

THE ONENESS OF GOD in Islam

The teaching of God's complete Oneness is the essence of Islam. All other laws, beliefs and commands of Islam are built on this foundation. Take it away, and there is nothing left of the religion.

God's name is unique

"Allah" is the proper and personal name applied to 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" as a personal name of God is a reflection of Islam's emphasis on the purity of the belief in one God.

There is no god except Allah

And your god is One God. There is no god but He. - Qur'an 2:163

The Oneness of God in Islam is a comprehensive teaching and can be further understood through the following attributes of Allah:

- Allah has no partners, no equals and no rivals
- Allah has no father, mother, sons, daughters or wives
- Allah is worshipped directly without anyone or anything acting as an intermediary
- Allah is not in need of anyone's worship Allah is not answerable to anyone
- Allah is not dependant on any person or thing, but all persons and things are dependant on Him
- Allah created everything without any assistance
- There is nothing above or comparable to Allah

Allah is not like His creation

Similar to how Islam forbids attributing Allah's divine attributes to His creation, Islam also rejects the notion of attributing human qualities and limitations to Allah.

An example of this is how some religions claim that "God rested on the 7th day" after He created everything. Allah does not need rest and to believe so is to attribute imperfection to Allah:

We created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six days, and no weariness touched Us. Qur'an 50:38

Islam makes a clear distinction between the imperfection of creation and the perfection of Allah. He is far above any imperfections that His creation has described Him with.

Some religions however, believe that Allah fashioned Himself into a human body and was both fully God and fully man at the same time. We should consider that God has attributes of perfection such as being All-Knowing, All-Powerful and Immortal. Man however, has imperfect attributes. Man has limited knowledge, limited power and is mortal.

Muslims are saved from having to ponder over this illogical concept (that God became man or any aspect of His creation) due to the pure and comprehensive Islamic concept of God.

Allah is worshipped directly

There is nothing to prevent a person from calling directly upon Allah and asking for His help and forgiveness.

Allah hears all who praise and call upon Him. There is no "middle man" in Islam; everyone has uninterrupted and direct access to God.

Muslims are required to maintain a direct relationship with God. Worshipping Allah indirectly (e.g. through an idol, statue or other intermediaries) is viewed as compromising Allah's Oneness and contaminating the purity of worship that Allah surely deserves.

Surely pure religion (Worship and obedience) is for Allah only. And those who take protectors besides Him (say): "We worship them only that they may bring us closer to Allah"... Truly Allah guides not him who is a liar and a disbeliever. Qur'an 39:3

- There is nothing that exists except that it is completely subservient to Him
- No one can withhold what Allah provides and no one can provide what Allah withholds
- Allah alone can benefit or harm

Allah has no equals

Are many lords differing among themselves better, or Allah, the One, the Supreme? - Qur'an 12:39

Muslims believe that the existence of the One True, Unique, Supreme, Almighty God, is the only logical concept of God. There cannot be, for example, two Absolutely Powerful Creators, and a moment's thought shows that this is not feasible.

If there were more than one God it would surely lead to confusion, disorder, chaos and destruction in the universe. The universe however, is in complete harmony. The Qur'an summarises this in the following verse:

No son (or offspring) did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him. (If there had been many gods) then each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others! Glorified be Allah above all that they attribute to Him. Qur'an 23:91

Allah alone is worthy of worship

And worship Allah and associate none with Him. - Qur'an 4:36

From the Islamic standpoint, believing in the Oneness of God means to realise that all prayer and acts of worship should be exclusively to God.

None have the right to be invoked, supplicated, sworn upon or prayed to but God alone. Nothing else is worthy of worship: not statues, crosses, tombs, the sun, the moon, stars, temples, animals, Prophets, Messengers, saints, priests or religious scholars. All of these things are created and limited, hence imperfect - they are not worthy of worship in Islam, whereas Allah is perfect.

All Prophets called to the Oneness of God

And certainly We raised in every nation a messenger (saying): Serve Allah and avoid false gods. - Qur'an 16:36

Muslims believe in all the Prophets that Allah sent to every nation. They all came with the same message – the Oneness of God. Below we see some examples:

Noah (peace be upon him) said [Qur'an 7:59],

"O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other gods besides Him."

Abraham (peace be upon him) said [Qur'an 21:66],

"Do you worship besides Allah, things that can neither be of any good to you nor do you harm?"

Moses (peace be upon him) said [Qur'an 7:140],

"What! Shall I seek for you a god other than Allah while He has made you excel (all) created things?"

Jesus (peace be upon him) said [Qur'an 43:64],

"For Allah, He is my Lord and your Lord: so worship Him: this is the Straight Way."

Muhammad (peace be upon him) was commanded to say [Qur'an 18:110],

"I am only a man like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is One God. So whoever expects to meet his Lord then let him do good deeds and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord."

The foundation of the Islamic faith is belief in the Oneness and Uniqueness of Almighty God, and as we have seen, Islam discards any concept which leads to the denial of Allah's Oneness. There is One God, and none has the right to be worshipped but He.

"Allah has promised those who believe and do good deeds that for them there is forgiveness and a mighty reward." Qur'an 5:9

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The Qur'an reminds us of the falsity of all alleged gods as follows:

Do you worship what you have carved yourself? But Allah has created you and what you make. Qur'an 37:95-96

Surely those you call upon besides Allah, are only slaves like yourselves. Qur'an 7:194

The creation does not share in Allah's Perfect attributes

And there is nothing like Him. - Qur'an 112:4

Islam teaches that no part of Allah is present in anyone or anything (although His knowledge encompasses everything). The idea of any created object or being possessing any of Allah's perfect attributes is completely rejected in Islam. To give a created thing attributes or powers only befitting the Creator is to elevate the creation to a level of partnership with the Creator.

For example, the belief that good-luck charms, amulets and superstitions, such as rabbits' feet, horse shoes and the number 13, have the ability to bring benefit or harm is effectively making partners with Allah. This is because He alone is All-Powerful, and therefore He alone is able to harm or benefit:

And do not call besides Allah on that which can neither benefit you nor harm you, for if you do then surely you will be amongst the wrong-doers. Qur'an 10:106

Other examples include fortune telling and astrology. Whoever claims to know the future is attributing to himself/herself one of the attributes of Allah, i.e. the only Knower of the unseen and hidden things.

He alone has the keys of the Unseen, none knows them but He. Qur'an 6:59

THE ONENESS OF GOD in Islam



Serving mankind

"Say: He, Allah, is One. Allah is He on Whom all depend: He begets not, nor is He begotten. And none is like Him."

Qur'an 112:1-4

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