

Theism and Monotheism

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THE OMNIPOTENT'S EXISTENCE -1

We Believe that the Almighty, and omnipotent God exists as the Creator and Ruler of the universe; and that the traces and signs of His greatness, knowledge, and power is apparent through the different aspects of any thing that exists; i.e. in human, animals, vegetations as well as in the planets of the skies and the higher worlds.

WE BELIEVE that the more we think over and study the secrets of all being things, the more we shall get to know of God's greatness, and the extent of his unlimited knowledge, and power. The progress of scientific researches will open new doors, extending the dimensions of our thoughts, which serves to increase our love for HIM, and to take us closer to HIS sacred essence. The approach will draw us to the immense light of God's glorious beauty. We do read in the Holy QURAN: "On the earth are signs for those of assured faith; as also in your own selves. Will you not then see?"

THE HOLY QURAN S51: 20 - 21

"BEHOLD! In the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of night and day - there are indeed signs for men of understanding. Men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, who contemplate the wonders of creation in the heavens and the earth; (with that thought they say:-) Our lord! Not for naught has thou created all this! Glory to thee, give us salvation from the penalty of the fire."

THE HOLY QURAN - S3: 190 - 191

THE ATTRIBUTES OF HIS GLORY & BEAUTY -2

We believe that His essence is void of any defect, clean of deficiencies, and adorned with all perfection that may exist. He is mere perfection, or in other word:

Any perfection and beauty that may ever exist, has it's source in His Holy ESSENCE. "Allah is He besides whom there is no other God. The sovereign, the Holy one, the source of peace, the keeper of faith, the Gaurdian of safety, (the PROTECTOR) and the exalted in might, the IRRESISTIBLE, the SUPREME. Glory to Allah who is above the partners that they attribute to HIM.

He is Allah the creator, the originator, the Bestower of forms. To Him belong the most beautiful

names. Whatever is in the heavens and on the earth give glory to Him, He is Almighty, the Wise one." THE HOLY QURAN - S59: 23 - 24

THE INFINITE ESSENCE OF GOD -3

WE BELIEVE that He is an infinite existence in all respects, such as knowledge, power, everlasting and pre-existence. Therefore He will not be contained in time and space, while He is in everywhere and at any time, for being above space/Time. "It is He who is Allah in heavens and Allah on earth, and He is full of wisdom and knowledge."

THE HOLY QURAN - S43: 84

"And He is with you where ever you may be, and Allah sees all that you do." THE HOLY QURAN - S 57: 4

Yes, He is nearer to us than ourselves. He is with our soul, and He is everywhere, and in the meanwhile He has not a certain place: "It was we who created man, and We know the promptings of his soul For We are nearer to him than his jugular vein." THE HOLY QURAN - S 50: 16

"He is the first and the last, the visible and the invisible, and He has full knowledge of all things." THE HOLY QURAN _ S 85: 15

Therefore if we read in the Holy QURAN that: 'He is the owner of ARSH' (which means either throne or empyrean) or 'He sat upon His throne'; or 'His throne does extend over the heaven and earth;' none of these verses mean that He may have a certain place. (these are all metaphors) These are to express His sovereignty over every thing and every place. If we consider Him to have a certain place, we have limited Him by giving Him the attributes of His creatures, while we know that:- 'nothing is like Him'. (Q - S 42: 11) And: there is none equal to (Him! (Q - S 112: 4

GOD HAS NO MATERIAL BODY AND NO EYE CAN EVER SEE HIM -4

WE BELIEVE that God can never be seen by the physical eyes; because the object of seeing by the eyes is a material body that has to have place, colour, form and direction. These are all the qualifications of the creatures, and not that of the creator. God is really far from that. Therefore the belief that one may physically see God is a sort of polytheism, and going astray in this field.

"No vision can grasp Him, but He grasps all visions." THE HOLY QURAN - S6: 103

This is why when the Israelites objected, asking Moses to let them see God: he took them to the Mount Sinai, and as mentioned in HOLY QURAN:-- "And when Moses came to a place

appointed by us, (ON THE MOUNT SINAI) his lord addressed him; and Moses said,"O my lord! Show thyself to me: (let me see you) that I may look upon You! Allah said," By no means can you see me; but look upon the mountain, if it abides in its place, then you may see me." When his lord manifested His glory on the mountain it turned into dust, and Moses fell down into a swoon. When he recovered his senses, he said, "Glory be to thee! To thee I return and I am the first one to believe in you." THE HOLY QURAN - S7: 143 And by such incidents it was proved that God can never be seen.

WE BELIEVE that our Islamic traditions denoting the observance of God, aim at seeing Him by the mind and by the heart, and not by the sense of vision of the eyes at all. In one of his sermons collected in the famous book: NAHJUL BALAGHA, Imam Ali says:- "Eyes can not see Him, but He can be seen by the realities of FAITH".

WE BELIEVE that the attributes of the creatures, such as: place, direction, material body, and physical observance should not be ascribed to God. If done so, it shall lead to polytheism, and .remoteness from the true knowledge of HIM, who is above all, and nothing is similar to HIM

MONOTHEISM IS THE VERY SOUL OF ALL THE ISLAMIC COMMANDMENTS -5

WE BELIEVE that one of the most important subjects of the knowledge of God, is the MONOTHEISM, i.e. the belief that there is but one God. As a matter of fact Monotheism (TOWHID) is not only a principle of the religion, but the most important of the tenets. It is the very soul and the base of all the Islamic ideas and beliefs. We can say that the roots, as well as the branches of Islam take their forms in the monotheism.

The UNITY and ONENESS is a general topic of conversation everywhere and in every field:- UNITY OF GOD'S ESSENCE, Unity of His attributes, and actions. In other word, also the unity of prophets and their teachings, the unity of the LAW, GHIBLEH, and the books. And after all, the unity of Moslims through their brotherhood and the unity of the resurrection day. From this

N declares POLYTHEISM as an unforgiveable SIN:-point of view the HOLY QUR "Allah does not forgive those who set up partners with Him, but He may forgive any sin inferior to that, of whom he wills. He that sets up CO-SHARERS with Allah is guilty of a SIN which is most heinous indeed." THE HOLY QURAN - S4: 48

"It has already been revealed to you as it was revealed to those before you that:-" If you join gods with Allah, your deeds shall be fruitless, and you surely will be one of those who lose. (all spiritual goodnesses) THE HOLY QURAN - S39: 65

THE BRANCHES OF MONOTHEISM -6

WE BELIEVE that MONOTHEISM, (TOWHID) has many branches among which four are the
-:most important ones

A- THE UNITY OF ESSENCE

By that we mean: His absolute Holy Essence is one, indivisible, and no one is similar or like
.unto him

B- THE UNITY OF HIS ATTRIBUTES

By that we mean:- knowledge, power, Eternality (EVERLASTING and PRE-EXISTENCE) and all other qualities and attributes of Him are in His Essence and are exactly the very self of His Essence. This is contrary to His creatures whose qualities are different to that of their bodies, .and from each other too. This is a critical point and is to be thought upon with minute care

C- THE UNITY OF HIS ACTION (ACT)

By that we mean that any action, movement, or effect, throughout the existence, have their causes in His will. In other word every thing depends on Him.

"Allah is the creator of all things, and He is the GAURDIAN and Disposer of all affairs." THE HOLY QURAN - S39: 62

"To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth. He enlarges and restricts the sustenance to whom He wills, for He knows all things well." THE HOLY QURAN - S42: 12

Yes! In this world, nothing is effective but Allah. But this does not mean that we are forced in all respects, and all that happens is inevitable; on the contrary, we all have free will in our decisions. "We showed man the way: whether he is grateful or ungrateful." THE HOLY QURAN - S76: 3

"Man can have nothing except that which he strives for, and the results of his striving will soon be seen." THE HOLY QURAN - S53: 39

Such verses in the holy Quran, will clearly show that man has free will, and that we may refer man's deeds and acts to God without any reduction in his responsibilities for what he does. God wills that we do what we do, in freedom and by free will, so that He may examine us and lead us for ward in the way of perfection, which could be attained through free will and serving the LORD.

Any thing done by force is neither a sign of good nor bad. Had We not free will, the missions of the prophets would be futile, and the holy books sent down could mean nothing, and the reward and punishments of the doomsday would be unjust. These are what we understand from the teachings of our Imams, for they say:- " It is neither FREE WILL, nor FORCE MAJEURE, but
".something medium and in-between

D- THE UNITY OF WORSHIP

By that we mean; God is the only Being that deserves, and is worthy of being worshipped. No one is to be worshipped but Allah. This branch of Monotheism is one of the most important one among the other branches. The prophets have all laid great stress on the unity of worship. "They are enjoined to worship none but Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being true in faith, and attend to their prayer, and to pay the alms taxes. (TITHS)

That is the religion: right and straight." THE HOLY QURAN - S98: 5

To pass over the road to perfection, One has to go deeper in monotheism, and to withdraw his affections from everything and all, but Allah, his Merciful Lord. He has to seek Him and look for Him everywhere and think of nothing but Allah. Whatever keeps man busy other than Allah, it is an idol for him.

WE BELIEVE that the branches of monotheism are not restricted to the four as mentioned above. We also know other branches of less importance and yet very important.-- such as the UNITY OF OWNERSHIP:-- "Know you not that to Allah alone belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth?" THE HOLY QURAN S5: 43

And also such as the UNITY OF SOVEREIGNTY, that only God has the supreme power and authority over all, and upon every thing. "If any one does not judge by what Allah has revealed, ".then they are the unbelievers

THE MIRACLES -7

WE BELIEVE that the unity of acts put the emphasis upon this fact that:- the great miracles that were performed by the prophets were all with the permission of Allah as we read in the Book about the miracles of JESUS CHRIST:

"And remember when Allah said to JESUS; O,JESUS the son of Mary! Recount my favours to you and your mother. I strengthened you with the HOLY SPIRIT, So that you spoke to the people in childhood and in maturity. I taught you the book and wisdom the law, and the Gospel. And when you made out of clay the figure of a bird and by my permission you breathed into it

and it became a (REAL) bird! And with my permission you healed the born blinds and lepers. You raised the dead by my leave. I restrained the children of Israel from (HARMING) you when you showed them the clear signs, and the unbelievers among them said," This is nothing but evident magic."

THE HOLY QURAN- S5: 113

When Solomon decided to have the throne of Bilqis transported to his court, so as to alter it to a basis of faith and religion of unity, a large powerful JINN, and one of his ministers volunteered to bring the throne thus:- "One who had knowledge of the book said," I will bring it to you in a twinkle of an eye!"

Then when Solomon saw the throne placed in front of him, he said," This is by the Grace of My Lord, so as to test me if I am grateful or not. And he who thanks; thanks for the benefit of his own soul, and my Lord is free of all needs." THE HOLY QURAN _ S27: 42

THE ANGELS -8

WE BELIEVE in the ANGELS of God who are assigned to perform different duties. Some of them were to take God's Divine Guidance through inspiration to the prophets and apostles. A group of the angels register the acts of men and women. Some of them take out the souls at the time of death. A group helps the believers who are steadfast to their principles. Some help the believers in the sacred battles.

Another group's duty is to punish those who transgress the bounds of decency. They do, all that they do with the permission of God; and in His charge, and these fulfillments are not contradictory with the belief of Monotheism, and the unity of acts. This also proves that the intercession of the prophets and saints on behalf of the guilty people, is in accordance with Monotheism, for it is done by the leave of the LORD GOD. "No intercessor can plead with the LORD, except after His Permission. (Has been obtained)

THE HOLY QURAN - S10: 3

.We shall give more details about this in our discussion on the prophethood

WORSHIP NO ONE BUT ALLAH -9

WE BELIEVE, that no one is to be worshipped but the LORD GOD. If any one worships any other than Him, he is surely a polytheist. The missions of all the prophets were turning around the center of the unity of worship. This is frequently mentioned in the Holy QURAN and all the scriptures. It's remarkable that We Muslims have to repeat in our daily prayers as a slogan

that:- "You alone We worship, and only Your aid We seek."

THE HOLY QURAN _ S1: 5

It is evident that the belief in the Prophet's -T'S intercession which is found in the Holy QURAN, is not a sort of worshipping of the prophets or saints. Also, to ask a prophet or saint for a help in solving our problems, is neither worshipping them, nor is it contrary to the unity of .acts, the detail of which is given in the chapter on the prophethood

NO ONE CAN EVER KNOW THE DEPTHS OF HIS SUBSTANCE-10

WE BELIEVE that although the manifestations of His Essence is found everywhere and in everything; His substance is not known to any one! That is; no one can ever know the innermost depths of His substance. This is because whatever HIS SUBSTANCE might be, is an infinite being in all aspects and without limits of any kind; just as we are limited in contrast to HIM. On this basis, no one can ever know what HIS substance really is! "Behold! it is HE that encompasses all things." THE HOLY QURAN _ S41: 54

"AND Allah surrounds them from behind." THE HOLY QURAN _ S85: 20

How long would you boast of the wisdom of yours, this road can not be travelled by thought? You could reach the innermost depth of HIS substance, if a straw could reach the bottom of an ocean.

A tradition is narrated from the Messenger of God:- "MY LORD! WE didn't worship as you deserved; and we couldn't know you as we should have." Of course this tradition (HADIS), doesn't mean that IF We cannot know HIM thoroughly; We cannot know HIM partially too: or in the limitless knowledge of HIM We should suffice by learning some words, the meaning of N and all the Gospels and which we cannot go through. This is because the Holy QUR scriptures are sent to man to help him to know God better and more. There are other instances of this matter too:_ As an example We do not know what our soul really is and yet we are sure that it exists and we can observe its effects and signs.

A tradition (HADIS) is narrated from Imam BAGHER as follows:-

"Any thing that you may think of is not the Lord who is the creator, but it is rather a creature created by your thoughts, and conjectures- some creatures just like yourselves, and God is greater than all." *Imam Ali has also said," God has not given to the wisdom, the knowledge of HIS Essence or Attributes, and yet HE has not left the wisdom unaware of HIM. (

(BAHAROLANVAR _ vol.66 _ Page 293;GHORAROLHAKAM

NEITHER SUSPENSIOIN, NOR COMPARISON _ 11

WE BELIEVE, that, as it is not right to suspend our attempts to achieve knowledge of HIM and HIS Attributes, it's also wrong to wander in the fields of COMPARISON, and seeing HIM some .how like one of HIS creatures, that both the ways lead to EXTREMES