

# Institute of Classical Islamic Sciences

## Series of Lectures by Shaykh ul Islam

### Tawhid

From the beginning of time, in the history of human thought, philosophers and thinkers of various times and centuries have been concentrating on the 'reality', and as such it has been the subject of much thought and research.

The research concentrated on defining 'reality' and the means of perceiving and interpreting it, making it the subject of major rational, academic and philosophical concern. A critical analysis of philosophy shows that there were three periods pertaining to this thought and the Greek philosophers were one of the major discussers of this subject.

The three periods were known as:

1. Aqqaliyyah (Rationalism)
2. Hissiyat
3. Tanqeediyyat (Criticism)

Before proceeding, it would be relevant to briefly discuss how the human intellect and human philosophy developed on this subject.

The 'reality' that one speaks of can also be identified as the 'Ultimate Reality', 'Ultimate Truth', 'Absolute Reality', 'Absolute Truth', 'Absolute Beauty', 'Absolute Excellence', and 'Absolute Perfection'. These appellations allude to the existence of a Creator of the Universe, a Divine Existence, or Ultimate Divinity (Uluhiyyah) which can also be known as 'Wahdah'. The word 'Wahdah' is sometimes used to describe the term Unity and Oneness. You will note in various books that scholars adopt the word unity to elaborate this concept or

to signify the concept of 'Wahdah'. Others have chosen the word Oneness; however both signify the same reality.

When 'Wahdah' is adopted as a concept it becomes a philosophy; rather it becomes the theory of unity and is perceived through its own sources of knowledge and reasoning. At this point, it still cannot be considered a faith; for the theory to achieve the status of faith it must first be upgraded and become a belief, only then it becomes faith in unity and is known as Tawhid.

These are the three states:

1. Wahdah (Unity)
2. Wahdaniah (Concept of the Unity)
3. Tawhid (Faith in divine unity)

This sequence of development applies to the term Oneness also. Beginning as a concept it would achieve the status of a theory of Oneness or philosophy of Oneness which signifies 'Wahdaniyyah'. When it has progressed into a faith only then does it become known as Tawhid. The concept of Wahdaniyyah is also discussed in the West by Unitarian Christians who have refuted the trinity.

With regards to the concept of Tawhid, this also cannot become a faith unless this declaration is uttered from the mouth of a Prophet whom people trust. Allah Almighty sends a Prophet to mankind to communicate to them the message of unity; therefore he is the sole source of divine declaration and divine communication. It is the character of the Prophet that determines belief in the Oneness of Allah; if the people consider him as a trustworthy person, a speaker of truth and they believe in him as a reliable source, then belief becomes faith in Unity and Oneness. So the basic thing which converts the

concept of unity and transforms it into faith is the credibility of the Prophet, which interestingly is the point at which faith (Iman) starts and inevitably the messenger is accepted as the Wasilah (means) of Allah's communication to mankind.

Belief in the oneness of God is therefore not achieved through the process of rationalism and experimentation , and neither is it achieved through critical analysis of the situation and realities or deductive reasoning. All these reasons may be leading to the same conclusion but none of these reasons and sources of knowledge can convert the concept of Unity into faith unless man develops blind faith in the credibility and truthfulness of Prophet (saw).

Allah says in the Quran:

'Qul huwa Allahu ahad

Allahus-samad

Lam yalid walam yulad

Walam yakun lahu kufuwan ahad.'

'Say (O Muhammad), He is God, the One and Only;

God, the Eternal, Absolute;

He does not beget, nor is He begotten;

And there is none comparable to Him.'

The Prophet (saw) is the one who is making the declaration of Absolute Oneness under divine command, which has become Tawhid. The word 'Qul' is the means of Risalah (prophethood). This verse clearly and expressly conveys the concept of absolute Oneness of Almighty Allah when it was announced by the Prophet (saw), through his speech and the people accepted this, only then did this declaration became Tawhid. Those who developed faith in this declaration

became Mu'min and this acceptance became Iman.

To elaborate this concept further one can study the Hadith of Sahih Bukhari in kitab ut-Tafsir, chapter Wa Anzir Asheerataka -al-Akrabeen- 'Warn those people who are the nearest, who are your nearest kin.' Hadith number 4523.

Ibn-e-Abbas narrates that when the verse was revealed, 'And warn your tribe of near kindred, your closest relatives,' the Apostle of Allah (saw) climbed up mount Safa and stated to the people of Quraysh, 'If I was to warn you of an army behind the mountain that came to attack you, would you believe me?' They replied, 'Yes, We find you the most truthful amongst us.' At this point the Quraysh were not aware of the Prophets call to prophethood nor did they know why they were being questioned thus. His (saw) questions were merely a means to establish his truthfulness and reliability.

Then the Apostle of Allah (saw) informed them that, a 'Punishment of Allah will soon be afflicted upon you. The wrath of Allah will descend upon you if you do not submit to him.' From the crowd, Abu Lahab spoke and exclaimed, 'Damn you! You called us for this? May you be destroyed!' Due to this, Allah revealed the verse, 'Perish the hands of Abu Lahab (the father of flames). Perish He! His wealth and his children will not benefit him! He will be burnt in a Fire of blazing flames! His wife shall carry the (crackling) wood as fuel. A twisted rope of Palm-leaf round her (own) neck !' This hadith is also narrated in Sahih Muslim by Ibn-e-Abbas in kitab al-Iman, Hadith number 508.

(To be Continued)