

UNITY OF MANKIND AND BELIEF IN SUPREME

Dr. Naseem Gul
Assistant Professor
Department of Islamic Studies
Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU)
Rajouri, Jammu & Kashmir, India – 185234

Abstract: The fundamental unity of mankind was revealed at their creation. When Adam (*Alyhi as-Salaam*) and Hawaa (*Alyha as-Salaam*) came into being, Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) drew forth from their loins all the children of Adam (*Alyhi as-Salaam*), from the first human being to the last, and called for their testimony: When thy Lord drew forth from the children of Adam—from their loins—their descendants, and made them testify concerning themselves, (saying): “Am I not your Lord (who cherishes and sustains you)?”– They said: “Yea! We do testify!” (This), lest ye should say on the Day of Judgment: “Of this we were never mindful”.¹ The paper will highlight the origin of the mankind and the belief about the Supreme Being which keeps them intact with a particular religion.

IndexTerms: Supreme Being, Mankind, Religions, Islam.

I. Introduction

The first covenant obligates people to know Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*), to know one another as one people, and to build the friendly relations essential for peaceful coexistence on earth. The Qur’ān repeatedly emphasizes on the unity of mankind, i.e., they come from the same parents:

O mankind! Fear your Guardian Lord, who created you from a single Person, created, out of it, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women;—fear Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and be heedful of the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you.²

Prophet Muhammad (*Salla Allahu Alyhi wa Sallam*), the last and final messenger of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*), in his farewell Hajj sermon delivered on the 9th day of *Dhul-Hijjah*, 10 A.H. in the ‘Uranah valley of Mount Arafat in Makkah, said:

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor does a black have any superiority over white except by piety and good action.³

The reason why Islam recognizes so many prophets (*nabiyuun*) and so many messengers or apostles (*rusul*) is because Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) reveals Himself in such installments across time and across space.⁴ Prophet Muhammad (*Salla Allahu Alyhi wa Sallam*) was the last prophet (*nabi*). The stories of former prophets (*Alyhim us-Salaam*), which are reckoned to constitute about a quarter of the Qur’ān, are

thus not merely encouragement for Muhammad (*Salla Allahu Alyhi wa Sallam*) and his companions (Razia Allahu Anhum) and followers but also an assertion that he (*Salla Allahu Alyhi wa Sallam*) had a long spiritual ancestry and that previous prophets (*Alyhim us-Salaam*) had had similar experiences to his (*Salla Allahu Alyhi wa Sallam*).⁵ Thus the prophets (*Alyhim us-Salaam*) were the channels through which mankind was reminded that which it already possessed. Among this possession the concept of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) is the basic one.

II. Belief in Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*)

This concept is ingrained in the very conscience of man from the very outset. What the Qur'ān does is that it only reminds this concept.⁶ However, man gets convinced for this on his own decision. Actually, the helplessness and vulnerability of man against the vast Nature has always persuaded him for a Being to rely upon and seek sustenance and support from. Although called as 'fear factor' by psychologists but given the fact that man is almost an insignificant creature when compared with the majestic Universe, the fact is that a being (like man) of such great intellectual faculties large enough to discover and disclose the secrets of nature is rendered meaningless if it is not attached to, in one way or the other, with the Supreme. However, in quest for the truth of the Supreme the struggle of every human being has differed from the other. Certain individuals, in every age, have been very sensitive for this purpose. Also, it is because of this difference in the sensitivity for the Truth that some stopped just after recognizing the Supreme, while as others, after recognition were satisfied only after worshipping and cherishing the Supreme. The best example of the latter stock, besides others, were the sensitive people, although a few, of pre-Qur'anic Arabia who were called *Hunafaa*. They were all truth seekers. Confining themselves to solitary places, they would remember Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) and say: "O God if we had known how to worship You, we would have worshipped You accordingly."⁷

As such, the concept of such kind of a Being is but a necessary prerequisite of mans being a special creature in the universe. And for such a concept of the Supreme Being certain arguments are offered below:

1. Evidence of Man's Inner Self: So far as man's constitution, whether physical, spiritual, or intellectual, is concerned it has always shown not only an inclination but also a great affinity for the Supreme Being or Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*). It is so because the 'Inner Self' of man finds itself restless and meaningless without having a relation with the Supreme. It finds solace by being attached and related to the Supreme just like a baby is attracted by the mere mention (sight) of his mother.⁸ Or it is just like a thirsty person who quenches his thirst by water. He does not need explanation and argument for the quality of water (whether it would quench thirst or not). Similarly 'the Inner Self' of man gets tranquility and peace as soon as he gets the threshold of the Being or Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*). This fact can be illustrated in other words as:

This awareness has been bestowed upon man in the form of inborn knowledge. Thus, every human soul, at the time of birth, is born as an 'abd and a 'Muslim' (one who submits to God) and a *hanif* (one who turns away from all that is false and returns to God alone). This is what has been characterized by the Qur'ān as *Fitrat Allāh* (God's Religion) on which man is created.⁹

2. Historical continuity of the evidence provided by Man's Inner Self: Although it has been argued by certain scholars that the concept of the Supreme Being is nothing but the creation of man's 'fear complex' about the natural phenomena before which he finds himself utterly helpless, but the fact is that it never happened in history that mankind, as a totally, was bereft of the consciousness about the Supreme. If the case had been the one as suggested by these scholars then we must have the knowledge about the particular point of time when this concept crept in in the conscience of man. However, the fact is that man, generation after generation, has become familiar with this concept just like a man becomes familiar about his parents¹⁰, gradually with continuity. It is because of this continuity that man turns to Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) easily and without reluctance whenever he gets astray. "It is because God is self-subsisting. He needs no proofs for his existence. The reason for God being self evident is twofold. Firstly, the existence of the universe itself is a proof of the existence of God. Secondly, man's existence in itself is a proof of God's existence. Therefore, man believes in God, because he is bound to believe in him."¹¹ As such the concept is not borrowed from without but it is the voice from within the man.

3. The evidence of Man's Intellect: Man has always tested his conscience about Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*), the Supreme Being, supported by historical continuity, by the application of his intellectual faculty. No doubt man's 'Inner Self' gets solace and satisfaction by nothing less than the concept of the Supreme Being, but it is an irrefutable fact that he has always tried to check this evidence by his mental faculty. For this purpose he analyses different forces of nature, their composition, their function, their inter-connectivity, their usefulness for each other generally and for man particularly, so on and so forth; in all this he sees a design and a purpose.¹² The Qur'ān has, time and again referred to instances in which man's intellect leads him to Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*). For example:

Thus did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, so that he might become a firm believer. When night overshadowed him, he saw a star. He said: 'This is my Lord'. But when it set, he said: 'I love not those that set.' Then when he saw the moon rising, he said: 'This is my Lord.' But when it set, he said: 'Unless my Lord guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray'. Then when he saw the sun rising, he said: 'This is my Lord. This is the greatest.' But when it set, he said: 'O my people! Surely, I am done with what you associate with Allah.'¹³

Thus, man simply infers that the Power behind the design and purpose (of the Nature) is nothing but the Supreme Designer or simply Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*). Thus the intellect gives the evidence of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*).

4. Evidence of the Anmbiyaa (Prophets) (Alyhim us-Salaam) of Allah (Subhanahu Wa Taala):- History is on record that from amongst the mankind at particular periods of time significant and special {(chosen of Allah) (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*)} men arose who claimed that they were chosen by Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) to call the people to Him because the latter had gone astray. This call used to be genuine because it matched with the voice¹⁴ and liking of the ‘Inner Self’ of man, was in accord with the historical continuity of the evidence of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) and it was also much according to the decision of man’s intellect. Thus:

God did not leave man to himself alone. Rather, He helped and guided him with the revelation of His Divine Will to remind him of his *raison d’être* [d’être]. God revealed His Will through prophets or messengers who summoned the people back to *Din al-Fitrah*. The prophets also provided mankind with models of its practice. They reclaimed mankind from their deviation from *Din al-Fitrah*, warning it of the grave consequences of such deviation. Some people followed the prophets, teachings and returned to *Din al-Fitrah*.¹⁵

Moreover, these persons, called prophets (*Alyhim us-Salaam*)¹⁶ were most reliable and trustworthy in every respect. And the most important thing about these specially gifted and chosen men was that they always brought forth the same truth that is the reality of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*).

5. Evidence of Divine Intervention, witnessed throughout History at different occasions: The truth conveyed to the mankind through the prophets (*Alyhim us-Salaam*) of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) was actually the voice and call of human nature. The truth that man’s ‘Inner Self’ has a liking for the Supreme is not incomprehensible. This is because Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) had disclosed His Self before Adam (*Alyhi as-Salaam*) and his progeny on the very first day and the whole mankind had accepted Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) as its Lord.¹⁷ The Qur’ān, in this regard says:

When thy Lord drew forth from the Children of Adam—From their loins—Their descendants, and made them Testify concerning themselves, (saying): “Am I not your Lord (Who cherishes and sustains you)?”— They said: “Yea! We do testify!” (This), lest ye should say on the Day of Judgment: “Of this we were never mindful”.¹⁸

It is this consciousness and concept which has passed from generation to generation through the psyche of man. And it is for the regeneration and reactivation of this concept that Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) sent His prophets (*Alyhim us-Salaam*) from time to time. However, mostly it happened that people

rejected their call. As this attitude of people was against¹⁹ the voice of their ‘Inner Self’, the historical continuity of the concept of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*), the decision of man’s own intellect and the struggle of the prophets (*Alyhim us-Salaam*), man was taken into task by ‘Divine Intervention’. It is because the door for any excuse on the part of man was shut that can be simply discerned from the last part of the above–quoted verse. Thus, according to that Covenant with Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) there remained,

No excuse for any individual to say, either (1) that he was unmindful, or (2) that he should not be punished for the sins of his fathers, because his punishment (if any) comes from his personal responsibility and is for his own rejection of faith and the higher spiritual influences.²⁰

Since every chance for the excuse of man was eliminated, therefore, at different points of time Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) intervened directly to chastise the transgressors. For example, the people of Noah (*Alyhi as-Salaam*) were taken by the Great Storm, the Egyptians led by Pharaoh were drowned in the Sea. Similarly the nations of *Hūd* {(*Alyhi as-Salaam*) (*‘Ad*)}, *Sālih* {(*Alyhi as-Salaam*) (*thamūd*)} and *Lūt* (*Alyhi as-Salaam*) were also revenged by Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*). However, the final Direct Intervention was different and peculiar. This time neither of the natural phenomena destroyed the people who rejected the call of the final *nabi* {(prophet) (*Salla Allahu Alyhi wa Sallam*)}. It was through the arm of the *nabi* {(prophet) (*Salla Allahu Alyhi wa Sallam*)} and his *Sahaba* {(companions) (*Razia Allahu Anhum*)} that defeated the hosts of falsehood. Not only this but the concept of ‘Godlessness’ was ideologically wiped out from the surface of *Hijaz* in its first phase and was totally washed off the surface of the earth in its second phase through the *Khilafat-i Rashidah*. Thus could be understood the purport of the Qur’anic *Aayah* (verse),

...Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure...²¹

Because “the principle involved was that of all worship, Jewish or Christian as well as Muslim, and of all foundations built for pious uses.”²²

As such, these Divine Interventions were but the introductions for the final Divine Intervention that will be caused by Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) on the Doomsday. Thus, if compared with the Doomsday, the Divine Interventions witnessed throughout the human history could be called ‘little Doomsdays’, in which the people were given what their hands had committed. However the absolute justice will be witnessed on the Doomsday.

Mankind has given expression to this consciousness by naming the Supreme Being in a number of ways, giving the basic sense of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*), the Almighty.

The word ‘Allah’ (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) is used by all Muslims including non-Arabs as the name of God. Most Arabic speaking non-Muslims too use the word for the name of God. ‘Allah’ (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) is used in Arabic for God of all, the One and Only God. There is no plural form of the word ‘Allah’ (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) in Arabic like Gods in English. Generally believed to be formed of *Al* (the) + *Ilah* (god), its root is arguably the oldest word used for a ‘deity’ or ‘to worship’ in many Semitic and non-Semitic civilizations.²³

Sanskrit: Agni Mile: (Rigveda 1:1:1) I worship the Foremost. Ilayastva Pade vayam Nabha Prithivya Adhi: (Rigveda 3:29:4) Our Place of God is at the navel of the earth.

A mysterious symbol in Hindu tradition, spelled as Ohm and considered very pious, is also called ‘Ulta Akchhar’ (invert letter). Interestingly if we rotate it clockwise it be read as Allah in Arabic

Pali: Lah: god: The old name of Tibet was Lhasa, ‘The house of god’.

Hawaiian: Aloha=alo (presense) + ha (breath or essence of life). Hawaii’s nick name is ‘State of Aloha’.

Levantine: El or Il: Father of humankind and all creations.

Hebrew: El: God, god. The word occurs in the Bible more than 200 times. Elahi or Eli, (Greek-Eloi) My God. “Eli Eli (in some Bible versions Eloi Eloi) lema sabachthani? (Matt.27:46, Mark 15:34)” is the only sentence occurring in Christ’s own language in all languages of the N.T. [New Testament] Translations. It means, ‘My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? Eloah: God. The word occurs in O.T. [Old Testament] 57 times. Elohim: The plural form of Eloah, used for One God as a mark of respect. Occurred in O.T. [Old Testament] about 2500 times. Other cognates (having similar root and meaning) of the word El or Il are; Canaanite: El, Western Semetic: Aloho, Eastern Semetic: Alaha, Aramaic: Elaha, Akkadian: ilu: Mesopotamian: ilu etc.²⁴

The word Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) is used in the Qur’an 2698 times, the next most occurring word *Al-Rahim* (Ever Compassionate) being used 114 times.²⁵ The Qur’an says: Say: “Call upon Allah, or call upon *Rahman*: By whatever name ye call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names...”²⁶

In the Qur'an and Hadith, there are nearly 400 attributive names (including famous 99 names described in a Hadith) of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) but on the basis of the Qur'an 17:10, most scholars opine that He may be invoked in any language by any good attributive name as all good attributes in its highest purity are the attributes of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*). His attributes however are considered among '*Mutashabihat*' (allegorical) as "... there is nothing whatever like unto Him..."²⁷.

Monotheism is defined by the Encyclopaedia Britannica as belief in the existence of one god or in the oneness of God.²⁸ It is opposite to polytheism and pantheism. The word monotheism is derived from the Greek (monos) meaning "single" and (theos) meaning "god". According to Christian tradition, monotheism was the original religion of humanity but was generally lost after the fall of man. In Zoroastrianism, Ahura Mazda appears as a supreme and transcendental deity. Hindu religious leaders have repeatedly stressed that God is one. Brahman which creates, sustains and dissolves creation.

They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, and he is heavenly nobly-winged Garuda.

To what is One, sages give many a title they call it Agni, Yama, Maatarisvan.²⁹

There is none to compare with Him. There is no parallel to Him, whose glory, verily, is great.³⁰

"The One" is a concept that arises in Platonism. Aristotle's concept of the "Uncaused Cause" – never incorporated into the polytheistic ancient Greek religion – has been used by many exponents of Abrahamic religions to justify their arguments for the existence of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic God of the Abrahamic religions.

III. Conclusion

The text of the Bible states that Judaism began with divine revelations from "God most high" to Abraham³¹ and to the Israelites at biblical Mount Sinai.³² The understanding of the transmitters of the biblical text was that the Bible uniformly presents one God as creator of the world and the only power controlling history. God in Judaism is monotheistic. This God of Israel is regarded as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and is believed to be the ultimate cause of all existence. YHWH is the name of God in Judaism and another name for God is Elohim. The Hebrew Bible commands the Israelites not to worship other gods, but only the God of Israel who brought them out of Egypt.³³

According to Islam, Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) is the sole Creator and Sustainer and Lord of all creation. There is no other worthy of worship except Him. He alone is truly One, neither begets nor begotten. On the Last Day (of life on this earth), He will judge all human beings and some invisible beings (*jinn*s) according to their faith and deeds. He is Seer, Knower and Hearer of all things. Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) is All-

Mighty, All-Powerful. Compassion, Beneficence and Mercy are His attributes. Submission to the Will of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Taala*) in Arabic is Islam.³⁴

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