

FUNDEMENTALS OF TAWHID

Part 8

Trancendency

Why study this topic:

- The author states: “Since the human mind is limited in its knowledge and scope, it is impossible for it to understand something which has no limits. Therefore, Allah mercifully took it upon Himself to reveal to man some of His attributes, in order that mankind may not confuse the attributes of created things with those of Allah.” *[P. 133]*
- What happens when Allah’s attributes are confused?
 - Man ends up deifying creation.
 - Deification of creation is the basis of idolatry.

What is Trancendancy?

- Referred to as *al-'ulu* in Arabic.
- Implies that:
 - Allah is far above His creation.
 - He is not a part of the created world, OR vice versa.
 - Totally distinct from His creation.
- His Attributes function without restriction:
 - He sees/hears all.
 - Nothing happens except by His will.

Past diversions in Trancendancy:

- Christians claims that Eisa (peace be upon him) came down in flesh and blood form, then claim He was crucified and died.
- Jews claim that Allah came in the form of a man and lost in a wrestling match with Yaqub (peace be upon him). [Genesis 32: 24-30]
- Hindus believed that Brahma was everywhere so they took worshipping idols.
 - “Lingam” (Pilgrimage to Banaras to worship Shiva) [National Geographic, February 1986]
 - Belief found it’s way into Christianity.
 - Belief also affected Muslims when:
 - Books of India, Persia & Greece were translated.
 - Introduced in Philosophical circles.
 - Became a foundational principle in **Sufi** orders.
 - Adopted by the ***Mu’tazilah***.

Among these diversions...

- Was the belief that Allah is everywhere.
 - When books from India, Persia and Greece were translated during the Abassid era.
- These ideas were adopted by the *Mu'tazillah*.
- These ideas became a foundational principle in Sufi circles.

The *Mu'tazilah*

- The ***Mu'tazilah*** occupied key posts in the administration of the Abbasid Caliph **Ma'mun** (813-832 AD).
 - Originated in 8th Cent. Iraq when **Wasil ibn Ata** (d. 748 AD) left the circle of **al-Hassan al-Basri**.
- They were extremely active in propagating this belief.
- This false belief was one among many false beliefs propagated.
- Inquisition courts were set up, many scholars were killed, jailed or tortured.
- This changed when **Imam Ahmed ibn Hanbal** (778-855 AD) stood his ground and defended the beliefs of the *Sunnah*.
- Eventually the tide changed due to the reign of **Caliph Al-Mutawakil** (ruled 847-861 AD):
 - *Mu'tazali* Philosophers were removed from their posts.
 - Their philosophy was officially condemned.
 - Their ideas live on in the form of the *Ash'ari* school.

The Immanence Concept

- What is the **immanence concept**?
 - “God is everywhere”
 - **In other words:** “God is human, animals & plants.”
- First Step: “God is more in humans than in animals and plants...”
- Eventually, it was claimed that God is in some humans more than others:
 - *Hulul*: “Indwelling of Allah in man”
 - *Ittihad*: “Complete unification of the human soul with Allah’s soul””
- Among those who claimed this was:
 - **Al-Hallaj** (858-992 AD): Claimed he and Allah were one.
 - **Nusayriyyah**: Claimed that Ali was the manifestation of Allah.
 - **Druze**: Claimed that Caliph Al-Hakim bi Amrillah (996-1021 AD) was the last incarnation of God among men.
 - **Ibn Arabi** (1165-1240 AD): Instructed followers to pray to themselves because Allah is inside each one of them.
 - **Elijah Muhammad**: Claimed that black people were “Allahs” and that Fard Muhammad was the ‘supreme Allah.’

1) Natural proofs

- 1) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:
“Every new born child is born with an inclination to worship Allah but his parents make him a Jew, a magian or a Christian.”
[Bukhari]
- 2) It implies that Allah exists in places of filth.

Hadithic proofs

- The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Angels stay with at night and angels by daytime, and both groups gather at the time of Asr and Fajr. Then those angels who have stayed with you overnight, ascend and Allah asks them (about you) though he knows all about you.” [Muslim]
- Zainab bint Jahsh used to boast to the other wives of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that whilst their families gave them away in marriage, it was Allah from above the seven heavens who gave her away in marriage. [Bukhari]
- Mu’awiyah ibn Al-Hakam narrated: “I had a servant girl who used to tend to my sheep in the area of Mount Uhud, near a place called *al-Jawariyah*. One day I came to seem them only to find that a wolf had made off with a sheep from her flock. Since I, like the rest of Adam’s descendants, am prone to do regrettable acts, I gave her a terrible slap in the face. When I came to Allah’s Messenger with the story, he considered it a grave thing for me to have done. I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, couldn’t I free her?’ He replied “Bring her to me,” so I brought her. He then asked her: “Where is Allah?” and she replied, “Above the sky.” Then he asked her: “Who am I?” and she replied, “You are the Messenger of Allah.” So he said, “Free her, for indeed she is a believer.” [Muslim]

Logical proofs

- Two Options:
 - Allah created within Himself.
 - Allah created outside Himself.
- If within Himself...
 - How can he be part of that which was created?
- If He created it outside himself...
 - It was either below Him or above.
- Regarding the claim: “God is neither connected to the world not separate from it.”
 - The statement is self-negating, thus illogical.
 - Denies existence of God.

Consensus proofs

- Imam Ad-Dhahabi (15th cent.) wrote a book called *Al-'Ulu lil 'ali Al-Adheem*.
 - He gathered the statements of 200 scholars from the past confirming Allah's transcendency.
- Another example can be found in Mutee' Al-Balakhi's report:
 - He was asked concerning a person who was not sure if Allah is above the heavens. Abu Hanifah replied: "He has disbelieved because Allah has said: "The Most Merciful is above the throne." [Quran 20:5]
 - Though many claim to follow the Hanafi madhab, they fail to hold the same position.
 - Abu Yusuf famously told **Bishr Al-Mareesi** to repent when he denied that Allah is above the throne.

Clear Proofs

- 1) The Qur'anic proof
- 2) The prayer proof
- 3) The Mi'raj proof

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Part 9

Seeing Allah

Discussion:
Wisdom in not seeing Allah?

Did the Prophet (peace be upon him) see Allah?

- When Masruq asked Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her):
 - “My hair is standing on end because of what you have asked! Whoever tells you that Muhammad saw his Lord has lied!” [Muslim]
- This is clarified by the fact that Abu Dhar (may Allah be pleased with him) asked him if he saw his Lord:
 - “There was only light, how could I see him?” [Muslim]
- Thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not see Allah.

Satan Pretends to be Allah

- Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jeelani (1077-1166) after whom the Qadiri Sufi Order is named, gave an account of one of his experiences:
 - “One day I was deeply involved in worship when all of a sudden I saw before me a grand throne with a brilliant shining light surrounding it. A thunderous voice then struck my ears: “O Abdul Qadir, I am your Lord! For you, I have made lawful what I have forbidden for others.”
 - Abdul Qadir asked: “Are you Allah besides whom there is no god?”
 - When there was no answer, he said, “Get away O enemy of Allah.” And with that, the light vanished and darkness blanketed him.
 - The voice then said, “Abdul Qadir, you have succeeded in defeating my strategy because of your understanding of the religion and your knowledge. I have managed to misguide over seventy saintly worshippers by such incidents.”

Satan Pretends to be Allah (Cont.)

- Afterwards, the people asked how he realised it was Satan. He replied: **“I recognise that it was Satan by his claim that Allah had made lawful for me what He had forbidden to others, because I knew that the divine law revealed to the Prophet could not be cancelled or changed. I also realised who it was when Satan announced that he was my Lord, but was unable to confirm that he was Allah who is without any partner.”**

In the akhira...

- The believer will have the opportunity to meet the Prophet (peace be upon him) and more...