. We now need to know what radar is in order to be able to see it in a small bat.

In physics, in the discussion on forms, waves are discussed which are beyond sound waves. These waves are those same waves whose length and frequency are so great that the human ear cannot hear them. This is why they are called 'meta-sound' waves.

When these waves are set off by means of a very strong transmitter, these waves move forward but whenever they meet up with any kind of a barrier in a point of space (like the aircraft of the enemy, etc.), just like a ball when it hits a wall and bounces back, like our voice before a mountain or a high wall and based on an accurate record of how long it takes for the sound to return to us, we can measure the exact distance to the object.

Many aircraft and ships are guided by means of radar and it takes them to whatever direction they want. It is also used to find out the location of enemy ships and aircraft.

Scholars say that within this small creature, there is something similar to radar so that if the bat flies in a room which at that same moment a microphone is put to use to transform 'meta-sound'

waves into sound waves which can be heard, in each second (30 to 60 times) the 'meta-sound' waves will be heard by the bat.

Scholars in answer to this say, "These waves leave the larynx through the nose of the bat by means of strong organs and its ears, which are the receivers, receive these.

Thus, this bat, in its night travels, is obligated to its ears. A scholar, through experiment, has proven that if you remove the ears of a bat, it cannot fly avoiding things whereas if you completely remove its eyes, it will very expertly still be able to fly. That is, a bat sees with its ears! Not its eyes and this is most strange.

Now think who created these two wondrous organs in this small creature and how was it taught how to use them? And how can it avoid the dangers which exist during its night flying? Who?

Is it possible that nature have the intelligence and consciousness to do this and place these organs which scientists copy, at great expense, in its body?

Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him), in the *Nahj al-Balaghah*, in a very long sermon about creation, mentions the bat, saying, "It is never prevented from the way because of the darkness of the night. Great and glorious is God Who, without a previous model, brought everything into being.

Love for Insects and Flowers

One spring day when the weather is, little by little, growing warmer, make a visit to a park or a farm. You will meet up with all sorts of small insects, honey bees, flies, butterflies and mosquitos, who, without making a sound, fly from one flower to the next and from this branch to that branch of the trees.

They are so busy with their work that one could imagine an employer is overlooking their progress and continuously telling them what to do. Their wings and feet are colored yellow by the pollen of the flowers, giving them the look of workers who have put on their work clothes and with love and seriousness, they continue their work.

In truth, they have a very important assignment which is so great that Professor Leon Britton says, "Few people realize that without the work of insects, our fruit baskets would be empty." And we add this sentence, "The next year, our green gardens and pastures would be completely lost." Thus, insects are, in reality, the real nourishers of fruit and providers of flower seeds.

You most probably ask why? Because the most sensitive act in the life of flowers is performed with their help. You have probably heard that flowers, like many animals, have two parts, masculine and feminine, and that reproduction takes place through their union, giving us seeds and fruit.

But have you ever thought how the two parts of flowers, which do not move, are attracted to each other? And how the male spermatozoa mix with the female ovary and provide the beginning of a marriage between the two?

This work is most often the work of insects and, in some cases, it is the work of the wind. But this is not as simple as we think it is. This fruitful marriage in which insects act as the intermediaries, has a history, formality and long adventure, only a small part of which we mention here with a short story.

Two old and close friends

Natural scientists, after study, have concluded that flowers and plants appeared in the second geological age and strangely enough, insects appeared at the same time. These two, throughout the eventful history of creation, were like two old and close friends who have remained loyal to each other and have been complements to one another.

Flowers have always stored sweet nectar within themselves in order to further attract and sweeten the relationship. At the time when insects enter the flower in order to transfer the masculine group, provide the preliminaries for the marriage and pregnancy, the flower freely gives of its sweetness to them. This sweet and valuable sugar is so good tasting to the insect that they are naturally pulled towards it.

Some botanists believe that the beautiful colors and good smelling perfume of flowers also play an important role in attracting the insects to them. Various experiments with honey bees have shown that they distinguish colors and the aroma of flowers.

In reality, it is these flowers which grow for insects and have a good-smelling aroma in such a way that a butterfly and honey bees are attracted to them. They accept the invitation with all of their being and quickly begin the preliminaries and eat of their sweetness.

This very sweetness is a special kind of sugar which is considered to be the best food for insects. When it is stored in one place, it makes honey because insects are attracted to flowers. It eats some of this sweetness and takes most of it with them to their honeycomb to store. This is a contract of friendship and love which is based on mutual interest, always existed and will continue to exist between flowers and insects.

A lesson about monotheism: when a human being studies these wondrous points in the lives of insects and flowers, he or she automatically asks, "Who established this pact of love and friendship between insects and flowers?"

Who gave this special sweetness and good tasting nectar to flowers? Who granted flowers these attractive colors, beauty and this sweet-smelling perfume? Who invited insects towards it? What were the fat and tiny bodies of insects, butterflies, honey bees and golden bees given to make them prepared to connect the pollen of flowers?

Why do bees, for a certain period of time, move towards one kind of flower? Why did the life of flowers and insects begin at one time in the created world?

Can anyone - no matter how stubborn - accept the fact that all of these events were without any plan or pre design? And the unconscious laws of nature automatically brought such wondrous scenes into being? Never.

﴿ وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴾ النحل، 68 ﴿

"And the Nourisher taught the bee to build its cells in hills, on trees and in habitations then to cat of all tile produce (of the earth) and find with skill the spacious paths of its Nourisher (16:68)

In the world of infinitely small things

Because we are nurtured in the wondrous world of creation and we are familiar with it, we may be unaware of the importance of many of its wonders such as:

1. Insects and very tiny animals live around us, which if measured, would not even be two millimeters but just like large animals, they have hands, feet, eyes, ears, even brains, awareness, a certain series of nerves and digestive facilities.

If we put the brain of an ant under a microscope and if we study its amazing structure with care, we would see what a strange and interesting body it has. The various parts are placed next to each other, each gives a command to a certain part of the tiny ant's body and the slightest change in any of these areas would paralyze a part of its body.

The strange part is that in this small brain, which is much smaller than the head of a pin, lies a world of awareness, wisdom, civilization, taste and art. It is such that a group of scholars spend many long years of their lives, studying these animals. They include the interesting points in the books that they write for us.

Can the person who created all of this awareness, wisdom, and taste in such a small animal be a nature that does not itself have even a pin-head's amount of awareness and wisdom?

2. In the mysterious world, we know that the smallest creature recognized to date is the 'atom'. The 'atom' is so small that even the strongest microscope, one which shows a piece of straw like a mountain, is not strong enough to see one. If you want to know how small an atom is, know that one drop of water has more atoms than the number of people upon the earth and if we want to count the protons in one centimeter of a thin wire and we get 1000 people to help us and if in each second, we separate out one of them, it will

take 30 to 300 years, depending on the number of atoms) of working day and night to count all of them.

Now that you have understood that one centimeter of a thin wire contains this many atoms, "just think about how many atoms are in the heavens and on the earth; in water and the air and the stars and planets and the galaxy!! Does one's mind not tire just thinking about it? No one other than their Creator is worthy to count them.

Atoms give us a lesson in Monotheism

Learning about atoms, which are among the most important scientific discussions today, this tiny thing gives us a glad and happy lesson in monotheism because the world of atoms call our attention 'to them in four areas.

1. The extraordinary sense of order: To date, more than 100 elements have been discovered beginning gradually with one electron and accepting up to over 100; this amazing order could never be born from an unaware or unintelligent factor.

2. Strong sense of balance: We know that two different electricities attract each other. Thus electrons which are negative and a nucleus which is positive should attract each other.

In addition, we also know that the encirclement of electrons around a nucleus brings a repulsive force into being (flight from the center). Thus the pull of this force draws electrons away from the atomic environment. The atom is separated and its attractive forces want to attract the electrons and destroy the atom.

It is here that one must see how accurately the force of 'attraction' and 'repulsion' have been systematically arranged in atoms so that neither do the electrons flee nor are they attracted, but are always in a state of balance, continuing their movement. It is possible that a blind and deaf nature bring this balance in to being?

3. Each upon its own way: We have said that some atoms have a multiple number of electrons but not that all of the electrons move in one circuit, but rather in multiple circuits and each electron in a determined distance, each within its own area, with great speed

move like this for millions of years, without any contradictions arising between them. It is a simple issue to place all of these in a fixed circuit and movement with an unbelievable system of order?

4. The great energy of the atom: In order to understand the great strength of the atom, just consider that in 1945, an experimental atom bomb was set off in the wilderness. A very small atomic bomb was placed upon a metal stand. After the explosion, the metal melted and then set off steam and electricity and a frightful sound was heard. When scientists went to look for it, there was no sign of it.

In this same year, two small bombs like these were inhumanely exploded over Japan by the USA, one in the city of Nagasaki and the other in the city of Hiroshima. In the first city, 70,000 people were killed instantly and the same number were injured and in the second city, 30 to 40, 000 people were killed instantly and the same number were injured, making Japan unconditionally surrender in the war with America.

Is it not sufficient to simply study the small atom for the human being to come to know the greatness of the Creator of the universe? It can then be said that there are as many reasons for the existence of God as there are atoms in the universe.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَامٌ وَالْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَا نَفِدَتْ كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ ...
﴿لقمان، 27﴾

"And if all the trees on earth were pens and the ocean (were ink), with seven oceans behind it, to add to its (supply), yet would not the Words of God be exhausted ... "(31:27)

How splendid are God's Qualities!

His Qualities

Know that to the same extent that realizing the existence of God through studying the secrets of the created world is easy, learning of His Qualities is difficult and requires a great deal of care and caution.

You probably wonder why! The reason for this is clear because God does not resemble anything we have ever seen or heard. Thus the first condition to recognize God's Qualities is to negate all of the qualities of creatures, that is, not comparing Him to any limited creature of the world of nature. It is here that our task becomes difficult because we have grown up in the heart of this nature. Our contact has been with nature. We have become familiar with it. Thus we are inclined to compare everything with it.

In other words, whatever we have seen has had a material form. Some of the creatures which have a determined time and place, have a special dimension and form. Because of this, conceiving of a God Who neither has eyes, nor time, nor place, but, at the same time, He overlooks all times and all places and is unlimited from all points of view, is a difficult task. That is, it requires that steps be taken along this way with great care.

But it is necessary to remind ourselves here of this point that we can never come to know God's Essence and we should not expect that we could because such an expectation is like expecting to contain the endless seas in a glass or expect that a child, which is developing in its mother's womb, know about all of the world outside of the womb. Is this possible?

It is here that such a small blunder will cause a person to fall tens of kilometers from the main way of coming to know God and become waylaid in crags of idol worship and the worship of creatures. Note with care that, in summary, we must be conscious of never comparing God's Qualities with the qualities of creatures.

The Qualities of Majesty and Beauty

We most often divide God's Qualities into two groups: those Qualities which God has and those Qualities which God is free from. And now, this question arises as to how many Qualities God's Essence has.

The answer is: On the one hand, God's Qualities are endless and unlimited and, on the other hand, they can be summarized in one

Quality because all of the Qualities of God can be summarized in the following:

The Essence of God is an essence which is infinite from all points of views and it contains all perfections.

From the point of view of Qualities, which God does not contain, they can be summarized in the following sentence. The Essence of God is not imperfect from any point of view. But from another angle, as perfections and imperfections have various levels, that is, we can conceive of endless perfections and endless imperfections, thus, it can be said that God is the infinite of demonstrated Qualities and infinite negation of Qualities because whatever perfection you can imagine, He has and whatever imperfection you can imagine, He is free of. Thus the demonstrated and negation of Qualities of God are unlimited.

The Most Well-Known Qualities of God

The most famous demonstrated Qualities of God can be summarized in the following:

1. God is the 'Knower' (Alim): He knows all things.
2. God is Powerful (Qadir): He has unlimited control over all things.
3. God is the Living because something which is living has wisdom, power and because
4. God is Wise and powerful, thus He is living.
5. God is the Willer (Mur'id), that is, He has a will power and He is not obliged in His work and whatever He does, has a goal and wisdom and even the smallest thing in the universe does not lack an objective and a goal.
6. God is Perceiving (Mudrik), that is, He understands and perceives all things. He sees everything; he hears all things and He is aware of all things.
7. God is Primordial and Eternal (Qadeem and Azali), that is, He always was and His existence has no beginning because He always boils from His inner Essence and because of this, He is primordial

and eternal because a person whose being is from he himself has no non-existence or annihilation.

8. God is the Speaker (Mutakallim), that is, he can create waves in the atmosphere and speak to His Prophet, not that God has a tongue or lips or a larynx.

9. God is Truthful (Sadiq), that is, whatever He says is the Truth and is equivalent to reality because lying comes from ignorance or from weakness and a lack of power and it is impossible for God Who is Knowing and Powerful, to lie.

And the most well-known negations of Qualities of God are:

1. He is not a composite. That is, He does not have mixed elements because in this case, He would be in need of other elements, whereas, He is in need of nothing.

2. God is not a body because everybody is limited, unstable and accepts annihilation.

3. God is not visible. That is, He cannot be seen because if He could be seen, He would be a body, limited and accepting annihilation.

4. God has no place because He is not a body to require a place.

5. God has no partner because if He had a partner, He would have to be a limited creature because is not possible to have two non-limited entities from every point of view, and in addition, the unity of law of this world shows His Oneness.

6. His Qualities are exactly like His Essence.

7. God is Needless and Self-sufficient. He is rich and containing everything because an endless being from the point of view of knowledge, power and all things has no deficiencies.

The Holy Quran says,

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ ﴿الشورى، 11﴾

There is nothing like unto Him" (42:11)

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CONCEPT OF ONE GOD IN SIKHISM

Prof. Manjit Singh

Former Head, Punjabi department,
Delhi University
Mobile: 9868773902
Email: singhsdr.manjit@gmail.com

First of all I would like to congratulate Hon'ble Vice-chancellor of the university, Prof. (Dr.) Ali Abbasi; Chief Representative Dr. Reza Shakeri and Dr. Syed Fayyaz Hussain Rizvi of 'India Branch' of Al-Mustafa International University of IRAN, who have arranged skillfully and managed this thought - provoking webinar on the subject "**Concept of One God in Religions**", that is also, during the period of COVID-19.

Impact of the CORONA pandemic is being felt all over the world with a great intensity. No doubt, the subject of the Webinar is quite significant, relevant and meaningful. In my considered opinion, the problematic in hand, is self-explanatory, quite indicative and suggestive one.

I have been asked to express my views on the subject "Concept of One God in Sikhism". In the beginning, I would like to submit that Sikh religion is the youngest religions of the world. Not only the youngest, but it is the most modern and scientific in nature. Till date, none of the scientific discoveries could challenge the basic 'Ethos' of this religion.

While discussing the philosophy of Sikh religion, Dr. Gopal Singh.....an eminent thinker on Sikhism, has rightly explained that Sikhism is the most modern, but yet, the most misunderstood, of all the world religions. He has further clarified that some scholars have described it as an offshoot of the Bhakti cult. Others have taken it to be a synthesis of Islamic Monotheism and the Hindu Metaphysics. One scholar has even suggested it to be a crude form of Buddhism. A school of the Sikhs, called the Nirmalas, well versed in Sanskrit

language and the Hindu scriptures, has been interpreting it as a Vadic creed.

Whereas, Sikh religion is one of the major known independent religions of the world. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Sikhism are, generally considered to be the major religions of the world.

Before coming to the basic problematics in hand, we should know the basic principles and significant characteristics of this religion. In the absence of all this, it may be difficult for us to understand the basic vision and the depth of Sikh 'Ethos'. In this context, burning issue before us is, "Is Sikhism suited to the conditions of modern society?" An eminent scholar on Sikhism Dr. Gobind Singh Maansukhani, in his book "Introduction to Sikhism" has tried his best to answer this question of historical importance. To him, Sikhism however is suited to the needs of modern life. It believes in the individual and his/her right to develop his/her personality to the maximum extent possible. According to Guru Nanak Dev.....founder of the Sikh faith, every human being has power or merit, but he/she is a part of the wider Divine Order. Dr. Maansukhani further significantly clarified that human being is not a useless weakling, a mere product of chain-reaction of 'Karma'. The Sikh is essentially a human being of action, with an overwhelming sense of self-reliance. He should invoke the Guru's blessings at every step in his life and ask for His Divine Favor or the Grace.

In this context, we can well conclude that Sikhism is both modern and rational in practice. In very brief, it can be said that "Sikhism rejects all distinctions of Caste and Creed. It stands for the "Fatherhood of God" and "Brotherhood of all human beings". Besides all this, democracy is the guiding principle of Sikh religion. Moreover, this religion believes in the modern concept of socialistic pattern of society.

It is further submitted that Sikh religion has its own Code of Conduct, Vices & Virtues, festivals, ceremonies etc.. Hence, it can easily be observed that Sikhism is distinct from other religions and

has something new to offer, to the whole mankind. Sikhism is also known for its lifting the status of women folk in the society. Guru Nanak Dev had earlier taken steps in this direction. He says "How can a female be called inferior to the male, who gives birth to the king of the kings." Scholars on Sikhism have tried their best to work out a well-defined Feminist Discourse; Cultural Discourse; Discourse of the Oppressed and Metaphysical Discourse out of the Bani.....spiritual & mystic hymns of the Guru Granth Sahib.

It is also important to mention here that, Sikh religion is the only religions of the world, which considers its sacred scripture as a living Guru. It is also important to mention here that sacred literature of Sikhism is called 'Gurbani', which means the Guru's word.....a song message.....as enshrined in the Guru Granth Sahib. In Sikhism, the Guru means 'the word' and not the physical mortal body. Dr. Maansukhani has well explained, how Almighty GOD revealed the Bani through the Guru and it will ultimately lead one to his/her source. 'The BANI is the GURU and The GURU is the BANI'. One who expounds or explains the Bani, i.e. sacred writings, cannot have the status of a Guru. He is mere a teacher or interpreter or a missionary.

Now, the question arises, who is to be called a 'Sikh'? Ms. Sahib Kaur, in her booklet 'Sikh Thought', explained significantly "that a person, who faithfully believes in one Immortal Being i.e. One God, ten Gurus.....from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh; Sri Guru Granth Sahib including the utterances & teachings of the ten Gurus and Baptism introduced by the tenth Master Guru Gobind Singh Ji and who does not believe in any other religion, is called a Sikh. He has to follow the well determined Code of Conduct too".

Now, it has become crystal clear that the Holy Scripture i.e. Guru Granth Sahib, is being worshiped by the Sikhs, the world over as the "living embodiment of the Gurus". This sacred Granth (The Holy Book) contains, besides the spiritual writings of the 06 Sikh Gurus (first five & the ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji), spiritual compositions of 15 medieval Hindu and Muslim Bhaktas, 11 Bhats and 04 Guru Sikhs, then popular all over India.

In this way, sacred metaphysical writings of 36 authors (i.e. Bani Writers) are included in this Granth. This number includes mystic writings of five Muslim saints also, they are: Baba Sheikh Farid (Shakarganj); Bhakta Bheekhan; Satta; Balwand and Mardana.

Dr. Gopal Singh has well said that most of the Sikh Gurus were themselves great musicians and masters of the classical styles. We are aware of the fact that Guru Nanak Dev kept the company of a Muslim drummer.....a great instrumentalist. For about 54 years, Mardana remained with Guru's company, i.e. during his spiritual travels named as 'UDAASSIS'. We agree with his argument that Mardana, who played on the Rebec while Guru Nanak Dev used to sing to the large audiences. Very humbly, it is also submitted that Mardana's descendants, who still to the Muslim faith, are the most honored of the spiritual musicians, who sing to the Sikh audiences to this day, words of the Gurus, in some of the best known and of historical importance Sikh temples i.e. Gurudwaras. Fifth spiritual Master of the Sikhs, Guru Arjun Dev, who edited or compiled the Adi Granth, which was completed in 1604 A.D. was himself a great vocalist. It is also important to mention here that major portion of this sacred Granth is written in poetry of the highest order. Both, music and poetry have formed an inseparable part of the Sikh rituals and Sikh cultural patterns. There are 31 ragas, which form the main body of the Granth.

The Sikh religion, which originated in the undivided Punjab.....a richest state of the then north India, through the spiritual teachings of Guru Nanak Dev (1469 - 1539 A.D.) is basically a monotheistic faith. Janab Jagjit Singh.....a great scholar of Sikhism, in his book "Guru Nanak: The Great Revolutionary" has discussed in detail that Guru Nanak Dev had his advent in this mortal world during 15th century A.D. We agree with his hypothesis that Almighty God sent Him in this world with a mission and He is beyond the cycle of birth and death, hence an immortal Guru. History of Sikhism, as a whole, tells us the stories of its multi-dimensional affinities with Islam, which include its architect too.

For example, the foundation stone of 'Sri Harmandir Sahib' (generally known as 'The Golden Temple')Sanctum Sanctorum of the Sikhs, situated at Amritsar (Punjab), was laid down by a Muslim Darvesh Saain Miyan Mir, who was a very good friend of the fifth & sixth masters Guru Arjun Dev Ji and Guru Hargobind Ji respectively.

During his spiritual travels, Guru Nanak Dev met a number of Muslim Saints, Peers and other socio-cultural & political leaders such as: Sheikh Braham, Peer Abdul Rahman of Baghdaad, Makhdoom Bahau-ud-Deen, Makhdoom Abdul Wahab, Babar etc.. Not only Guru Nanak Dev, other Sikh Gurus also had so many Muslim followers. This shows that the Sikh Gurus had no enmity with any religion. Rather they had a great regard for other religions. Here, Mohammed Habib's article entitled as "Islam, Baba Nanak and the Contemporary Muslim Society" PP. 37 - 48, of 'Punjab Journal Of Sikh Studies' (Vol. V , year 2018 - 2018) published by the Department of Guru Nanak Sikh Studies, Punjab University, Chandigarh, is relevant to quote. Especially these lines: -

"The meanings of the word are the most suited to express the pure identical concepts of Almighty Creator. It is reflected in Gurbani at least in 17 times. This word to the Creator is particularly used in the Holy Qur'an as it has no number and no gender. It appropriately reflects the idea of oneness and uniqueness of the Creator as mentioned in Gurbani: -

"ਅਲਾਹ ਪਾਕੰ ਪਾਕ ਹੈ ਸਕ ਕਰਉ ਜੇ ਦੂਸਰ ਹੋਇ ॥"

"ALLAH PAKNM PAAK HAI, SAK KARO JE DOOSAR HOE"

In this background it seems fit to mention some of the hymns of Baba Nanak which were expressed in the context of Islam and Muslims. These hymns proved that Baba Nanak's teachings bear universal values which guided the contemporary society as well as quite relevant to the current situations also" (P. 37).

We also agree with Dr. (Bhai) Harbans Lal.....a great scholar on Sikhism, that:

"Nanak travelled throughout the world of his times and wherever the civilization of that time was flourishing. He paid attention to the places of pilgrimages of all religions, as it was there that the clergy class was exploiting the religion to their own selfish motives and to serve the rulers of the times. Further, Guru Nanak Dev employed all approaches i.e., Love, Discourses, Confrontations and sometime selective tricks to draw people's attention to his mission. He laid down foundation of the 'Interfaith dialogues' as an effective method of promoting understandings among the people of various religions".

(Foreword of the book "Guru Nanak: The Great Revolutionary" (2019), P. X, by Jagjit Singh).

In this context, it is very humbly submitted that Guru Nanak Dev revealed the meaning of Almighty God in a nutshell, termed as the "Mool Mantra". This Mool Mantra expresses attributes or the qualities of the God. The human mind should concentrate on these qualities of God and must assimilate them to follow in life. English translation of this Mool Mantra follows: -

"The one universal - All - prevailing energy to create, Truth is His Name, the creator, the conscious Being, without fear, without enmity, the time-less Being, without birth, self-existent and is revealed through the Grace of Guru".

In this way, this Mool Mantra enlists twelve adjectives used for the qualities of God. This shows that God is one, who cannot be established, nor can 'He' be created by humans. 'He' exists by Himself. The tenth master Guru Gobind Singh says: "accept Him as God, the one who existed before the beginning of His creation, is beyond the cycle of birth and death, is all powerful and is indestructible.

It is further submitted here that when one meditates on the existence of God, two types of qualities of God are being experienced by human mind. These are: the Transcendent and the Immañent qualities.

According to Sikhism, God is omnipresent and omniscient. He is distant too, and unreachable, ineffable, unutterable, indefinable, without beginning, eternal and beyond time & space, unknowable, beyond the reach of human senses, farthest the far, highest the high, without religion, race, caste or sex or gender, alone, absolute, self-contained. That is why God in Sikh terminology, is called "The Lord of Wonders" (i.e. Vahe - guru).

Prof. Gurcharan Singh Talib has well explained, how Sikhism is a Monotheistic Faith. Its conception of the Supreme Being embraces, both aspects, conceived in Indian Philosophy: The Unattributed, 'NIRGUNA' and attributed 'SARGUNA'.

It is also important to mention here that Almighty God has been addressed by names, crossing different religious boundaries, such as, 'Dayal' (Compassionate); 'Dayanidhi' (Ocean of Compassion); Sacha; Holy; Eternal; Thakur; Lord; Master and many more. From Hindu traditions: Rama; Murari; Gopal; Narayan; Madho and from Muslim traditions: Allah; Khudda; Karim; Rahim; Parvardigar & Sahib.

This part of the Bani's vocabulary is intended, especially to foster goodwill between Hindus and Muslims, so that, all words expressive of devotion are found, equally acceptable. According to the Sikh religion, there is no special 'deva-bani,' i.e. divine language, and no language that may be held impure. "NAAM JAPO" (remember Almighty God by reciting His pious Name); "KIRAT KARO" (earn your livelihood by righteous means); "VAND CHHAKO" (share your earnings with the needy people) are the golden principles of Sikh faith. Worldwide all the Sikhs have been following these golden principles in their practical life till date.

Besides these concepts, 'SANGAT' and 'PANGAT' are also two of the major concepts of Sikhism. As we know, Casteism was/is a big problem in the Indian ethos. 'SANGAT' (common religious congregation) and 'PANGAT' (free common kitchen) concepts were introduced by Guru Nanak Dev Ji himself to abolish Casteism from

its very roots. Ms. Sahib Kaur has well said that the third Master "Guru Amardas Ji made the taking meals (i.e. Langar) in the common kitchen ('Pangat') compulsory for a Sikh or anyone else before he/she could take blessings of the Guru. The message of the Guru was common to all, irrespective of caste, color, religion and sex "(PP. 119). As per the historical records, third Mughal emperor of India 'AKBAR THE GREAT' also took langar before, he met Guru Ji for his blessings. Great impact of this 'Langar' (i.e. Pangat) tradition was also visible during 'SHAHEEN BAGH' anti-CAA agitation, total lockdown conditions during COVID - 19 and Indian farmer's anti-agricultural Acts 2020 passed by the Central Govt. of India. Whether there is any form of natural calamity or manmade political - holocausts, free 'langar' (eatables) along with other necessary goods are being served to the victims worldwide, without considering their caste, creed, religion and sex etc. In this way, all the Sikh Gurus and the other Banikaars (authors of the spiritual hymns), transformed the Semitic and Aryan cultural - heritages for the production of new meanings and to give birth to a "New Human Being" i.e. KHALSA (the pure).

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The Gods of Hindus: a research study

Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Naeemi

Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies
Jamia Hamdard (Hamdard University), New Delhi

Translated by: Syed Ali Ameer

To whom worship Hindus and whom they accept as their deity and God? It is a very complicated issue to resolve rather it is a mystery. Because they claim to believe in one God but they submit themselves to countless Lords and accept them as their deity at the same time i.e. Hindus believe in one God and also believe in millions of deities.

They worship incorporeal and corporeal god too. They can worship Brahma and Vishnu and Shiva as well. They are allowed to worship Rama and Krishna and other avatars too. They might worship water, mountain, tree and snake etc. and modern priests of the modern times as well.

Apart from this, they might pay their homage to any deity. This is depend on their own will and wish. A Hindu can devote to many deities simultaneously. He is not bound by religion in this regard. This freedom is considered as a major characteristic and merit of Hinduism; which is not found in other religions. Someone, who performs aarti of Lord Rama and Krishna in temple also offers water to Shiva and listens to the teaching of Vedas in Arya Samaj. Not only this but Hindus enjoy as much freedom in 'Karmkand' i.e. rituals and getup etc. as in worship.

The writers of the book 'Vibhinn dharmo me Ishwar ki kalpana' [the idea of God in different religions] also attest the abovementioned facts. Therefore Dr. Prabhakar Machwe and Surendra Narayan Daftwar writes:

Shankar's formless and inviolable God (Brahm) and also Ramanuja's personified God (Brahm) both are accepted in

Hinduism. Both are equally true. It's depend on devotee either he worships formless or personified God. There is no difference between the two. These two might be truth from two different perspectives. Also, Just as God is conceived, his relation with this world is also defined. If he is personified (Brahm) then he is the creator Brahm, the sustainer (Vishnu) and the ender (Shiva). But if he is formless and inviolable God, then he is above all efforts and limits in all affairs.¹

Swami Ananyanand also mentions the same point in the book 'Hindu dharm ka Saarbhaum tatv' [The universal element of Hinduism]:

"Hinduism believes the absolute truth (Paramsatya) as personified and non-personified both. Neutral ruling is not only incorporeal rather it is also corporeal. It is necessary for a personified and subjective God that he manifests his lordship on the human level. This is not only God, who has made the human being in his form and image rather human has also moulded the God in his own shape. The man has made the God in Human's body shape with high attributes and positions. The God is considered the most beautiful, merciful, unparalleled and the portrait of vigour and enthusiasm.

God is the master of nature (Prakriti). The universe comes into existence by him in every era and declines at the end. Only one God manages all incarnations in various forms. It's his act to create in the form of Brahm, to establish in the form of Vishnu and to destroy in the form of Shiva; who are worshipped by millions of Hindus even today. The worshippers of Vishnu are called 'Veshtar' and the devotees of Shiva are called 'Shiv'."²

¹ . Vibhinn dharmo'n me Ishwar ki kalpana [The concept of God in different religions], Dr. Prabhakar Machwe, Bihar Hindi Granth Academy, Patna, 1988, p. 49.

² . Hindu Dharm ka Saarbhaum tatv [The universal element of Hinduism], Swami Ananyanand, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, 1997, P. 6.

Swami ji writes on another place: "In fact, Hinduism accepts and approves all other religions. Hinduism accepts them completely due to intention and persuasion of all religions for one God. Hinduism believes in unity of all religions. It doesn't have any dispute with anybody on the name of religion"¹

We knew that every Hindu has complete freedom of worship and devotion. He can worship anyone as per his own expediency. He has no restriction by religion in this regard. Even he can worship those, who tirelessly attempted to wipe out the Hinduism from the existing world and also those who aren't even mentioned in old Hindu scriptures.

Famous Hindi thinker Ram Dhari Singh Dinkar portrays this fact in a good manner, so he writes:

"Hindus have even accepted them as their God, who had revolted against Hinduism at some point. We have a lot of atheist philosophies among our religious philosophies and they have also a social respect. Our old poet has often mentioned Ravana also respectfully with the attributes of like 'Mahatma' [Great souled]. These all things show that from beginning a high flexibility and softness in term of religion has been adopted in this country.

He writes further: "the belief in multiple deities (Polytheism) has become an inseparable part of Hinduism due to entry of deities of different nations. That is why, all Hindus do not worship a single deity. After the entry of different deities, the stories of their magnitude and greatness also entered in old scriptures, therefore the old scriptures are also unsuccessful to indicate towards a specific direction."²

According to ancient history of Hinduism and its thinkers and researchers, only one and single god was worshipped in the form of

¹ . Hindu Dharm ka Saarbhaum tatv, Swami Ananyanand, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata, 1997, P. 11.

² . Sanskrit ke chaar adhyaay [The four chapters of Sanskrit], Ramdhari singh Dinkar, Rajpal and sons, Delhi, 1956, P. 74.

various deities or manifestations of nature in Vedic period but many changes made in that later and the belief was established that there are three major gods of Hindu nation and after that the worship of many deities, trees, water, fire and stones etc. came into vogue, which is in fact completely contrary to old Hinduism.

A prominent scholar of Vedas, Dharma Shastra Acharya Krishna Dutta Bhatt writes in this regard:

“Only one God was worshipped in the form of Om, Brahma, and Varuna etc. in the Vedic period, after that incarnations of God, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh i.e. Worship of Trimurti [trinity or three idols] became popular considering the creation of universe, current situation and establishment and resurrection.”¹

Mr. Ray Bahadur says in “Usool-e-Dharm Shastra” [The principals of theology]:

There are three major gods of Hinduism Brahma ji, Vishnu ji and Shiva ji. Every deity is eminent and great on his place so the worship of one of these three gods is necessary part of Hinduism. This idea gave the concept of Trimurti [trinity] later on and it was tried to make these three deities as one and single God and accept their equal magnitude because every devotee considers his deity as the greatest one so this was the only way to unite these three gods and Hindu nation. Therefore these three deities were united and formed into trinity and all these were manifested through one body having three separate heads.²

The same fact is presented by famous Hindu thinker Ram Dhari Singh Dinkar in very clear words. He writes:

¹ . Vedic dharm kya hai? [What is a Vedic religion] Krishna Dutta Bhatt (Acharya), Varanasi printing institute, 1997, part-2.

² . Usool-e-Dharm Shastra [The principles of Hindu theology], Priests of civil courts under premise of mulk bangala, Munshi Naval Kishore, Lucknow, 1877, Aqwaam-e-Aalam ke adyaan wa mazahib [The religions and sects of world nations], Abdul Qadir Shaibah (Urdu), Muslim Publications, Pakistan, 2007, p. 53.

“The worship of deity and occult arts have been also stood with Vedic doctrines from outside. The Acharyas of original Vedic doctrines used to consider it against Hindu theology and culture.

Faun’s worship is prohibited according to Hindu theology. Manu ji has called the worshippers of faun deities disgraceful and mean at many places but the Brahmans also worship fauns and ghosts in villages. Same as Aryas now worship even trees and rivers too. Tulsi tree, sacred fig and bael plant are sacred now. The soul doesn’t be satisfied until the bones of human corpse are dispersed in the river. It is also a custom to tie the bells with the tree of sacred fig in a few places. These ideas were not found in Vedas then from where Aryas have taken it.”¹

Vedas are considered the most significant and fundamental source of Hinduism but according to some Hindu Scholars these four sacred Vedas: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sam Veda, Atharva Veda, are also full of teachings of polytheism and Idolatry and Vedas represent the idea of Tawheed (Monotheism) according to Arya Society, Brahm Society and many Hindu researchers and religious thinkers.

The scholars, who say that Vedas are adorned with polytheistic teaching; they hold the view that Vedas or Vedic people believe in various God and Goddesses and they worship and chant many deities in the form of “Agni, Mitra, Indra and Varuna” etc. Even they are not only mentioned in many ‘Mantras’ [Vedic Sacred utterance] rather its number is also defined. Therefore it is found in Yajur Veda:

- The total number of Deities are thirty three, eleven of them are on the earth, eleven are in the sky and eleven are in the heaven.
- The total number of Mantras are 3340 in Rig Veda, Mandala 3, Sukta 9, Mantra 9 and the same number is also mentioned in Rig Veda, Mandala 10, Sukta 52, and Mantra 6.

¹ . Sanskrit ke chaar adhyaay, Ramdhari singh Dinkar, Rajpal and sons, Delhi, 1956, P. 78.

Thus it is proved that Vedas are also full of polytheistic teaching but the Hindu Scholars and Acharyas, who accept Vedas or Vedic people monotheists, they give the reason that all of them are not the separate Gods rather these are the epithets of the one and the same God, who is named as different Gods and this is also a fact because neither any significant effect of these deities on people remained later nor even today remains.

The monotheism discussed in Vedas, Upanishads and other Hindu scriptures, has been dealt with detail under the title of 'The idea of Monotheism in Hinduism'. Further it is not good to write on it here. See there to study more.

In short, according to ancient religious history of Hinduism, one God was worshipped in Vedas 'period in the view of some Hindu Priests and Acharyas and the various Gods and deities pertaining to natural scenes and powers were important and manifestations of nature were worshipped but the fundamentals changes were made later in that.

When we come to the period of Upanishads and study them; we find here that the polytheism is also being transformed into Tawheed (monotheism). Upanishads have also created two Hindu Philosophical systems. One is 'Samakaar Advaita' and the other is 'Ramanuj Vishwa Advaita'. According to first, God is incorporeal and according to second, God manages the universe, he is omnipresent, corporeal and also known as Brahma.

Some Hindu scholars hold the view that God doesn't have any form, color or shape and he is formless. He is even beyond and above time and also infinite. Some Hindu scholars believe that he is characterized by color, form and shape means he is personified and finite.

In this regard, when we analyze old scriptures e.g. Ramayana and Mahabharata etc., some new gods and deities are seen here ruling over the religious lives of Hindus e.g. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva and one goddess have more significance in their religious lives. Among them the first-mentioned three are also called 'Trimurti'.

Although Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are also mentioned in the later Vedic literature but their position is almost nothing in this Era. Whereas they have a eminent position in Mahabharata, Ramayana and scriptures. Brahm, who is presented as a greatest God in the latest Vedic literature; possesses only the position of a creator of the universe in Ramayana and Mahabharata's period and he usually loses his status in comparison with Vishnu and Shiva and the main center of public's devotion and the original entitled of religious holiness and sacredness; Vishnu and Shiva are evolved.

The concept of Trimurti is very popular among Hindus, in which Brahma is the creator of the universe, Vishnu is responsible for the sustenance and imperishability of the Universe, the beauty aspect is prevalent in his personality and Shiva or Mahesh as per his attributes is the symbol of Majesty and responsible for destruction of the Universe and resurrection. If Vishnu relieves and solaces the hearts due to his sympathetic attributes and rules over the hearts of people due to his sympathy then Shiva bows the people's heads before him after wiping out the hearts by his self-sufficiency and majesty.

The new Hinduism also holds that whenever evils would emerged on the earth, Vishnu is incarnated and destroys the evils. He has incarnated many times before.¹ Sometimes he incarnated into the form of an animal, fish, tortoise, pig and lion etc. even sometimes into the form a strange creature like body of a human and head of a lion or body of a human and head of a horse. How he has benefited people, destroyed sins and established the religion, is out of mind? He has incarnated four times into the form of human; those are called Parshurama, Rama, Krishna and Buddha and also he will incarnate tenth times in future. Although he has already incarnated according to research of many religious scholars, as you will study in the context of the title 'Kalki Avatar'.

¹ . Shrimad Bhagavad Gita yatha roop, Bhakti Vedanta book Trust Mumbai, 1990, Chapter 9. Shloka 24.

Ramcharitmanas (scripture), Baal kand, 121.

The worship of a goddess in any form like Vishnu and Shiva is also a most popular and approved concept of Hinduism. Among the avatars of goddess, the status of Parvati wife of Shiva, the position of Kali Mata, goddess of occultist sect Bhairon, who is considered the goddess of criminals in the form of Bhavani and 'Maa sheron wali' are more significant.

Two more ideas and thoughts are found in Hinduism regarding God:

- 1) The idea of Shankracharya
- 2) The idea of Vallabhacharya

Shankracharya said that only Brahm i.e. God is truth and the world is Maya or illusion and Vallabhacharya said that the reality of the inter-relation of Brahm and world is like the spider's web, which she spins around itself. Whole world emerges from Brahm or same as the sparks come out from the fire; all worlds, deities, animal souls and living creatures have been emerged from Atman (God).¹ It is described in Mundaka Upanishad verse 1.1.7 as follows:

"Same as spider doesn't take anything from outside but creates the nets from inside and itself plays in that, Brahma creates the Universe from him and making him up in the form of universe, playing in it. Therefore Brahma wished to have many faces and he incarnated into the world just by his will."

The high profile names are involved in the propagators' list of this idea and thought. All have accepted one of the two abovementioned Acharya's ideas with minor changes. Every visible thing is illusion according to them. Therefore all is Brahm or there is a part of Brahm in everything.

Both are incorrect views from Islamic point of view. In the Universe, Universe itself is not God, Brahm or part of it, rather Brahm and universe both are separate entities. God has not created the universe by his part rather he has created by his imaginary power, knowledge or the order of 'Kun fayakun' i.e. '**be and it is**'. It is also

¹ . Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (scripture), 2-1-2.

attested by Rig Veda, Mandala, 10, Sukta, 129 Mantra 3 and 4, Manusmriti, chapter 1, Shloka 6. See for further details 'The idea of monotheism in Hinduism'.

When we study regarding the God of Hindus, current Hinduism and the most popular and favorite scripture of Hinduism, Bhagavad Gita, so he is a knowing and powerful entity as per its teaching; who always exists. He is not only superior from this universe rather his entity is totally different from immortal soul of human being. Thus he is a soul but not like humans.

According to Bhagavad Gita, God has two natures; one is superior and other is inferior. The first nature is a supreme spiritual power, upon whom the foundation of universe is based but the other nature is materialism means he possesses the attributes of matter. In the light of Gita's teaching, all actions and deeds of God are performed for the goodness of universe. He doesn't have any self-interest or self-motive. Whenever the evils are prevailed, God manifests in a new face so that the goodness and welfare might grow and progress.¹

In short, polytheism and idolatry is also apparently seen with monotheism in Hinduism, which is proved by many Mantras and Shloks of Vedas, Upanishads and Gita etc. Hinduism believes in Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh or Shiva, Krishna, Rama and various deities and gives them the status of God although also accepts that they are avatars or messengers of God and only one and Almighty God is manifested behind all of them.

Hinduism and imperfect belief of monotheism

Many researchers and Acharyas of Hindus say that Hinduism is the interpreter and flag bearer of monotheism. They claim that nobody should think from the idea of whole deities of Hinduism specially Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; whose separate characteristics and attributes are described in Hindu scriptures that these are the

¹ . Adyan wa Mazāhib ka taqabuli jaeza' [The comparative analysis of religions and sects], Dr. Abdul Rasheed, P. 69.

separate deities or gods, rather all deities specially these three are the epithets of one God. People have made secluded deities on basis of these attributes. Means when he creates, his name is creator or Brahma, he is called Vishnu or sustainer due to sustentation and he is also the master of destruction and resurrection, therefore he is called lethal or Shiva and likewise.

It is the fact that there are a lot of Mantras in Vedas and Upanishads, which clearly mention the teachings of monotheism. The worship of one and only God is instructed and guided in them although their monotheism is incomplete and imperfect because monotheism doesn't mean to attest just the unity of God but it is also necessary and obligatory that the same attributes or actions proved for him shouldn't be believed in others than him. For example one of the attributes of God is his necessary existence and eternity means he doesn't need to anyone else in his existence but the soul (Atman) and matter (nature) are also considered non-created by anybody rather they are also considered necessary beings although it is the attribute of just God, who has no partner. Therefore, it is mentioned in Vedas:

Brahma and Jiva, both are collectively permeable by self-consciousness (Personal knowledge) and comprehensive means connected to complimentary relation and are eternal due to be partners of each other.

It is mentioned in Shvetashvatara Upanishad 4-4:

“The Matter, Jiva (Soul) and Paramatma (supreme soul) three are unborn means the three are the causes of whole universe but they don't need any cause. The undergoing eternal Jiva is always encompassing this eternal matter and Paramatma neither undergoes it nor encompasses.”

The eminent researcher and propagator of Vedas, Dayanand Saraswati also accepts that God, Jiva and the cause of the universe (matter), these three are eternal as per Vedas' teachings.¹

The result of acceptance the eternity of soul and matter would be that nothing in this universe is purely made of God because the matter is required in creation of every materialistic thing and soul is also required to make living things and these two are not the creatures of God, because these two are eternal according to them.

If these were not existing, God was unable to create anything (Allah forbid) and the creation of the universe would not be possible.

Moreover this point is also cleared and immediately comes in mind that if we are not purely made of God, then his worship is also not obligatory for us and if worship is not obligatory then no aim of our creation would remain because his creatorship is the main cause of the obligation of worship. Thus it is very obvious that their belief of monotheism is incomplete and imperfect.

¹ . Rig Veda (scripture), 1-164-20, Yajur Veda (Scripture) 40-8, Satyarth Prakash (Scripture) Samullas-8.

Unity of Allah (Tawheed)

-Yasin T. Al-Jibouri

Islam falls in the category of monotheistic creeds whose adherents believe in the Oneness of God. This concept is referred to in Islam as Tawheed, and it is so important and so vast that volumes of books have been written about it. `Allama al-Majlisi, for example, dedicates two entire volumes of his encyclopedic work 'Bihar al-Anwar' to this most important tenet of Islam. Tawheed instructs Muslims that: there is only one God, one truth, one straight line between two points: God and His servants, one family, one couple of parents, Adam and Eve, one human race, one heaven, and one hell.

Since the space here is limited, we will have to be brief as much as possible. Had we been able to afford the space, we would have refuted the views of dualists and polytheists as well as those who believe in the concept of the Trinity and in God having a son, a daughter, a wife, or any close family relative!

1. Tawheed in Holy Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an is an inexhaustible source of knowledge for those who seek to discuss this subject. We have preferred here to be very brief in bringing the reader the following aspects relevant to Tawheed as outlined in the Holy Qur'an.

a. Allah is Unique, Peerless

Qur'anic verses testifying to the fact that Allah, Praise to Him, is One and peerless and can never have a partner in His authority, or a similitude, nor can He have a son, a daughter, an aunt, or any kin, are numerous; here are some of them:

(He is) the Originator of the heavens and the earth; He made mates for you from among yourselves, and mates of (and for) the cattle, too, multiplying you (humans and animals) thereby; nothing is like Him; and He is the Hearing, the Seeing. (42:11)

Say: He, Allah, is one. Allah is He on whom all (beings and things) depend. He does not beget, nor is He begotten. And none is like Him. (112:1-4)

He is Allah, the One, the Subduer (of all). (39:4)

Say: Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth? Say: Allah. Say: Do you then take besides Him guardians who do not control any benefit or harm for themselves? Say: Are the blind and the seeing alike? Or can the darkness and the light be equal? Or have they set up with Allah associates who have created creation like His, so what is created became confused to them? Say: Allah is the Creator of all, and He is the One, the Supreme. (13:16)

All these verses, and many others, testify that Allah is the One and Only God, negating the theories of dualists or polytheists.

b. He is the Only Creator

None besides Allah has ever created anything out of nothing. He, and only He, is the Creator, whereas everything besides Him is a creation of His. Everything in the cosmos, the stars and constellations, the earth and its mountains, oceans, rivers, vegetation, small or large beings, and the humans who live on it, are all among His creations.

Verses stressing this fact abound in the Holy Qur'an; among them are: (See 13:16 above)

Allah is the Creator of everything and He has authority over everything. His are the treasures of the heavens and the earth; as for those who disbelieve in the communications of Allah, they surely are the losers. (39:62-63)

Such is Allah, your Lord, the Creator of everything; there is no God but He; whence are you then turned away? (40:62)

Such is Allah, your Lord; there is no god but He, the Creator of all things; so, worship Him (and Him alone), and He has charge of all things. (6:102)

He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most beautiful names; whatever in the heavens and in the earth declares His glory, and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (59:24)

(Allah is the) Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! How could He have a son when He has no consort, and He (Himself) created everything? And He knows all things. (6:101)

O men! Call to mind the favor of Allah on you; is there any creator besides Allah who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth? There is no god but He; whence are you then turned away? (35:3)

Surely your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods of time (Six stages), and He is firm in power; He throws the veil of night over the day, which it incessantly pursues, and (He created) the sun and the moon and the stars (and) made them subservient (to you, serving you) by His command; surely His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds. (7:54)

c. The One in Godhead and in Nurturing His Beings

There is only One God for the entire cosmos. He deals with it as He pleases without having anyone to share His authority, or to help Him. He manages the affairs through many agents, the most noteworthy of whom are the angels who outnumber by many, many times, all the residents of earth, and whose duties and ranks vary a great deal. They carry out His orders most efficiently and effectively; He enabled them to do so. Consider the following verses:

Surely your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods (stages), and He is firm in power, regulating the affairs; there is no intercessor except with His permission. Such is Allah, your Lord; so, worship Him; will you not then mind? (10:3)

Allah takes the souls away at the time of death (through His agents, the angels of death), and those that do not die during their sleep, He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death and

sends the others back till an appointed term; most surely there are signs in this for people who reflect. (39:42)

And when I am sick, He restores health to me. (26:80)

And we reveal of the Qur'an that wherein there is a healing and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only perdition to the unjust ones. (17:82)

Surely Allah bestows sustenance, the Lord of Power, the Strong One. (51:58)

Have you considered what you sow? Is it you that cause it to grow, or do we not cause its growth?! (56:63-64)

... It delights the one that sows it, so that He may enrage the unbelievers on their account; Allah has promised those who believe and do good from among them forgiveness and a great reward. (48:29)

... Allah writes down (through His agents, the angels) what they decide by night; therefore, turn aside from them and trust in Allah, and Allah suffices as the Protector. (4:81)

As for those who do not believe in the hereafter, we have surely made their deeds fair-seeming to them, so they blindly wander on. (27:4)

Say: Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth? Or who controls the hearing and the sight? And who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? And who regulates the affairs? They will then say: Allah. Say: Will you not then guard (yourselves against evil)? (20:31)

Then those that regulate the affair (on behalf of and according to the instructions of Allah)... (79:5) ... and you did not smite them when you smote (the, the enemy), but it was Allah who smote (them). (8:17)

Had there been in them any gods other than Allah, they would have both been in a state of disorder; therefore, glory to Allah, the Lord of the dominion, above what they attribute (to Him). (21:22)

Neither did Allah take to Himself a son, and never was there with him any (other) god; in that case, each god would certainly have taken away what he created, and some of them would certainly have overpowered others; glory to Allah above what they describe! (23:91)

d. Allah is the Only Source of Legislation

For the Muslims, Allah is the only One Who legislates every rule of their lives. Such a code of legislation, i.e. the Shari'ah, regulates everyone's relationship with all others as well as with his/her Lord and Maker. The Holy Qur'an clearly indicates that no man-made law or constitution is acceptable, that the only canon is the Holy Qur'an. Verses requiring the believers to obey only Allah are numerous; here are some of them:

You do not worship besides Him except names which you yourselves and your fathers have named; Allah has not sent down any authority for them; judgment is only Allah's; He has commanded that you should worship none but Him; this is the right religion, but most people do not know. (12:40)

Is it then the judgment of (the times of) ignorance (Jahiliyyah) that they desire? And who is better than Allah to judge for people who are sure? (5:50)

Whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, they are the unbelievers. ...and whoever does not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unjust.

And we sent after them in their footsteps Jesus son of Mary testifying to what was before him of the Torah, and we gave him the Gospel wherein there was guidance and light and testifying to what was before it of the Torah, and a guidance, and an admonition for those who guard (themselves against evil). And the People of the Book should have judged by what Allah revealed in it, and whoever does not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the transgressors. (5:44-47)

The questions that force themselves on us here are: Are Muslims really following the Islamic Shari'ah? Are they deriving their laws from the Holy Qur'an? Do their legal, social, and economical systems adhere to the Holy Qur'an? What about their blind imitation of the anti-Islamic Western way of life?

But they have first of all to purge their countries of corrupt rulers who fear nothing more than the Islamic Shari'ah and who derive their strength not from public support but from the enemies of the Islamic Shari'ah.

e. The Only one to obey

Only Allah should be obeyed. Obedience of His commandments manifests one's submission to Him. A Muslim is required to do only what pleases Allah and what He has decreed as permissible. Anything besides that is apostasy:

Be careful of (your duty to) Allah as much as you can, and hear and obey and spend (of what He bestows upon you); it is better for your souls (that you do so), and whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, these it is that are the successful. (64:16)

And we did not send any prophet except that he should be obeyed by Allah's permission. (4:64)

f. Allah is the Only Judge

Allah is the only Judge, the Judge of Judges, the One, whose authority is above that of anyone else's. His Word is the law, His injunctions are binding on everyone. To accept anyone else's judgment in preference to Allah's is to commit shirk; we seek refuge with Him against doing so. Consider the following verses: (See 12:40 above)

Say: Surely I have a manifest proof from my Lord but you call it a lie; I have not with me (to bring about) that which you hasten; judgment is only Allah's; He relates the truth and He is the best of those who decide. (6:57)

Then they are sent back to Allah, their Master, the True One; surely His is the judgment, and He is the swiftest in taking account. (6:62)

O David! Surely we have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice and do not follow (your own personal) desire lest it should lead you astray from the path of Allah. (38:26)

g. Rewards of testifying that "There is no god except Allah"

To articulate the testimony of 'La ilaha illa-Allah' (There is no god except Allah) is regarded in Islam as an act of worship for which the believer will be richly rewarded. Such rewards are recorded starting from p. 20 of the book 'Thawab al-A`mal wa Iqab al-A`mal' by the great mentor Abu Ja`fer Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn al-Husain ibn Babawayh al-Saduq al-Qummi (d. 381 A.H. /991 A.D.) and published in 1410 A.H./1989 A.D. by 'al-A`lami Establishment for Publications' (Beirut, Lebanon).

We would like to quote some of the very interesting and enlightening text on those pages for the benefit of the dear reader:

Abu Sa`eed al-Khudri¹ quotes the Messenger of Allah saying, "Allah, the most Exalted and Sublime, said once to Moses son of `Imran, `O Moses! Had the heavens and all those who reside therein, as well as those of the seven (layers) of earth, been placed on one scale and 'La ilha illa-Allah' on the other, the scale containing 'La ilaha illa-Allah' would surely have weighed more."

The great companion Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari quotes the Messenger of Allah saying, "Two most sure things are: 1) Whoever dies testifying that 'There is no god except Allah' will enter Paradise and, 2) Whoever dies associating anything with Allah will enter the fire (of hell)."

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq quotes his great grandfather the Messenger of Allah saying, "Teach your dying persons to say: 'La ilaha illa-Allah',

¹ . His name is Sa`d ibn Malik ibn Sinan al-Khudri al-Ansari al-Khazraji, Abu Saïd. He was a sahabi who for many years kept the Prophet's company and participated in twelve of his military campaigns. He died in 74 A.H./693 A.D.

for it will smash their sins all of them." He was asked, "O Messenger of Allah! What about one who says so while enjoying good health?"

He said, "That is more smashing to them, more so, and still more! Indeed, 'La ilaha illa-Allah' is the best companion of anyone during his lifetime, when he dies, and when he is brought back to life again... Gabriel has said (to me): 'O Muhammad! Were you only to see them when they are brought back to life again! Some are raised with white faces calling out: 'La ilaha illa-Allah! Allahu Akbar!' And the faces of others will be black, and they will be crying out: Ya Waylah! Ya Thuburah! (O woe unto me! O what a calamity!)"

Jabir ibn Yazid al-Ju'fi quotes Imam Abu Ja'fer al-Baqir who quotes the Messenger of Allah saying, "For everything there is something else equal to it except Allah, the Exalted, the Sublime, for nothing at all equals Him, and so is 'La ilaha illa-Allah': nothing equals it. Nothing can weigh heavier than one's tear shed out of fear of Allah. If it trickles down his face, no exhaustion nor humiliation shall ever touch it (his face) thereafter."

The Commander of the believers, Imam 'Ali ibn Abu Talib has said, "Whenever a servant of Allah says: 'La ilaha illa-Allah', it (the statement) ascends piercing every ceiling, wiping out his sins as it passes by them till it reaches its equivalent in good deeds. It is only there that it will."

Abu Ja'far, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, has said, "Nothing is more rewardable than testifying that 'There is no god except Allah', for nothing equates Allah, the most Exalted One, nor is there any partner with him."

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri quotes the Messenger of Allah saying, "I have not said anything, nor has anyone else before me, like: La ilaha illa-Allah."

Abu Abdullah Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq has said, "The testimony of la ilaha illa-Allah is the price of Paradise."

The Messenger of Allah is quoted saying, "Repeat 'la ilaha illa-Allah and Allahu Akbar' as often as you can, for Allah loves nothing more than them both."

Of course the more you pronounce this short but very weighty statement, the more rewards you will earn.

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq has said, "Whoever repeats the testimony of la ilaha illa-Allah' a hundred times is better than all other people that day except one who repeats it more often than him."

Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) has also said, "If one says 'La ilaha illa-Allah' a hundred times prior to going to bed, Allah builds him a mansion in Paradise, and whoever seeks Allah's forgiveness a hundred times before going to bed, his sins will fall down as leaves fall down from the trees."

2. How Shi`a Muslims View Allah

Shi`a Muslims explicitly refute the view that Allah can be seen by eyes here or in hereafter by quoting verse 103 of Surat al-Ana`m (6:103) that states the following:

Vision does not comprehend Him, while He comprehends all vision, and He knows all the subtleties, (He is) the Aware One.

In their view, the Almighty is not a physical form and, hence, does not occupy a space, nor does He move from one place to another, nor can He be seen by anyone. They contend that some commentators simply do not have the proper tafsir (exegesis) of certain Qur'anic verses such as the following:

Some faces will on that Day be bright, looking to their Lord. (75:22)

"Looking to their Lord" does not mean "looking at their Lord;" it means: they are waiting in optimistic anticipation for His rewards. As regarding the Almighty seating Himself on the `Arsh, the Throne of Authority, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as), from whose fiqh Ithna-`Asheri Ja'far Shi`as derive their creed, says the following:

Whoever claims that Allah sits on the `Arsh considers Allah as being conveyed (or mounted on something), implying that what

conveys Him has to be stronger than Him (so it could carry His weight). And whoever claims that Allah is present somewhere, or is on top of something, or there is a place where He is not there, or that He occupies a space..., would be attributing to Him characteristics which are strictly relevant to those whom He creates, whereas Allah is the Creator of everything. He cannot be measured or compared by anything; He cannot be like people; He is not absent from anywhere, and He does not occupy a specific space.¹

Shi`as also refute this claim by citing Imam `Ali ibn Abi Talib saying, Allah does not descend, nor does He need to descend. Such is claimed by those who attribute to Him an increase or a decrease. Everything mobile needs what mobilizes it or what means whereby it moves. Beware, then, when you discuss His characteristics lest you should imply any increase or decrease to Him, any movement or mobilization, any departure or descending, any sitting or standing.²

This is the view held by all other Imams from Ahlulbayt; none of them contradicts the other; such is the true creed, one wherein there is no contradiction at all.

Allah as Viewed by the Commander of the Faithful Imam `Ali (a.s.)

Two narrators, Muhammad ibn Abi Abdillah and Muhammad ibn Yahya, narrate a tradition related by Abu Abdullah Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq citing the Commander of the Faithful Imam `Ali ibn Abi Talib delivering a sermon once. In it, the Commander of the Faithful says,

All praise is due to Allah, the One and Only God Who is sought by all, the Unique One Who is neither created out of anything pre-existing, nor has He created anything out of something. Through His Might does He manifest Himself, and it is through His Might that anything manifests itself. None of His attributes can be fully

¹ . Al-Kulayni, *Usool al-Kafi*, Vol. 1, pp. 3, 7, and 9, "Kitab al-Tawheed." Shaikh al-Saduq, *Al-Tawheed*, pp. 9-10, p. 12. Al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, Vol. 3, p. 311, "Kitab al-Tawheed."

² . *Ibid.* Vol. 1, p. 18. Al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, Vol. 3, p. 311.

comprehended, nor does He have any measure whereby He is compared.

The tongue in any language is too crippled to describe His attributes, and the circumlocution of His attributes leads into nowhere but a blind alley. The sharpest of intellects are too puzzled to comprehend His kingdom; all comprehensive explanations are rendered short of delving into His kingdom. Unknown curtains obstruct the understanding of the lowest levels of His hidden knowledge, and the keenest insights are totally lost in comprehending the most (seemingly) superficial of His subtleties.

So Glorified is Allah Who cannot be reached by the most ambitious of wills, nor can He be grasped by the deepest of insights. Exalted is He for whom there is no measure of time, nor any fixed duration, nor any limited description. Praised is He, Who has no beginning at all nor any end, nor any extinction. Glorified is He as He has described Himself. Those who attempt to describe Him can never do so. He delineated the boundaries of all things when He created them without having modelled them after any pre-existing models, thus distinguishing Himself from their similitude.

Never has He resided in them, so it could be said that He is contained therein, nor has He been apart from them, so a place outside them could be sought for Him. Rather, He, all Praise is due to Him, encompassed them in His knowledge and perfected their design and computed them.

Even things beyond the curtains of the atmosphere are never hidden from His knowledge, nor are those obscurities within the depth of the dark, nor are those in the high heavens, nor are those in the lowest layers of the earth: for each and every thing in them there is a custodian and a keeper, each one of them surrounds the others, while His knowledge encompasses them all. He is the One and Only God upon Whom all depend for their existence and subsistence, the One Whom the passage of time never alters, nor does the creation of things tire Him. Whatever He wills, He says to it, "Be!" and it is.

He created everything without following a pre-existing model or a precedent, and without encountering any fatigue or a prior planning. Whoever makes something makes it out of something else, whereas Allah created everything out of nothing. Every scholar acquires knowledge after being ignorant, while Allah is never ignorant, nor has He ever acquired knowledge out of what He creates. He encompasses all things in His knowledge before creating them.

Nothing is added to His knowledge because of their coming into existence: His knowledge is the same before and after He brought them into existence. He never created what He created in order to enhance His control, nor out of fear of its decay or loss, nor to seek help out of it against His adversary, nor to seek the upper hand over a progressive competitor, nor seeking to be the equal of a dominating partner; all creation is nurtured by Him; everyone and everything are humbled slaves before Him.

Glorified is He Who never feels weary on account of creating what He creates, nor in nurturing whatever He creates, nor does He, out of inability or slackness, terminate what He creates. He knows what He creates and creates what He knows.

Whatever He creates He creates neither out of deliberating on any new knowledge, nor does any doubt entertain Him on account of what He creates. Rather, He creates out of His inviolable decision, firm knowledge, and exact command. He made Himself unique in His Mastership, peerless in unity, grandeur, and sublimity. He remains peerless in praise and exalted in glory. He is far above parenthood, purified from and sanctified against any cohabitation.

He is too great and too mighty to seek any partners. Thus, none among what He creates opposes Him, nor is there any equal peer like Him from among His possessions, nor is there any partner in His Kingdom. He is the One, the Unique, the One sought by all, the Eternal, the Everlasting, the Lord of the cosmos, Who has always been and shall always be, the eternally all alone before the beginning of time and after the end of all affairs. He will never

terminate nor expire. Thus do I describe my Lord; there is no god except Allah; Great is He and how Great! Glorified is He and how Glorified! Almighty is He and how Almighty! He is far above what the unjust ones say about Him, far, far above that!

Understanding Tawheed with Karbala

-Asad Raza

Tawheed is the root and heart of all Islamic doctrines and teachings. It's the pivot around which the whole system of divine guidance works. It forms the essence of guidance and constitutes the main base of divine religions - particularly the revealed divine religion of Islam.

The Tawheed implies that the world is, as Ayatollah Mutahhari says, - 'mono-axis' and 'mono-orbit'. It means that the world is 'from Allah' and returns' to Allah'. The oneness of Allah is reflected in His all creation. The creation of astronomical bodies like the Sun or stars or galaxies or the creation of man and other animals all gesture towards His Tawheed. The orderliness of the celestial system or the lack of disharmony, inconsistency or clash in the system is a manifestation of mono-axis control. There is wonderful harmony in the different sub systems of nature. All the sub systems of nature work in such a perfect harmony with each other that sustainability and maintainability of life on Earth becomes viable and all living things get their respective required ecological environments in which they get their nourishment and their life is sustained.

The perfect order, harmony with such profound inter dependence of the different sub systems in maintaining life had not been possible if there would have been many creators or controllers: **“If there had been in them any gods except Allah, they would both have certainly been in a state of disorder; therefore glory be to Allah, the Lord of the dominion, above what they attribute (to Him).”** (Holy Quran, 21:22).

Certainly all creation for its existence or sustenance, or all actions and motions for their operations, or phenomena that makes the fabric of cosmos stay is dependent upon the will of the One Lord : **“Say: He, Allāh, is Unique. Allah is He on whom all depend”** (Holy Quran, 112:1-2)

The belief in Tawheed makes us see the hope and purpose in life. This belief gives direction to life and explains the different happenings in the context of journey towards the Creator Lord. Without the Tawheed the life has no definite meaning and different happenings of life cannot be explained in a framework.

The framework of Tawheed provides the meaningful explanation to the different phenomena taking place. An intelligent soul and a thinking mind cannot ignore the purpose and aim in creation: **“Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee; save us then from the chastisement of the fire:”** (3:191).

To assume that this grand system of life has been created without a goal is fundamentally the negation of the manifest signs present in every corner of the creation. The negation of purpose in creation is disbelief : **“And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain; that is the opinion of those who disbelieve then woe to those who disbelieve on account of the fire.”** (Holy Quran, 38:27).

The framework of Tawheed gives the purpose in each step of life and it shows that how everything has come “from Him” and is moving “towards Him”. The story of life takes its origin from Him and ends reaching to Him. Tawheed demands the submission of man to Him and His will in between the time points of birth and death.

As Tawheed is the essence of religion “the great Islamic scholar and commentator of the Holy Qur’an -the late Allamah Tabatabai (may Allah bless his soul) says: ‘Tawheed, when expanded, becomes the whole of Islam, and Islam, when condensed, Tawheed is acquired.’

Tawheed is like a compressed treasure which on the surface appears like a simple ideological principle, but which however, when, expanded and spread, embraces the whole of Islam. In other words, the whole of Islam is as a body which is formed by various limbs and parts and of which the soul is Tawheed. If Tawheed, namely,

the soul is breathed into this body, it will be a body which is alive, otherwise it will turn into a lifeless and dead system.”[1]

Ayatollah Murtadha Mutahhari throws light on the Monotheistic or Tawheed based system of creation and operation in the universe in the following words:

“From the stand point of monotheistic and Islamic conception of the world, the universe is a creation and is looked after by Divine will and attention. If Divine attention were withheld for a moment, the whole universe would be annihilated in no time.

This world has not been created in vain or in jest. There are many advantages implied in the creation of man and the world. Nothing has been created unbecoming and futile. The existing system of the universe is the best and the most perfect. It manifests justice and truth and is based on a sequence of causes and effects. Every result is a logical consequence of a cause and every cause produces a specific effect. Divine destiny brings a thing into existence through its specific causes only, and it is a chain of causes which constitutes the Divine destiny of a thing.

Divine will always operates in the world in the form of a law or a general principle. Divine laws do not change. Whatever changes take place, they are always in accordance with some law. Good and evil in the world are related to man's own conduct and his own deeds. Good deeds and bad deeds, besides being recompensed in the next world, have their reaction in this world also. Gradual evolution is a Divine law. This world is a nursery for the development of man.

Divine destiny is supreme in the whole world. Man has been destined by it to be free and responsible. He is the master of his own destiny. Man has his special dignity. He is fit to be the vicegerent of Allah. This world and the Hereafter are but two interconnected stages like those of sowing and harvest, for one reaps what one sows. They may also be compared to the two periods of childhood and old age, for the latter period is the outcome of the former.” [2]

The Holy Quran lays great emphasis on Tawheed at numerous places. After realizing and understanding the Tawheed in creation and functioning of the system we are required to follow Tawheed in worship and deeds:

“And certainly We raised in every people a Messenger saying: ‘Serve Allah and shun the shaytan’ ... (16:36).”

“And We did not send before you any Messenger but We revealed to him that there is no god but Me, therefore, serve Me (21:25)”

The messengers of Allah had this foremost message for their people: **“... ‘O my people! Serve Allah, you have no god other than Him’ ... (7:59).”** The purpose of the prophetic mission was to bring people back to the worship of the Allah.

The holy Prophet (S) of Islam announced in unequivocal words the Oneness of Allah and salvation can be only obtained through it: **“Say there is no god but Allah so that you will find salvation.”** Likewise Ahlul Bayt (AS) have guided people towards Allah (SWT) with the message of Tawheed.

Imam Ali ibn Musa Ar-Rida (AS) in the hadith bearing “silsilatu-dhahab” (golden chain of infallible narrators), says: "I heard from my father. Musa ibn Ja'far (AS) who narrated from his father and forefathers (AS) reaching to 'Amirul-Mu'mineen (The Commander of the Faithful), Al-Imam 'Ali (AS) who narrated from the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam, who narrated the same from Jibra'il (the archangel Gabriel) saying that Allah says,"

“The words ‘La ilaha illallah’ (there is no god but Allah) is My Fortress, so anybody who entered my fortress became immune from my torment.” [3]

There are innumerable traditions quoted from Ahlul Bayt (AS) on Tawheed.

In the following sermon in Nahjul Balagha, Ameerul Momineen (AS) beautifully describes the different aspects related to Tawheed:

“The foremost in religion is the acknowledgement of Him, the perfection of acknowledging Him is to testify Him, the perfection of

testifying Him is to believe in His Oneness, the perfection of believing in His Oneness is to regard Him Pure, and the perfection of His purity is to deny Him attributes, because every attribute is a proof that it is different from that to which it is attributed and everything to which something is attributed is different from the attribute.

Thus whoever attaches attributes to Allah recognises His like, and whoever recognises His like regards Him two; and whoever regards Him as two recognises parts for Him; and whoever recognises parts for Him mistook Him; and whoever mistook Him pointed at Him; and whoever pointed at Him admitted limitations for Him; and whoever admitted limitations for Him numbered Him. Whoever said: 'In what is He?' held that He is contained; and whoever said: 'On what is He?' held He is not on something else.

He is a Being, but not through phenomenon of coming into being. He exists but not from non-existence. He is with everything but not in physical nearness. He is different from everything but not in physical separation. He acts but without connotation of movements and instruments. He sees even when there is none to be looked at from among His creation. He is only One, such that there is none with whom He may keep company or whom He may miss in his absence. "[4]

Imam Ali ibn Musa, Ar-Rida (AS) in one of his tradition, which delivered when he was in Khorasan, describes the Tawheed in the similar fashion as done by Ameerul Momineen (AS) in above quoted sermon:

"Certainly, God the Light, the Initiator of this cosmos, and the Foremost is One without any associate or any accompanying thing. He is Unique without a second. He is neither realized nor unknown. He is neither decisive nor allegorical. He is neither mentioned nor forgotten. He is not a thing that a familiar name can fit Him. The Initiator has been self-Existent and light that is dispensing with everything. He did not exist in a definite time and will not last for a

definite time. He has not existed in anything, has not hidden Himself to anything, and has not resorted to anything.

No sayer can invent a statement describing Him even if he thinks of light, example, ghost, or shadow. All that was before the creation and in the situation where there was nothing but Him. The same situation is in this position. There are only imaginary attributes and a translation of a picture in the mind purposed for making others understand.....

You should know also that there is no feature to the indescribable, no name to the meaningless, and no edge to the edgeless. All the names and features refer to perfection and existence, but do not refer to encirclement, like their referring to the terms such as squares, circles, and triangles, because God can be recognized through names and attributes and not through terms. God is not subject to any terms; therefore, the creatures cannot recognize Him in the same way they recognize themselves. If His attributes and names do not refer to Him, then the creatures are worshipping His names and attributes, not their meanings. If this is true, the worshipped god will be someone other than Allah, since His attributes refer to something other than Him.”[5]

In one of such tradition Imam Jafar as-Sadiq (AS) while describing the indications and characteristics of a true followers of him says “the first of which is that they knew monotheism perfectly, they excelled in the rules of God’s oneness, and finally they believed in God’s oneness and its description. Then they recognized the outlines, facts, provisions, and interpretation of faith.” [6]

In their lives the Ahlul Bayt (AS) have been living embodiment of Tawheed. Their every moment of life has been in accordance to the will of Allah (SWT). And this fact is very much evident in the tragic event of Karbala where Imam Husain (AS) practically demonstrated on every moment that how a true believer in Tawheed conducts his affairs. If we ponder deeply on the tragedy of Karbala and analyze the statements and conduct of Imam al Husain

(AS) we would witness a true manifestation of belief in Oneness of Allah (SWT).

When Imam al Husain (AS) was in Mecca at Mount Arafat, Imam Husain's (as) love and servitude for Allah (swt) became apparent in the famed Dua of Arafat.

This prayer our Imam recited on the day of Arafat and it is a lesson for all those who want to understand what Tawheed is. Imam's (as) statement in the prayer that **"blind be the eye that cannot see, You watching it"** signifies his most elevated sense of Allah's (swt) presence at every place and time. In the opening lines of Dua of Arafat Imam al Husain (AS) gives us the knowledge of Allah's lofty status and His unbounded majesty: **"Praise be to Allah Whose determination cannot be repelled by anything, Whose gifts cannot be stopped by anything, and Whose making cannot be resembled by the making of anyone. He is the All-magnanimous, the All-liberal. He originated the genus of the wonderfully created things and He perfected the made things by His wisdom..."**

One often wonders that how a man can bear so much suffering and hardships but he still does not deviate from his faith. How one can witness before his own eyes, his young son dying, small children of his household crying and dying due to thirst, yet remain steadfast? What was the power behind him which only increased as the day of tragedy was unravelling? What did Imam al-Husain (as) have that was greater than all the sufferings he bore?

The answer lies in the same prayer of the day of Arafat which he recited in Mecca: **"What can one who misses You find any substitute? What can one who finds You miss anything else? Definitely, failing is he who has accepted anyone other than You as substitute. Definitely, loser is he who have desired for anyone other than You."** Here he proclaims the source of his patience and the source of his contented heart... **"What can one who finds You miss anything else?"**

Imam al-Husain (as) found His Lord, and so now even all is taken from him including his children, brothers and friends—that all is

nothing in comparison to what he found. He found His Lord's pleasure and that is the biggest substitute for the all loses.

In the Dua of Arafah he points out the place of his hope and shelter: **"O my God, how can I fail whilst You are my hope? "**, his dependence for grace and honor upon Him: **"How can I be humiliated whilst I depend upon You? How can see dignity if You fix me in humiliation? How can I not see dignity whilst You have referred me to You? "**, and his recognition of Divine Essence Who has manifested His lofty Self to the ones who have sight of faith: **"It is You, there is no god save You. Who have introduced Yourself to all things; therefore, nothing has ever ignored You. It is You Who have introduced Yourself to me in all things; therefore, I have seen You Manifest in all things It is You Who give manifestation to all things.....O He Who has screened Himself in the curtains of His Throne; hence, He cannot be comprehended by visions! O He Who has manifested Himself with His perfect Magnificence; therefore, His Grandeur of being firm in power."**

Imam al Husain (AS) awakens our souls with the question so that we can witness Allah everywhere around us: **"How can You be hidden whilst You are the Manifester (of all things)? Or how can You be absent whilst You are the Watcher (over all things) and the Present (at all times). Verily, You have power over all things. All praise be to Allah alone. "**

On the morning of Ashura, the horsemen of the enemy launched an attack on the ranks of the Imam (as). The Imam raised his hands in prayer and said: **"O Lord! I depend on you in every affliction and am hopeful of your blessing in every hardship. In every difficulty with which I am faced, You are my only remedy and resort. There have been many embarrassments which weakened my heart and no remedy for it was available. The friends did not assist me and the enemies rejoiced at my misfortune. However, when I ceased to seek assistance from everyone except You and sought the remedy only from You, You provided me solace and relief and removed the difficulty. Every blessing and goodness reaches us from You and everything should be sought from You only,"** further highlighting

the spirit of belief in the oneness of God was alive and well amongst the Bani Hashim at Karbala. [7]

Some of the Imam's (as) last words when he was submerged in his blood after being stricken with swords, arrows, spears, and stones, and when his whole body was badly wounded and bleeding, were: "I am pleased with your decree, obedient to your command. There is no one worthy of worship but You." [8]

There, Imam al-Husain (as) in his last moments once more declared his faith in His lord, submitting before His command and will, and being pleased with His will. He became the living exegesis of the following verses of holy Qur'an:

"O soul that art at rest! Return to your Lord, well-pleased (with him), well-pleasing (Him), so enter among my servants, and enter into my garden." (89:27-30)

After Imam al-Husain's martyrdom, members of Ahlul Bayt (AS) were made captives and taken to Kufa in front of Ibn Ziyad (la). There, Ibn Ziyad asked Sayyida Zainab (as), "How have you seen what Allah has done to your Ahlulbayt?" She responded, "I have seen Him treating them most beautifully." [9] This is the reply from a woman who is in captivity, whose family has been killed.

Sheikh Mufid also has mentioned the conversation between Sayyida Zainab (as) and the accursed ibn Ziyad. Ibn Ziyad (la) in his arrogance and wickedness said to Sayyida Zainab (as): "Praise be to God Who has disgraced you, killed you and revealed the false nature of your claims." She replied to the wicked tyrant in his face as a brave and honored lady: "Praise be to God who favored us with His Prophet, Muhammad (s), and He has purified us completely from sin. He only disgraces the great sinner and reveals the false nature of the profligate. Such men are not among us, praise be to God." [10]

The whole story of Ahlul Bayt (AS) is that of valour and majesty. The source of this lofty majesty and unwavering valour lies in their unwavering faith in Allah (swt). The tyrants committed all acts of aggression and oppression towards the holy Ahlul Bayt (AS) but

they could not made them bow and submit before their unholy wishes, because the Ahlul Bayt(AS) had submitted before the will of Allah, and Karbala was only one example of this embodiment of belief in the Almighty and Majestic.

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The types of 'Tawheed' in Islam

-Syed Ali Ameer Rizvi

Alumni, Al-Mustafa International University,
Qom, Iran

The article before you deals the different types of Tawheed in Islam. It covers almost all types of Tawheed and gives a brief introduction of every kind of monotheism defined by Islam.

So, basically Tawheed is divided into two types: 'Tawheed-e-Nazari' (Theoretical) and 'Tawheed-e-Amali' (Practical) and both of these two types itself are divided into various types of Tawheed.

Tawheed-e-Nazari or Theoretical is related to knowledge and cognition means to consider and accept the unity of Allah in belief by our intellect.

Tawheed-e-Amali or practical is related to actions means being a monotheist in practice.

In other words, 'Tawheed-e-Nazari' means cognizance of the unity of Allah and 'Tawheed-e-Amali' means being a monotheist.

Tawheed-e-Nazari is basically divided into three types:

1. Tawheed-e-Zaat (The Unity of Divine essence)
2. Tawheed-e-Sif'aat (The Unity of Divine attributes)
3. Tawheed-e-Af'aal (The Unity of Divine actions)

Then **Tawheed-e-Af'aal** is itself divided into three types:

- I. Tawheed-e-Khāliqiyyah (The unity of Allah in creation)
- II. Tawheed-e-Ruboobi/Ruboobiyah (The unity of Allah in providing)
- III. Tawheed-dar-wilayat (The unity of Allah in guardianship)

And **Tawheed-e-Amali** is also divided into three types:

1. Tawheed-e-Ibadi/Tawheed dar Ibadat (The Divine unity in worship)

2. Tawheed-dar-hukoomat (The Divine unity in ruling and governance)
3. Tawheed-dar-mohabbat wa ita'at (The Divine unity in love and obedience)

Tawheed-e-Zaat (The unity of Divine essence)

The Unity of the Divine Essence (*Tawheed-e dhātī*) means that the Essence of God is One or Unique. The Oneness or Unity of the Divine Essence has two meanings:

1. The Essence which in itself is not in need of any cause is only God. Therefore, all essences (*dhawāt*) and existents (*mawjūdāt*) – whether they are physical or non-physical, essential (*jawharī*) or accidental (*'arḍī*), animate or inanimate – are possible beings, needy and effects [of a prior cause]. Hence, the Essence of God is not in need of any cause [for itself to exist] and has utter absence of necessity for any partner or similarity.
2. The Essence of God is not constituted by parts, and there is no sort of multiplicity and plurality in the Divine Essence.

The two stated meanings have been mentioned in a tradition (*hadith*) from Imam 'Alī ('a). Someone asked the Imām ('a) concerning the Oneness of God. The Imām ('a) replied, "Oneness has four meanings; two of them can be applied to God while the other two cannot be applied to Him. The two inapplicable meanings are as follows:

1. **Numerical oneness** because in numerical oneness, any notion of two, three, etc. is possible; and
2. **Oneness of genus**, such as the human beings that belong to the same species; such oneness does not also hinder multiplicity and plurality.

And the two applicable meanings [of oneness] are as follows:

1. **God's uniqueness** in Essence and Attributes, and

2. The indivisibility and inseparability of the Essence of God.¹

Tawheed-e-Sif'aat (The unity of Divine attributes)

The Unity of the Divine Attributes has two meanings:

1. God has no equal in His Attributes, because:

Firstly, the Attributes of God are of Him and no one has bestowed them upon Him.

Secondly, His Attributes of Perfection are infinite and limitless, and these two characteristics are concomitant with God being the Necessary Being by essence as well as his absolute self-sufficiency and independence.

2. The Attributes of Perfection of God are identical with His Essence. That is, although they differ in terms of meaning (*mafhūm*), in terms of applicability (*mişdāq*) they are in unison.

In other words, it is not the case that the Essence of God, on one hand, is All-knowing, and on the other hand, All-powerful and Sovereign; rather, His knowledge, power and will are His very Essence, because if the Attributes of God were extraneous to His Essence and distinct from each other, this implies a sort of multiplicity (*kathrah*), compositeness (*tarkīb*) and limitation (*maḥdūdiyyah*) in the Divine Essence, and all these characteristics cannot be applied to God.

Moreover, in originating the creatures and bestowing knowledge and power to them, He would be in need of his Attributes (Knowledge and Power) which are assumed to be distinct from His Essence, and neediness is contradictory to God as the Necessary Being and Self-sufficient.

Tawheed-e-Af'aal (The unity of Divine actions)

The belief in 'Unity of the actions of Allah (SWT)' informs us that everything and everyone which exists in the entire universe - even the leaves of a tree which move with the passing breeze - originate

¹ . Shaykh al-Şadūq, Al-Tawḥīd, section (bāb) 3, ḥadīth 3.

from Allah (SWT). Nothing can take place without His command - the cutting which the sword performs, the burning which a fire produces and all other actions stem from His order. To sum this belief up in one sentence, we refer to the tradition mentioned in Bihar al-Anwar that reads:

لَا وَدَّرَ فِي الْوُجُوِّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

“There is no one effector in the creation except Allah.”¹

Even our own freedom and the choices we make in life all originate from Allah (SWT), since if He had not given us the power of choice, then we would not be able to do a single thing! However at the same time, we understand that He has given us freedom in our life and has not compelled us to perform acts.

When one has the deep-rooted belief of 'Unity of the actions of Allah (SWT)' and understands that the only independent power of decision and will belongs to Allah (SWT) and that the power of choice which Allah (SWT) has given us is merely a test (for the life of this world), then one would definitely not submit himself to others merely to seek closeness to them!

One would also realize that the true source of attaining goodness in the material world does not lie in the hands of the people. With this belief in mind, one would not look seek to covet what others have! In addition, with such a belief, one would not obey and try to please others if this meant transgressing the laws of Allah (SWT). Also, one would not appeal to others to help solve his problems since that person knows that the true meaning of “**There is no one effector in the creation except Allah**” goes against all of these issues!

When the various Prophets of Allah (as) were appointed, the first thing they sought to do was instill the correct set of beliefs within the hearts and minds of the people. Once the beliefs and faith are set straight, then the roots and branches (of the faith) will also become correct.

¹ . Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 5, pg. 151

Of course, we are not opposed to the world of cause and effect; however, we must remember that behind the material world lies the hand of the One who induces things to happen (the actual Cause).

In order for humanity not to forget that there is a Causer for everything, sometimes people create reasons and rationale for things which happen around them. For example, sometimes people say that, "All the doors (of prosperity) were closed to me, and then all of a sudden, I found a way out!" while sometimes, the exact opposite of this is also said!

If one was to lose the Causer for everything that happens and was to rely solely on the frail spider's web known as the material world, then Allah (SWT) would leave the person alone within this weak web, as it has been stated in the Qur'an:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ
الْعَنْكَبُوتِ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ^١

"The similitude of those who take other than Allah as their guardian is as the example of the spider who takes his (frail) web as a house. And surely the weakest of houses is the house of the spider, if only the people had knowledge of this (fact)."

The intelligent person is one who does not rely upon the frail house of the spider - the material world. Rather, the intelligent one relies solely upon the chief Causer of all actions (Allah (SWT)) and through this, becomes needless of everything else.

It is mentioned in a tradition that:

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَكَلِّبْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ أَبَدًا.^٢

"O' Allah! Do not ever leave me to myself for even the period of the blinking of the eye!"

¹ . Surat al-Ankabut (29), verse 41

² . Bihar-al-anwar, vol. 17, P. 53

Tawheed-e-Af'aal is itself divided into three types:

I. Tawheed-e-Khāliqiyah (The unity of Allah in creation)

To create or originate is one of the attributes of God. This attribute is necessitated by arguments to prove the existence of God, for the purport of those arguments is that God is the Origin and Cause of causes of all creatures. All beings, therefore, are His creation and construction. So, the discussion is that God has no partner in the act of creation and there is no Creator of the universe other than Him.

II. Tawheed-e-Ruboobi (The Divine Unity in Lordship)

Rubūbiyyah or Lordship is one of the Attributes of Perfection of God. *Rubūbiyyah* is derived from the word *rabb* and lexicographically an infinite (*maṣḍar*) which mean *tarbiyya* (nurture) but it is most frequently used in the sense of the doer of action (*ism fā'il*) meaning 'nurturer'.

This word, in the latter sense, is exclusively and absolutely applied to God, but it is also applied sometimes to other than God, as in the words *rabb al-dār* (head of the house), *rabb al-firdaws* (doyen of the paradise), etc.¹

The word *tadbīr* (management) in the sense of *rubūbiyyah* (lordship) has been used a lot in Qur'anic verses and traditions (*aḥādīth*). *Tadbīr* means to put a thing next to another thing in a particular order and arrangement in such a way that the intended purpose of each of them could be attained. For example, managing (*tadbīr*) home affairs is to put each thing in its suitable place so that it could be used in the most appropriate manner without wasting anything. Managing the affairs of the universe means to create a particular order among the creatures in such a way that every creature could attain its desired perfection.

This kind of management is a specific management which pertains to every phenomenon but the general management in relation to the entire universe is to let such an order govern the universe so that the

¹ . Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *Al-Mufradāt*, under the word *rabb*.

world of creation could reach its ultimate goal, which is the return to God and the emergence of the hereafter.¹

Cosmic and Legislative Lordship

What has been discussed so far pertains to the cosmic (*takwīnī*) Lordship and management of the universe, but with respect to some creatures, legislative (*tashrī'ī*) lordship and management are also raised, and this pertains to the creatures which, in addition to the instinctive guidance, also possess rational guidance.

For this reason, they have also rational responsibility but since their reason is not that perfect and that capable in every aspect, they are also in need of legislative guidance which has been provided by the prophets of God and the heavenly religion. This subject constitutes the foundation of prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and heavenly codes of law. Therefore, one of the manifestations of Lordship is the legislative one.

III. The Divine Unity in Sovereignty and guardianship

The right of sovereignty is primarily and essentially exclusive to God, for sovereignty is a kind of guardianship and management which is peculiar to God alone. On the other hand, governance is one of the social needs of the human being and its realization depends on his sovereignty and domination.

The outcome of these two principles is that some individuals are granted the right of sovereignty by God so as to assume the leadership in society and exercise the right of sovereignty by observing the rational and legislative principles and rules. There is no dispute that the prophets of God, in general, and the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), in particular, have enjoyed such a station.

From the Shī'ah point of view, after the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) this station has been entrusted to his infallible successors, viz. the Imāms from the *Ahl al-Bayt* ('a), just as it was during the Period of Occultation

¹ . Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, vol. 11, pp. 289-290.

(*ghaybah*), the just, pious and competent jurists (*fuqahā*) also have such a right (the concept of *Wilayat-al-Faqih*).

In other words, the system of government in Islam is founded on the concept of Allah's guardianship (*wilāyah*) and the guardianship of the prophets, the Imāms and the jurists is a manifestation and expression of it.¹

Tawheed-e-Amali

a) The Divine Unity in Worship

Calling to the worship (*'ibādah*) of One and Only God and abandoning the worship of false deities is one of the most important objectives of all the prophets of God, as the Holy Qur'an thus says:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ^٢

"Certainly we raised an apostle in every nation [to preach:] 'Worship Allah, and keep away from the Rebel'."

The Muslim schools of thought have a consensus of opinion on worship as exclusive to God alone, but some sects (such as the Wahhābīs) have committed mistakes in interpreting worship. As a result, they mistakenly regard many practices of Muslim as a gesture of honor and respect to the prophets and righteous people as worshipping them and polytheism in worship (*shirk fī'l-'ibādah*).

b) The Divine Unity in governance and legislation

One of the manifestations and expressions of the Divine Unity in Lordship is Oneness in governance, legislation and law-making. The Holy Qur'an says:

إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ^٣

"Sovereignty belongs only to Allah. He has commanded you to worship none except Him."

¹ . For further information, see the book *Dīn wa Dawlat* (Religion and Government) by Ali Rabbani Gulpaygani.

² . Surah Nahl, Verse no. 36

³ . Surah Yusuf, Verse no. 40

Since legislation and determining the duties of individuals is a kind of guardianship (*wilāyah*) on them and interference in their affairs and that the guardianship and involvement in the affairs of the universe (including the human beings and others) is exclusive to God on the basis of the Divine Unity in Lordship, no one except Him has the right of legislation and determining the rights and duties of others.

One the other hand, what shall be enacted as laws in the legislative houses are actually declarations of the practical and executive ways of realizing the Divine laws and decrees.

For this reason, these laws must be harmonious with the Islamic laws and decrees without any conflict with them; otherwise, they shall be devoid of legitimacy.

The Divine Unity in love and obedience

The right to earn love and obedience (*itā'ah*) is primarily and essentially exclusive to God, for He is the Creator and Master of the universe and the human beings. For this reason, obedience to God – so is servitude (*'ibādah*) to Him – is necessary for all beings. Meanwhile, God's bestowal of the right of sovereignty and leadership on specific individuals (the prophets and the like) necessitates that obedience to them is also essential for others; otherwise, their guardianship and leadership shall be void and useless in practice.

The way of reconciling the two is to argue that obedience to other than God is not obligatory on anyone, but obedience to those who are granted guardianship by God on the human beings is obligatory on others by the decree and commandment of God, as it is thus said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ¹

“O, you who have faith! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority among you.”

And it is also stated, thus:

¹ . Surah Nisa, Verse no. 59

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ¹

“We did not send any apostle but to be obeyed by Allah’s leave.”

These are some important types of Tawheed explained in short. Although there are some other types of Tawheed mentioned in the detailed books written about the topic but if a reader looks carefully, he will find that those types either emerge from these types mentioned here or return to it.

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