

THE CONCEPT OF GOD

2- ENGLISH

مفهوم الإله في الإسلام (03/18)

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THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN ISLAM

2- ENGLISH

مفهوم الإله في الإسلام (03/18)

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is there a God?

There are many rational reasons for believing in God. Three simple reasons are described below:

1. order of the universe

Imagine walking along the beach and finding a watch in the sand. Would you believe that the watch came together by itself? You would not conclude that the watch just happened to emerge from the sand by random chance. All the intricate working parts could not simply develop from the materials that lay buried in the earth. The watch must have a manufacturer. And if the watch tells accurate time we expect the manufacturer must be intelligent. Natural coincidences cannot produce a working watch.

Consider the planet earth. Its timing is so strictly regulated around the sun that scientists can publish in advance the sunrise and sunset times. Just as a watch has an intelligent maker to keep accurate time, so too must the earth have an intelligent maker to keep accurate time around the sun. Could this occur by itself?

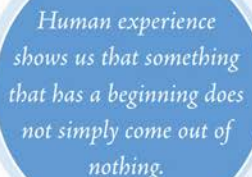
In the same way, when we see the order, precise laws and systems within ourselves and throughout the entire universe, is it not rational that the universe has an organiser? This 'organiser' is best explained by the existence of God - the one who brought about the order in the universe.

2. beginning of the universe

Modern science concludes that the universe has a beginning.

This is based on a recent discovery that the universe is expanding, and if we go back in time, the universe converges - which points to a beginning. There are three possible explanations for the beginning of the universe, either:

1. The Universe came from nothing,
2. The Universe created itself, or
3. The Universe was created.



Human experience shows us that something that has a beginning does not simply come out of nothing.

As for the second explanation, simple logic tells us that something cannot do anything before having existed. This leaves the third point as the only rational explanation: a higher and intelligent being, God, created the universe.

Some people may ask, "Who created God"? God, The Creator, is different to His creation. If He was the same as creation, He would also need a creator, leading to an infinite amount of creators, which is impossible. He is beyond time and the physical matter of this universe. God has always existed and has no beginning; therefore the question of who created God is irrational.

3. revelation from God

If God revealed a book of guidance to humanity, we would expect that such a book would contain clear evidence of the existence of God.

There are clear signs that the book of Islam, the Quran, is the word of God. Below is a very brief summary of reasons that support this claim:

- The Quran was revealed over 1400 years ago and contains many scientific facts that were unknown to the people of that time which have only been discovered recently by contemporary science. Examples include: water being the origin of all living things (Quran 21:30); the expanding universe (Quran 51:47); and the individual orbits of the sun and moon (Quran 21:33).
- The Quran contains many historical facts that were unknown to the people of that time as well as numerous predictions which have both proven to be correct.
- The Quran is free from any errors or contradictions.
- The Quran has been preserved, word-for-word, since it was revealed in its original Arabic language, unlike other scriptures which no longer exist in their original form.
- The simple, pure and universal message of the Quran appeals to Man's inherent beliefs about Almighty God.
- The Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who was known in history to be illiterate. Yet, the Quran contains a unique style of language that is universally known as the pinnacle of Arabic eloquence and linguistic beauty.

The most rational explanation for the many unique and miraculous aspects of the Quran is that it is from God.

who is God?

*"And your god is
One God. There is
no god but He."*

Quran 2:163

"Allah" is the personal name of the One True God. Nothing else can be called Allah.

The term has no plural or gender unlike the English word "God" which can be made both plural and feminine (i.e. gods/goddess). The unique usage of "Allah" is a reflection of Islam's emphasis on the purity of the belief in One God.

The main beauty of Islam is that it acknowledges the complete perfection, greatness and uniqueness of God with absolutely no compromises. This is reflected in Islam's pure teachings of the attributes of God.

God is one & unique

- God has no partners, no equals and no rivals.
- God has no father, mother, sons, daughters or wives.
- God alone is worthy of all worship.
- Had there been more than one God, it would reflect deficiency in His power or authority as this would involve God having rivalry, making compromises or needing agreement with other gods.

God is all-powerful

- God has full authority and power over all things
- Everything is completely subservient and dependent on Him.
- Obedience to God does not increase His Power, nor does disobedience decrease His power in any way.

God is the most high

- There is nothing above or comparable to God.
- The attributes of God do not resemble that of His creation.
- No part of God is present in anyone or anything.
- God is perfect and does not have any human limitations, such as resting on the seventh day after he created the universe, as claimed by some other religions

God is the all-just & all-merciful

- God does not need to sacrifice himself to forgive sins nor is anyone “born into sin”.
- God judges everyone based on their own deeds and everyone is accountable for their own actions.
- Humans may distinguish themselves and earn God's favour through belief, virtue and piety only - not through race, wealth or social class.

the nature of Jesus

Some Christians claim that **“Jesus is God”** - that is, he is the incarnation of God on earth and that God took on a human form.

However, according to the Bible, Jesus was born, ate, slept, prayed and had limited knowledge – all attributes not befitting God. God has attributes of perfection whereas Man is the opposite and lacks such perfection. So how can anything be two complete opposites both at the same time? This is not rational.

However, some people may ask, “If God can do anything, why can't he become a man?” By definition, God does not do ungodly acts, so if God became man and took on human attributes, he would, necessarily, no longer be God.

Furthermore, the Bible contains many verses in which Jesus speaks and behaves as if God is a separate being to himself. For example, Jesus **“fell on his face and prayed”** (Matthew 26:39). If Jesus was God, then would a God fall on his face and pray? And, who would he be praying to?

Some Christians also claim that **“Jesus is the Son of God”** but we should ask ourselves, what does this actually mean?

Surely God is far removed from having a physical and literal son. Rather, we find that the term “Son of God” is symbolically used in the earliest biblical languages for a “righteous person”. It is used throughout the Old Testament for many righteous people such as David, Solomon and Israel - not exclusively for Jesus. **“...Israel is my firstborn son,”** (Exodus 4:22) is one such example.

When explaining the concept of God in Islam it is important to discuss the status of Jesus, given the widespread confusion and claims about the nature of Jesus.

“It is not befitting for Allah to take a son; He is perfect and flawless.”

Quran 19:35

The Islamic belief about Jesus explains who the real Jesus was, whilst maintaining the pure belief about God and His Greatness. Jesus was as an honourable Prophet sent by God to call to the worship of God alone.

God Alone is Worthy of Worship

“And worship Allah and associate none with Him.” Quran 4:36

Islam teaches that all prayer and acts of worship should be exclusively to God. Nothing else is worthy of worship: not statues, graves, the sun, the moon, animals, Prophets, saints, angels, priests or religious scholars. All of these things are created and limited, hence imperfect, whereas Allah is perfect.

God is Worshipped Directly

God does not need any partners or intermediaries. Everyone always has direct access to worship God, as He hears all who praise and call upon Him. Worshipping Allah indirectly (e.g. through idols, statues or other intermediaries) is viewed as compromising Allah's Oneness and purity of worship that He alone, is worthy of.

All Prophets Called to the Worship of God

“And We (God) certainly sent into every nation a Messenger, saying, ‘Worship Allah and avoid false gods.’ ” Quran 16:36

Muslims believe in all the Prophets that Allah sent. These prophets include Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. They all came with the same message – to call their people to the belief and worship of the One True God.

The Purpose of Life is to Worship God

The ultimate purpose of life is to acknowledge the greatness of God, establish a direct connection with him, and worship Him alone. The concept of worship in Islam is not limited to rituals such as praying and fasting, it includes all actions that are pleasing to God such as having good manners, being honest, establishing justice, being patient and helping the needy.

In conclusion, the foundation of Islam is belief in the Oneness and Uniqueness of Almighty God, who is the Creator and Lord of all, perfect in all His attributes. He alone deserves all worship. Therein lies our success in this life and the next.

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