

Al-Anbiya [21:22]

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا

يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides Allah, there would have been confusion in both! but glory to Allah, the Lord of the Throne: (High is He) above what they attribute to Him!

MUHAMMAD HUSAIN TABA TABAI (AR)

We have repeatedly discussed in the explanations of Surah Hud that there was no disagreement between the monotheists and the polytheists about the Oneness of God and He is regarded as the creator and cause of all that exists. His existence is from Him only and all that exists is from Him too. He is one and there is no dispute about it. Even the idolaters had this belief.

The dispute is about His being Ma'bud, the only God to be worshipped. They say that everything has been created for those who are close to Him. This is why we worship the gods we believe are close to Him so that they may act as intercessors. These lesser gods bring us close to Him for they are the gods of the creations and God is their God and the Lord of all.

The verses 9 and 87 of Surah Zukhruf say 1. “ And indeed if you ask them, “ Who has created the heavens and the earth?” They will surely say, “ The All Mighty and the All Knower created them.” And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say, “Allah”. How then do they turn away (from the worship of Allah who created them?).

The verse under discussion refutes the idea of there being any gods other than the only One who is the creator of the heavens and the earth. Had there been any, there would have been utter confusion and destruction. Verse 84 of Surah Zukhruf says, “ It is He Allah who is the only Ilah (God to be worshipped) “.

The root argument of this verse is that if there are other gods then it is imperative that they should either be cooperative or against one another. Since they will have different schemes for creation and sustenance there will be clashes between them and this will ultimately lead to the destruction of this earth and the heavens. We observe that this universe consists of all creations that are interlinked and interdependent on achieving their purpose and goals. We feel that there can never be more than one God in this universe who has created all things.

Sometimes we observe that the elements are opposed to each other or there are creatures of different natures but they all exist under the spirit and divine rule of coexistence. But then how is mischief and chaos created?

The answer

The clash between two causes is due to the different systems of the two creators but this dispute is something else. They take place under one system. One creator nullifies one system with another or limits their effects and this is what is seen in the disparities in the system of this universe.

The differences between the causes are not because they should reject one another, and the link with each other's purpose of existence, and thereby break the fabric of the unique and sole system or to break the unity or interconnection. But, in the dispute that arise if there are two creators, if we suppose that they break the fabric of the interdependence, then even they will not effect the cause, purpose and its effect. If they did then there would be no universe. The causes that are different but under one creator are like the two sides of a scale. One will rise while the other declines and this will keep happening until they reach a balance.

You may say that the effects of the system are visible in this world or that the systems proclaim the existence of one creator, then why shouldn't we create and install other gods so that they should all participate in the administration of this universe? They may disagree with each other in the implementation of the system in groups united against each other or that some of them may cooperate with each other.

The answer is that this assumption is wrong because for us humans, the meaning of reflection and planning is that the deeds that we do under the demands of our intelligence; we do so after regarding them and their constitution, only then do we take it to its logical conclusion. All these laws of intelligence have been derived from the external truths that we observe or we may say that they are derived from the systems present in the creations. This is why the laws of intelligence control our actions and the laws of intelligence are subservient to the laws of the universe, but this does not apply to God.

This was the proof that the verse has established on the Unity of God. This is also the proof of the fact that the common and special arrangements or plans emanate from one central authority, God. There is no dispute or disparity in them. Some commentators have opined ideas that are not in alignment with the Unity of God and others have said things that are beyond the meaning of this verse.

“Glory be to the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne! Exalted is He from all that they ascribe to Him.”

This verse corrects the ideas of the idolaters who had said that there are lesser gods with the Supreme One. Then, there are other gods who can resurrect people? Are there other gods in the realm of the Supreme Lord who arrange matters? Exalted is He from what they ascribe to Him.

There are other dimensions in this discussion and will be discussed later.

MIR AHMED ALI (AR)

This verse is a manifest proof of the unity of Allah - the integration, uniformity and harmony found in the operation of the universe. Since its creation positively proves the existence of a single, omnipotent, independent and all-wise authority which is governing its operation through the laws made and enforced by Him. He is Allah. Refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 255 (Ayat Kursi) and Ali Imran: 2.

Ali Imran: 2

Refer to the commentary of verse 255 of al Baqarah for "Allah! There is no god save He, the ever-living, the self-subsisting."

Hayy, the ever-living, and qayyum, the self-subsisting, are the two attributes of Allah which break up and blot out the absurd doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ. He, who did not have an existence before his creation, like any other mortal, was brought into being by Allah, therefore, cannot be hayy, the everliving; and also he cannot be qayyum, the self-subsisting, because, according to the Christians, he was crucified.

Ibna Ishaq says that verses 3 to 80 of this surah were revealed about the Christians of Najran whom the Holy Prophet with his Ahl ul Bayt confronted in a spiritual contest known as the event of mubahilah (see commentary of verse 61 of this surah).

A great deal of metaphysical nonsense, based on conjecture and speculation, is put forward by the Christians in support of their claim, yet they themselves do not understand the doctrine of divinity of Jesus, which they take as true without examination or proof. Moreover, there is no consensus among their theologians. The most popular belief is triune, three in one, or a trinity in unity-God is a spiritual organism, having living components which can be called organs only so long as they remain united and interrelated to each other in the whole. Therefore, God is one but has components which perform separate functions.

Jesus has a mysterious double nature which makes him a member of the trinity. The idea of trinity or the doctrine of divinity of Jesus was not given by prophet Isa. Please refer to the quotations of the Old and the New Testaments given in the commentary of verse 255 of al Baqarah.

All organisms are finite. To function in a harmonious whole the components must be interdependent. There must be an omnipotent will or a primal cause to keep the diverse components together, without being disunited, in order to let them work in harmony. The primal cause is God. None of the components or their whole can be God because they obey and follow the will of the primal cause.

Hayy, the everliving, is He who knows and acts freely without any limitations. Any organism whose components are finite and dependent cannot be an everliving infinite.

Qayyum, the self-subsisting, (a magnified form of the adjective qayam-standing and enduring) is He who stands (subsists) by Himself and all others stand (are subsisted) by His eternal endurance.

Anything, composed of components with separate functions, is governed by the law of cause and effect; and that which needs reason or cause to be effective or sufficient cannot be self-subsisting, "Allah is the self-subsisting" means that to be effective or sufficient He does not need a reason or cause because He Himself is the prime cause. Now it becomes clear that the hypothesis of the scholars and the theologians of the Christian church not only fail to convince the seekers of truth but also create chaos and confusion.

AYATULLAH KAMAL FAQIH IMANI AND SEVERAL SCHOLARS

This verse is one of the clear reasons of the negation of any god as well as polytheists' gods. It says:

If there were, in the heavens and the earth, (other) gods besides Allah, they would both certainly go to ruin. ...

In that case, the regulation of the world would disturb. The verse continues saying:

... So glorified is Allah, the Lord of the Arsh, from what they attribute (unto Him).

These undue attributes unto Him, these false idols and imaginary gods are naught but some illusions, and the Essence of Allah, the Pure, therefore may not be polluted by these undue attributes.

The proof which has been mentioned in the verse under discussion upon Unity and negation of any god, besides being simple and clear, is one of the exact philosophical proofs in this field. The Islamic scholars call it 'a mutual hindering proof'. This reasoning, briefly speaking, says that no doubt there is a single regularity dominated over this world. This harmony existed in the laws and order of the creation denotes that they have originated from a single source, because if the sources were different and the wills were various, this harmony and agreement would never exist; since each of them might have a separate requirement and would nullify the effect of the other, and, consequently, the world might finally go to destruction.

Hushaam-ibn-Hakam once asked Imam Sadiq (a.s.) what the reason of Unity of Allah was. Imam (a.s.) said:

The continuation of devices (of the world) and the completion of creation, is the reason of His Unity...
(Tauhid-Saduq, p. 250)

This verse is an answer to those who used to believe in a separate god for every thing and every affair. That is why the Qur'ān says: "The Lord of the 'Arsh" which means Allah is the Lord of the whole world of existence.