

The Oneness of God, the Creator of all and the Knower of all

Friday Khutba by Dr Zahid Aziz, for Lahore Ahmadiyya UK, 24 September 2021

بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةً ۖ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۗ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ
ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ رَبُّكُمْ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۚ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾ لَا تَدْرِكُهُ
الْأَبْصَارُ ۚ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ ۚ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٠٣﴾

“Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! How could He have a son when He has no consort? And He created everything, and He is the Knower of all things. That is Allah, your Lord. There is no god but He, the Creator of all things; therefore serve Him, and He has charge of all things. Vision cannot comprehend Him, and He comprehends (all) vision; and He is the Knower of subtleties, the Aware.” — ch. 6, v. 101–103

These verses explain why God does not have any offspring, i.e. sons or daughters. They begin by describing God as *badī‘*, translated here as “Wonderful Originator”. God’s attribute of Originator is different from his attribute of Creator or *khāliq*. It means He originated the things of this world out of nothing. Some religions teach that God and the things of this world have always existed together. They say that God can only create things from existing material. This is the kind of creation we see going on around us, such as a plant growing from a seed. But Islam teaches that God existed before there was anything, and He originated things. If He has sons or daughters, they would come into existence after Him, and that would mean there was a time when His sons or daughters did not exist, so they cannot be gods in any sense.

The verse goes on to say that God cannot have a son or any offspring because He has no consort or spouse. Offspring come into existence when a parent male and parent female of the same species join together. But if we look at those persons in history who have been considered as sons of God, like Jesus, they were all born of mortal women, not of a wife of God. When one parent is human, and not God, the son

will have some human attributes inherited from the human parent. That son can never be a replacement for the father, which is what sons are born to become eventually. So God cannot have a son because He has no spouse. It also means that God is not male. The question is often asked: why is God a male? The statement of the Quran that He has no consort or spouse (*ṣāhibah*) means that God cannot be a male because the very existence of a male means that there must be a counter-part female as well. A male has certain defining organs and attributes. By means of these the male forms a relationship with a female. Corresponding to these, the female has certain defining organs and attributes which enable it to form a relationship with the male. If the female of a certain being simply does not exist, that being cannot be a male.

These verses repeat that God created everything. The relationship of anything in this world with God is that it is a creation and He is its Creator. No one can have a special relationship with God in terms of his creation. Whether it is Jesus or the Holy Prophet Muhammad, or you and I, each is a creation of God, and none has some special and exclusive relation with God in being His creation. There is a short book in the New Testament entitled *Letter to the Hebrews*. It is written by an early Christian teacher, and presents the claim of Jesus of being the Messiah to the Jews. It is stated in this book: “For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God” (Hebrews, 3:4). According to the principle stated here by an early Christian evangelist, Jesus also is a creation of God, because He made everything. And as the above verses of the Quran tell us, God is the Creator of all things and, being the Creator, He has charge of all things, including those who are believed by people to be sons of God.

In refuting the notion that God can have offspring, the above verses also tell us that God is the knower of all things. And His knowledge extends into the finer, most subtle and most detailed points. If God had a son, the son’s knowledge would not be equal to the father’s in its wide extent and great depth. A son knows little in the beginning and has to be taught and trained by the father. The son makes mistakes through imperfect knowledge, as we all do. Jesus predicted many signs of the future for his followers to look out for, but as to when they will happen he added: “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, **nor the Son**, but my Father only”

(Matthew, 24:36). In some manuscripts the words “nor the Son” are absent, but they still have the words “my Father only” which imply that the Son does not know. There is a website which shows 62 different English translations of the Bible. Out of those, 44 include the words “nor the Son”. So the man considered as the son of God says that he doesn’t know when the predictions he is making will be fulfilled because only God has that knowledge. Therefore the son cannot be treated as an equal partner of God. Jesus also told his followers that they must not be afraid of his enemies because God, Who cares even for insignificant creatures, will not desert and forget them. He knows so much about their needs that: “the very hairs of your head are all numbered” (Luke 12:7). Here again, Jesus is talking about God’s full knowledge, that He even knows how many hairs are on your head. Of course, Jesus himself didn’t have that depth of knowledge as to even know how many hairs were on the head of any follower of his.

There is another book in the New Testament entitled *The First Letter of John*. It contains the statement: “If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts **and knows everything**” (1 John 3:20). A Christian commentator of the Bible interprets this as follows: “It means that, although our conscience is not infallible, God is. Our hearts may be deceived; he cannot be. He knows all things” (*Pulpit Commentary*). It is thus admitted in the Christian scriptures that God and God alone is the knower of everything, and that this is a fact we must always remember. If He had a son, the son would be like a human being with deficient knowledge, and people would be justified in treating him like a fallible human being and not as a god to be worshipped.

Towards the end of the verses which I quoted at the beginning it is stated: “Vision cannot comprehend Him, and He comprehends (all) vision”. For a long time, human beings only knew about vision which uses light, and what the human eye could see. Through that vision one cannot comprehend God, or bring Him into view and see what He is like physically. Then, with the progress of science, it was discovered that light is only a small part of what is called the electro-magnetic spectrum and there are other ways of seeing things, such as by means of X-rays, infra-red light, and radio waves. X-rays can show us what is inside something, infra-red light can show us things in the dark and radio telescopes can show us extremely distant stars and

galaxies which are unimaginably far away, yet God cannot be seen by any of these means or brought within their range. On the other hand, as the Quran here says, God comprehends all forms of vision, meaning that He has full and deep knowledge of all these ways of vision, they work under His laws, He has restricted how they work, and He knows other ways which humans have not yet discovered.

There is a simple statement in the Quran about God as follows: “Nothing is like Him” (42:10). Literally, it says that *nothing is like a likeness of Him (laisa ka-mithli-hi shai'-un)*. This means that we cannot see anything existing in the world which is like Him, but also that we cannot even imagine in our minds, using our imagination, anything which is like Him. The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, wrote in a lecture which was delivered in Lahore:

“It says in the Holy Quran that God is one and without any partner in His excellent qualities, and He is free from every defect. In Him are found all the perfect attributes and by Him are displayed all the mighty powers. From Him the whole creation comes into existence and to Him all the affairs return (for decision and judgment). While being remote, He is very near, and while being near, He is still far off. He is above all but still it cannot be said that beneath Him there is anything else, and He is the most hidden of all things, but it cannot be said of anything that it is more apparent than He. He is Himself living and everything has its life from Him. He is His own support and everything finds support from Him. He bears (i.e., maintains) everything and there is nothing that bears Him. Nothing has come into existence independently of Him and nothing can remain existing without Him. He comprehends all, but the manner in which He does so, cannot be described. He is the light of everything that is in earth and heavens, and every light has shone forth from His hand and is a reflection of His person. He is the Lord of all the worlds and there is no soul which has not been brought forth by Him and has come into existence by itself. Nor is there any faculty of a soul which has not been brought into existence by Him and came by itself.” (*Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 20, p. 152–153)

A little later in this lecture he mentions the well-known chapter 112 of the Quran, beginning *Qul: Huwa-llāhu aḥad* and explains its meaning as follows:

“Your God is the God Who is one in His person and in His attributes. No being is eternal and everlasting like Him, nor does any being have its attributes like His attributes. ... As there is nothing that is like Him, so there is nothing whose attributes are like His attributes. If there were any defect in one of His attributes, all His attributes would be defective. Therefore His unity cannot be established unless He is regarded as one and without any partner in His person as well as His attributes. ... God is neither a son nor a father, for He stands in need of none, not even of a father or a son. This is the doctrine of Unity taught by the Holy Quran which is necessary for a perfect faith.” (p. 154–155)

We pray that may Allah enable us to follow the true meaning of the teaching that “there is no god but Allah”—*Ameen*.

بَارَكَ اللهُ لَنَا وَنَاوَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِالآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، إِنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَوَادٌ كَرِيمٌ
مَلِكٌ بَرٌّ رُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ-