

Fast 27: God — The Oneness of God

- It is the basic doctrine of Islam that there is only One God, and the fundamental aspect of the mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is to preach this and establish it by argument:

“And **your God is one God**; there is no God but He! He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.” (2:163)

وَالْهُكْمُ لِلَّهِ وَالْوَاحِدُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ
الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٣﴾

“This is a message for the people and that they may be warned by it, and that they may know that **He is One God**, and that those who have understanding may be mindful.” (14:52)

هَذَا بَلَاغٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيُنذَرُوا بِهِ وَلِيَعْلَمُوا
أَنَّهَا هُوَ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الَّذِي كَرَّوُلُوا
الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٥٢﴾

“Say: It is only revealed to me that **your God is one God**: will you then submit?” (21:108)

قُلْ إِنَّمَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّ الْهُكْمَ لِلَّهِ وَالْوَاحِدِ
فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

“Say: I am only a mortal like you — it is revealed to me that **your God is one God**. So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and make no one a partner (with God) in the service of his Lord.” (18:110)

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّ
الْهُكْمَ لِلَّهِ وَالْوَاحِدِ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ
فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ
أَحَدًا ﴿١١٠﴾

- It may be said that other religions also believe in a Supreme God, and even the idol-worshipping Arabs believed in Allah. But everywhere in the world, when the Holy Prophet appeared, people were worshipping or treating as gods others besides the One God. The Quran says:

“And most of them do not believe in Allah without setting up partners (with Him).” (12:106)

وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُشْرِكُونَ
﴿١٠٦﴾

The Quran quotes the reason they gave for this:

“Now surely sincere obedience is due to Allah (alone). And those who

أَلَّا لِلَّهِ الدِّينَ الْحَالِصُ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ

choose protectors besides Him (say):
We serve them only that they may
bring us nearer to Allah.” (39:3)

دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى
اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ ط

Worshippers of idols and images say that these are not gods but only symbols to turn their minds towards God. But the fact is that the material object, which is supposed to be the means of reaching God, acquires a God-like sanctity and sacredness itself. Also, many followers of religions which say they believe in one God consider that they can only approach God through the medium of some priest. They are prepared to set aside their own reason and intelligence and submit blindly to the rulings of the priestly class as being the commands of God. And the priests themselves might be going through another medium (e.g., Jesus), from whom they derive their validation and authority. As the Quran says:

“They take their doctors of law and their monks for lords besides Allah, and (also) the Messiah, son of Mary. And they were enjoined that they should serve one God only — there is no god but He. Glory be to Him from what they set up as partners (with Him)!” (9:31)

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهَبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا
لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحٰنَهُ
عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

- The Quran speaks of these people’s misplaced but such strong devotion to those besides God, that they give them the love and reverence due to God alone:

“Yet there are some people who take for themselves objects of worship besides Allah, whom they love as they should love Allah.” (2:165)

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا
يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ ط

“And when Allah alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter shrink, and when those besides Him are mentioned, lo! they are joyful.” (39:45)

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْتَمَزَتْ قُلُوبُ الَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ
إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

- The objection may be raised that Islam too teaches that access to God is only through the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It is to remove such a misimpression that in the Quran the Holy Prophet is again and again told to inform people that he is a mortal like

themselves, who is preaching what God reveals to him, and who sets an example for others to emulate. The verse 18:110 has already been quoted above, beginning: “Say: I am only a mortal like you — it is revealed to me that your God is one God.”

Elsewhere it is stated:

“Say: I do not say to you, I have with me the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel; I follow only what is revealed to me.” (6:50)

قُلْ لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا
أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ ۚ إِن
أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ ۖ

“Say: I do not control benefit nor harm for myself except as Allah please. And if I had known the unseen, I should have much of good, and no evil would touch me. I am but a warner and the giver of good news to a people who believe.” (7:188)

قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ
اللَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَاسْتَكْتَرْتُ مِنَ
الْخَيْرِ ۗ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ ۗ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ
بَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

“And they say: We will by no means believe in you, till you ... (do various things such as) ... bring Allah and the angels face to face (with us)... Say: Glory be to my Lord! Am I anything but a mortal messenger?” (17:90–93)

وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ ...
تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبِيلًا ﴿٩٢﴾ ...
قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّي ۖ هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَسُولًا ﴿٩٣﴾

So the Holy Prophet Muhammad was not treated like an idol, a super-human being, or a priest with authority to forgive people’s sins on behalf of God. He had to obey God in the same way as all other Muslims, and they had to do their best to copy him.