

BELIEF IN THE ONENESS OF ALLAH [MONOTHEISM]

To explain the notion of the oneness of Allah [*Tawheed*] we can split it into three parts: (1) *Tawhid al `Uluhiyyah* (Oneness of the Worship of Allah); (2) *Tawhid al Rubu`biyah* (Oneness of the Lordship of Allah); and (3) *Tawheed-al-Asma was-Sifaat* (Oneness of the Names and the Attributes of Allah).

Tawhid al `Uluhiyyah (Oneness of the Worship of Allah)

“Allah is one, Allah is one”, were the words which Bilal (*RadhiAllahu Anhu*) kept on repeating when the polytheists of Makkah were dragging his naked body upon the hot sands of mid noon and had placed a heavy stone on his chest. But he kept on chanting the same words incessantly.

In fact a true Muslim is like that. He worships only one God and considers only Him as worthy of worship. He only prays to Him and from Him alone he seeks succour. He has trust only in Him and believes in His rule over the whole universe. A true Muslim affirms the existence of one God and denies the existence of any other gods altogether. Thus Allah proclaims:

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَبَدُ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴾
الحج: ٦٢

(Translation of meaning) [“That is because only Allah is true and all those whom they call are all false; and that Allah is the high and great” (*Al-Hajj*: 62)].

The poor Christians do not worship Allah. Rather they worship God whom they call father, Hazrat *Isa alaihis salam* (Jesus) whom they call the son of God and the Holy Spirit [*Ruhul Quds*] (three entities collectively "trinity"). Thus Allah says in the Quran:

﴿ لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهُ وَحْدٌ ﴾
المائدة: ٧٣

(Translation of meaning) [“Those are disbelievers who say that Allah is one of the Trinity and there are no gods but only One God” (*Al-Ma`edah*: 73)]. The Arabs and other communities believed that Allah is the Creator but they worshipped other gods as His co-partners. It is with reference to such people that Allah says:

﴿ وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُم بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴾
يوسف: ١٠٦

(Translation of meaning) [*“the majority of them do not believe in Allah and they are but idolaters” (Yusuf: 106)*].

In fact men’s deviance did not start from the point that they denied the existence of Allah altogether or that they ceased to worship Him altogether but from the point that along with the worship of Allah they also began worshipping other gods. And for this they had an argument as well which has been described in the Quran in these words:

﴿ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ ﴾ الزمر: ٣

(Translation of meaning) [*“We do not worship (these gods) except for the purpose that they enable us to come nearer to Allah” (Az-Zumar: 3)*].

Allah has unequivocally refuted this argument of theirs in these words:

﴿ قُلِ ادْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِيهِمَا مِنْ شِرْكٍَ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ ظَهِيرٍ ﴾ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَلَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَعَةُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ. حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُزِّعَ عَنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ قَالُوا مَاذَا قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا الْحَقُّ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴾ سبأ: ٢٢ - ٢٣

(Translation of meaning) [*“(O Prophet) tell those who have assumed gods other than Allah that they do not own even a particle in the whole of the heavens and earth and that they have no partnership in their possession and that none of them is an ally of Him. And nobody’s intercession with Him can be useful except with His permission. Till when their hearts become free of fearfulness they will ask [the intercessors] what has your Creator told you? They will say, He said the right thing and He is high and great” (Saba: 22-23)*].

In fact, monotheism was the first belief which was demanded by each prophet from his community. Quran says:

﴿ اَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ ﴾ هود: ٨٤

(Translation of meaning) [*“Worship Allah; there is no god for you other than Him” (Hud: 84)*].

When the Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) appointed Mua’z Bin Jabal (RadhiAllahu Anhu) as the Judge [Qadhi] of Yemen he told him that:

«إِنَّكَ تَقْدُمُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ، فَلْيَكُنْ أَوَّلَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى أَنْ يُوحِّدُوا اللَّهَ تَعَالَى، فَإِذَا عَرَفُوا ذَلِكَ، فَأَخْبِرْهُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ فَرَضَ عَلَيْهِمْ خَمْسَ صَلَوَاتٍ فِي يَوْمِهِمْ وَلَيْلَتِهِمْ، فَإِذَا صَلَّوْا، فَأَخْبِرْهُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْهِمْ زَكَاةً فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ، تُوْخَذُ مِنْ غَنِيِّهِمْ فَتُرَدُّ عَلَى فَقِيرِهِمْ، فَإِذَا أَقْرَأُوا بِذَلِكَ فَخُذْ مِنْهُمْ، وَتَوَقَّ كَرَائِمَ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ» (البخاري).

(Translation of meaning) O Mua'z you are proceeding to a community of the People of the Book [Ahl-i-Kitab]. First of all, you invite them to accept monotheism. When they understand it well then tell them that Allah has made *salat* of five times in the day and night obligatory for them. When they become perfect in performing them, then tell them that Allah the Almighty has made payment of *zakat* obligatory upon them, which will be taken from the rich and redistributed among the deprived. When, they accept this, then start collecting *zakat* from them but avoid taking the best of their possessions (Bukhari).

That Allah is one and only one is attested by common sense. He is alone worthy of worship. He is alone Lord of us all. Because if this is not so and there were others as His co-partners, then, we can face either of the two possible situations: First that they manage the order of the universe in mutual agreement and second that they disagree among themselves. In the first case, if all affairs are run in complete agreement then what is the need for one to have another partner? But in the second case, if there is disagreement among them, on each issue, then conflict is unavoidable and in this case this universe cannot exist in its present state for a moment. This state of affairs has been described in the Quran in these words:

﴿لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ﴾ (الأنبياء: ٢٢)

(Translation of meaning) [“Had there been many gods (in the heavens and earth), both would have been corrupted. So God Almighty, the Creator of the Throne, is pure of what these (idolaters) describe” (Al-Anbiya: 22)]. He further proclaimed:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَكِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ﴾ (الإخلاص: ١ - ٤)

(Translation of meaning) [“Say that Allah is one; Allah is like an insurmountable mountain; He never bore any nor He was born of any. And none were his co-equal” (Surah Ikhlas: 1-4)].

Thus, it should be realized, that *Tawhid al `Uluhiyyah* (Oneness of the worship of Allah) is the essence of faith and belief and the shibboleth [*kalimah*] “*La Ilaha Illallah*” is the essence of monotheism. This *kalimah* is an epitome of righteousness and piety. All prophets were deputed with this slogan and its promulgation became their life’s mission. The heavenly scriptures were revealed for its sake and Paradise

and Hell were created on its basis. On the Day of Judgment, human beings will be divided into two categories: those belonging to Paradise and those belonging to Hell. Allah proclaims:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾ (الأنبياء: ٢٥)

(Translation of meaning) [“And We did not send any messenger before you but We revealed to him that there is no god but Me so you must worship me” (Al-Anbiya: 25)].

He further said:

﴿يُنَزِّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاتَّقُونِ﴾ (النحل: ٢)

(Translation of meaning) [“He sends angels carrying his revelation to any of His slaves as He wants that you warn the people that there is no god but Me and that you should be afraid of me” (Al-Nahl: 2)]. “La Ilah Illallah” is the key of the Paradise and a medium of forgiveness.

Of the utterances of the past prophets of Allah this *kalimah* was the most sublime and noblest word. Thus the Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said that

«وَأَفْضَلُ مَا قُلْتُ أَنَا، وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ قَبْلِي: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ»

(Translation of meaning) The noblest word that I and the past Messengers spoke is this *kalimah*: “La Ilaha Illallah, Wahdahu La shareeka Lah” (Malik).

La Ilah Illallah, simply means that there is no one else worthy of worship. It has no other objective but this affirmation. Nobody except Him is the leader and guide. The necessary corollary of this *kalimah* is that one should categorically, reject all false gods and accept only the divinity of Allah (sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam). Also this *kalimah* is the means of intercession of the Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) on behalf of all believers. The Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said:

«أَسْعِدُ النَّاسَ بِشَفَاعَتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، خَالِصًا مِنْ قَلْبِهِ، أَوْ نَفْسِهِ» (البخاري).

(Translation of meaning) On the Day of Judgment those lucky ones will deserve my intercession, who had solemnly affirmed “La Ilah Illallah” (Bukhari). This is the “Qaul-i-Tha’bit” [“Solid Word”] about which Allah the Almighty has proclaimed:

﴿يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ

اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ﴾ (٢٧) إبراهيم: ٢٧

(Translation of meaning) [*“Allah solidifies those, who, believe in Him with the solid word in this world and the world hereafter; and Allah misleads the oppressors; and Allah does what He wills” (Ibrahim: 27)*]. In another place this *kalimah* has been designated as “*Urwatul Wusqua*” [the strongest rope] which Allah Almighty has ordered all His slaves to grasp:

﴿فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ (البقرة: ٢٥٦)

(Translation of meaning) [*“So those who reject the false gods and believe in Allah those have grasped the strongest rope that is unbreakable. And Allah is all-hearing and all-knowing” (Baqarah: 256)*]. Similarly, the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said:

«مَنْ شَهِدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ النَّارَ» (مسلم).

(Translation of meaning) Anybody, who testifies that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, Hell will be forbidden for him (Muslim).

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