

First Speech: Tawhid In The Islamic Vision Of The Universe

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۚ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

Allah – there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them, and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great. (Qur'an, 2:225)

Tawhid (Monotheism): A Responsibility

In brief, the subject of our discussion is to choose and separate the verses in gracious Qur'an related to Tawhid and translate them before you. Then you can draw your own conclusions. In the eyes of Qur'an:

- What is Tawhid?
- What does it mean for commitment and action in life?

For example, faith in all religious thoughts and principles:

- Should not be blind but based on understanding and knowledge

- Should carry certain responsibility

What we believe in, should place a certain responsibility on our shoulders. What we believe in should be related to our lives, our actions – individual or collective in society; related to either individuals themselves or the society at large; related to either humanity or future happenings; whatever it is, should lead to a definite responsibility.

When we enter the discussion on Tawhid with this introduction, this discussion turns into a responsibility–creating discussion for us. We will examine Tawhid in such a way that firstly, we reach Tawhid through awareness; secondly, we inquire about the responsibilities that Tawhid places on our shoulders. Is Tawhid simply awareness of something without responsibility and commitment? Is it just grasp of a reality without feeling any responsibility? Or no. Tawhid is such an awareness that makes performance of certain duties and responsibilities obligatory on the man. When you consult Qur'an you will find the answer to this question.

The verses under review today are about Tawhid from a specific point of view. Insha Allah in the next discussion the verses will be about Tawhid but from a different viewpoint. In the coming days again the verses will be about Tawhid but each from a specific point of view. I cannot claim that it will be possible for me to completely describe Tawhid in Qur'an and all aspects of Islam through a few days' discussion using help from Qur'anic verses. The fact of the matter is that if people will spend more time and attach themselves to Qur'an through its study with intelligence, they will find a boundless ocean on Tawhid. Our conversation in these sessions will be limited due to paucity of time.

Let me remind you that it is possible that a discussion on Tawhid related Qur'anic verses, using a process that we will present, may appear to be difficult. It may appear to be a lesson as opposed to a speech. But I always used to think on my own and still wonder, is it necessary for our regular gatherings not to be lecture like and does the speech have to be something different from a lecture? What is wrong in having some people in a gathering of a large number of attendees to be ready to listen to a few things that are difficult and in need of critical thinking, just like a classroom? Is it necessary that in the month of Ramadan just because it is the month of Ramadan and everyone is fasting, the speaker should feel obligated to present his material in a sweet and enjoyable manner? Why? For how long should we not expect deeper thinking with higher quality in our congregations?

Therefore, to all of you brothers and sisters who are present today and will be there in the coming days, I cannot surmise if the discourse will be difficult for you or not; it may be difficult or it may be simple. Even if it is difficult and demanding you should study and ponder over it keeping in mind that after all it needs to be understood. Study it; use all the powers of your mind so the lecture can be understood. Safeguard the spoken words in your mind; if they are difficult, discuss them with your friends and colleagues. If the discussion appears to be strange to your mind, try not to push it away from your mind, finding it difficult and heavy. No, try to make it familiar to your mind.

However, as we have stated in several discussions, speeches and lectures, we certainly do not expect from even one individual that whatever we say will be totally accepted. On the contrary, our expectation from our friends, brothers and sisters, whatever level they are at is, that the material they are being given is food for thought – if they normally don't examine it in other places – should ponder over this material in their critical thinking laboratory and mold themselves per this Qur'anic verse:

فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ.

Give glad tidings to my servants who listen and adopt what is good. (Qur'an, 39: 17-18)

In any case, we have looked at Tawhid from two different angles. We have picked Tawhid to be the focal point in the Islamic vision of the universe. Certainly, Tawhid is there in the Islamic vision of the universe. What is Tawhid in the Islamic vision of the universe and in what sense? And how do the verses and the eloquent language of Qur'an explain Tawhid the way it is in the Islamic vision of the universe?

Tawhid In Islamic Ideology

For some people who do not know, the terms “Islamic Vision of the Universe” and “Islamic Ideology” will be explained briefly because Tawhid is part of Islamic vision of the universe as well as the Islamic Ideology.

Furthermore, Tawhid appears in every practical part of the Islamic doctrine. If anywhere in the name of religion you find a command, law or constitution that has Tawhid limping or absent or opposite of Tawhid is present, then know that it is un-Islamic because Tawhid is the soul in the body of all Islamic laws like soft and delicate air that is found in all parts of this building called Islam. It is like pure fresh blood that runs through this body called Islam; it is present even in the thinnest of veins. You won't find even a single command in Islam that does not have some color or mark of Islam. Therefore, today our discussion is about Tawhid in the Islamic Vision of the universe.

What does the Islamic Vision of the Universe mean? When you look at the universe and the man, you develop some ideas in your thinking and comprehension. It is possible that you have not thought about it. However, a person who muses about these things; when he thinks about this world; when he thinks about a man; when he thinks about the relationship between man and the universe; when he thinks about meta physics and the world beyond the human being and this world, he develops a series of visions and thoughts. This is called Vision of the Universe. Every school of thought has a certain way of looking at things about the world, a particular viewpoint, a specific understanding and a definite method of discovery. This specific method of discovery about the world and exclusive way of reflection is called Vision of the World. It is one of those terms that started showing up a few years ago in Farsi literature. The vision of the world does not mean broad mindedness as is often used in everyday life. We say, “a certain individual has a broad mind”. No, vision of the universe is different from it.

To summarize, the vision of the universe can be characterized as the interpretation one makes about the universe, someone's thoughts about the universe and somebody's discovery about the universe or the man. We said, "a person's interpretation". It can be the inference of a school of thought, a sect or a religion. A society's way of living reflects its interpretation about the universe and this is their vision of the universe. Islam has its own vision of the universe. It has its own ideology about the universe. I will present Islamic vision only to the extent of our discussion on Tawhid.

Everything Belongs To Him

Islamic faith says that this whole collection called the universe, from top to bottom; from little existence and most inferior things to the biggest and mesmerizing bodies; from the most inferior life or no life to the most prestigious, strongest and intellectual creation i.e. human being; everything in this universe, slave, servant, etc., is the creation of a Great Power and is attached to Him. Beyond whatever we can see and touch and whatever Science can observe with its most powerful tools, there is a reality that is superior, more significant and more esteemed than all realities; and everything in the universe is His creation. We give that superior power a name -- God and Allah.

This universe is a reality that has no presence on its own; it did not come into being on its own; it did not come out of itself. Rather a most capable hand has initiated a variety of creations (as knowledge is progressing, more and more new ones are surfacing) and gave them existence. There is a competent hand that has produced a storm in a small particle and the strange worlds, galaxies and whatever is beyond galaxies that we have discovered so far and there are billions more waiting to be discovered; all of these have been created by this all powerful Entity. There is someone who created this workshop; there is an inventor of this machine; it is not by mere accident. This is the ideology of Islam about the universe.

This is some material on the Islamic ideology about the universe that I will present a little at a time. God, Who is above this universe and its inhabitants, the mighty Hand That is running this universe, is the One Who created it and keeps it alive from moment to moment. This powerful existence (whose name is Allah or God) in reality has all good attributes in Himself; i.e., knowledge; divine power; ownership of life; ownership of will; and everything else that is the source of these attributes. He did not get His life from someone else; His knowledge is not acquired and so on.

He has authority over this universe. Who are the inhabitants of this universe? What status do the atoms of this universe hold in front of Him? Once the atoms of this universe came into existence through Him like a child is born by his mother; did they get disconnected from Him? No, it is not like this. These things are dependent on Him for their very existence; they are reliant on His omnipotence and will; and they are all His servants. All existences are His servants, slaves, inventions and creations. He has authority over everyone. He has created everything with a specific system; He has given existence to all through organized and thorough laws. Today science is discovering these laws. However, my discourse is not

related to this topic, i.e. existence of God and the Creator. There are many books on this subject; you can study them.

It is pertinent to mention a sentence quoted not by philosophers but by a few scientists – experts in certain sciences. These scientists work in the labs and are involved with industry and inventions. There is a book called “Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe”.¹ It is written by a few non-Iranian scholars and has been translated into Farsi by a few distinguished Iranian translators. (It is a good book to read.) These intellectuals say that due to scientific progress, getting to the bottom of creation and existence, and with discovery of organized laws, we have come to the conclusion that there is someone who brought this universe into being. We see such order and discipline in the working of the universe that there must be someone who created and gave existence to this universe. All entities in this universe are His servants and creations; they are in His control including the human beings.

In the Islamic vision of the universe Tawhid says that there is a creator of this universe. He is a pure and subtle reality. Every element of this universe is His servant and under His control. When a Muslim looks at this universe from Islamic point of view, he does not see it as a permanent existence but rather as an existence that is connected to a superior power. What is its effect? What is the benefit? When we discuss Tawhid a bit later, we will find out how strange the effect is. We will come to know that this thought, this specific vision of the universe, this awareness about the universe and its various components, all have an effect on building a life.

Who Is Ilah?

As we study Qur’anic verses, we observe that the Sustainer of the universe mentions the same thing in the verses. I had mentioned that I will focus on verses from two places in the Qur’an. Today we will recite and translate them. The first one is from Surah Al-Baqarah famously known as “Ayatal Kursi”.² The first part of Ayatal Kursi is relevant to our discussion. We will recite, translate and ponder over it.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ. In the name of Allah Who is beneficent and merciful. No one is to be worshipped except Allah. Allah is such a name that no equivalent word can explain better. What is Allah? He is God. Who is God? He is one Who is لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ (there is no one to be worshipped except Him). Ilah means someone to be worshipped. Ilah is an entity that is revered by man; is looked up to with respect; is handed over total control by man of his affairs and life. It is called Ilah in the Qur’anic terminology. Those who let their carnal desires control their lives, their ilah is those desires. Those who allow an arrogant and oppressive person to run their lives, have this devil as their ilah. Those who submit to baseless traditions and beliefs without thinking, their ilah is these absurd traditions and beliefs. Whatever has unconditional authority over the existence and life of a man is his ilah.

Here Qur’an says, لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ. There is no ilah except Him. What does it mean that there is no ilah; i.e., not in this world? There were thousands of ilahs in the world – three hundred and sixty of them just in Kaaba; three hundred and sixty lifeless idols. Similar was the count of living idols ruling the world. Then

how can there be no ilahs? The verse لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ there is no ilah except Him. There is no true ilah; no lawful ilah; no real ilah. If you have accepted anything as ilah except Allah, you have sinned; you have acted contrary to the truth, because there is no one except Allah deserving worship.

Attributes Of Ilah

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ. What are the attributes of Allah – the one and only ilah? Let us discuss some of His attributes. الْحَيُّ. He is alive; everything else is dead; every existence is dead. The lifeless are obviously dead but even the alive are dead. A life that did not exist at one time and will not exist in future; a life that is always in danger of being lost; a living existence that is prone to annihilation in a split second; what kind of life is this? The everlasting; the real life the true life is that existence Who owns life and blesses all His creation with life and that is God. الْحَيُّ. That living existence. الْقَيُّومُ. That lasting existence Whose life has no end; that existence on Whom every life is dependent. If He is not there or if He does not want or will, life will cease to exist in the universe.

لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ He does not dose off or sleep. Even dosing off is not for him; what to talk about sleep. Dosing off or sleep does not separate Him from Himself. What does it mean? Even a split-second distraction is not in His existence and life. Other creations become inattentive; false gods become unmindful of themselves and those in their charge; they become inattentive of this world that is in their control. They are totally negligent and in permanent stupor. Whenever they claim awareness and consciousness, they are lying. What controls them is inattentiveness and silliness.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْقَرَارُ

Have you not turned your sight to those who have changed Allah's favor into blasphemy and caused their people to descend to the house of perdition; into hell? They will burn therein – a most evil abode. (Qur'an, 14:28-29)

Imam Musa Al-Kazim ('a) recited this verse to Haroon Rasheed's face. Did you not see those people who were ungrateful to God's blessings and took their nation and their followers to annihilation? Where is this valley of misfortune and calamity? It is hell. They ended up in hell and took their poor followers along. What a dreadful abode hell is! Imam Musa Al-Kazim ('a) used to tell Haroon Rasheed that he was one of such leaders.³ If Haroon was not ignorant why would he take himself and his followers to hell? So the other gods are totally in the dark.

The essence that has nothing to do with ignorance is the true ruler of this universe; i.e., Allah.

لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ. It may not occur to you why removing and denying dosing off and deep sleep from God are needed here. Why? It will become clear in the future discussions. Because every gesture and every article in Tawhid are targeted at denial of fake gods and point to the defects in them. These are

God's attributes that do not exist in fake gods. Such characteristics that are talked about in Tawhid should manifest in the practical lives of monotheist God worshippers. All attributes and subtleties of Tawhid should be present in the lives of monotheists. Therefore, **الْقِيَوْمُ الْحَيُّ** alludes to the ignorance, inattentiveness and sleep of fake gods and their followers.

Intercession Without Permission

لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ. He does not dose off or sleep. Everything in the heavens and the earth belongs to Him; is in His servitude. **مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ**. Who can intercede in front of Him without His permission? You cannot find any power that can stand in front of Him even as an intercessor. Even if anyone intercedes for others, it can only be with His permission. Prophets who intercede; Saints, Imams, the pious, believers and martyrs who intercede, do it with God's permission. Furthermore, they are not such powers that stand up to God. It is not like they have their own standing independent of the grandeur of God; they are servants of God. However, they are such servants who are worthy of God's love and blessing.

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ. Who is there to intercede in front of Him except with His permission? **مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ**. He knows what is in front and what is behind them. In other words, He totally wraps the lives of humans and every other existence. **وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ**. And they do not have even a fraction of His knowledge except what He wills.

Notice how the whole universe has been split into two classes. One class belongs to God and the other to His creation. The second class consisting of every particle in the universe is God's servant within certain bounds. Every existence is God's servant in the sense that it is in God's control and jurisdiction. They are all equal; even the greatest, the most honorable and the most valuable human being – our Prophet (S) – is God's servant, under His command, just like every other creation. Just the way every other creation is under God's control so is the Prophet (S). It is not that some prophet, someone with responsibility, someone with status, someone great, someone close to God holds some sort of a rank in front of God; they are all God's humble servants and their greatness stems from their servitude. We recite in the tashhad of ritual prayer. **أَشْهَدُ أَنْ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ**. I testify that Muhammad (S) is His servant and Prophet. Being a servant is mentioned first.

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ. His position of knowledge and might is greater than the heavens and the earth. **وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا**. He suffers no inconvenience in safeguarding the heavens and the earth. It is not difficult for Him. **وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ**. He holds a lofty station and is the greatest.

A Great Power

Overall, what do you get out of these verses? Of course, there are subtleties that exist in the verses. There are a few points and little things present in every sentence that conceivably you and I may be able to grasp; yet, there are dozens or hundreds of fine points that no one except the high-ranking servants

of God can understand. **اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ**. The intricacies and nuances Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a) can understand from this sentence, you and I cannot. So, leaving the subtleties aside what do you get out of these verses?

Generally speaking, we can very well understand Islamic ideology about God. What is it? In every existence, there is a power by the name – God. The nucleus of all might, the core of all knowledge, life and divine power is God. On the other hand, everything is in a state of poverty and in service of this divine power. There is no difference between all things in the universe from servitude point of view. From a worthless atom to a great galaxy; from a believer to a non-believer; from an insignificant thing to a great human being; all are petty, lowly and humble slaves in front of Him.

Understanding Islamic Ideology – the practical Islamic system for the society – leaves some effects. To elaborate let me make a reference that will give your brains a shock while keeping in mind that we don’t want to impress you with philosophy. As we understand that all humans are equal in the eyes of this Power, it is meaningless to make a statue of Roman Emperor Valerian⁴ in the state of arrogance and haughtiness with a slave at his feet. We will say, why? Was this emperor in his own rank away from the rest of God’s other slaves? This person, who is at the feet of the emperor, prostrating and begging; has he fallen to a lower rank than other servants? Don’t both belong to the same class? Why is it so?

If it was not for this vision of the world, the rulers of large states, the aggressive leaders of history, big landlords, wealthy individuals and the elite who had thousands and hundreds of thousands under their control could say, “Sir, I am unique; I am different from him; he should be at my feet and I should step on him; I have been created to rule over him and he has been created to serve me. I have been created to be the king and he has been created to be miserable. I am a servant of a superior god who has more power and he is the servant of a god who has less capability. It is the same thing that the Israelites used to claim. They used to say that their God is Yahweh⁵ and He is kinder to the Israelites.

The pagan idol-worshippers of India used to say that a society had four tiers and every tier had its own god who was created at a specific place. But the pure monotheistic approach of Islam asserts that all possibilities and realities come from one source, one place and one hand of the Creator. All are His servants and slaves; all are in His kingdom; all should obey Him. No one has the right to throw himself to someone else’s feet; just like no one has the right to step on someone else. Just like you don’t have the right to step on someone else, you don’t have the right to put your head at someone else’s feet. Why? Because in both situations you acted against what is right. There is no difference between someone sitting on a horse and those writhing under his horse’s hoofs; there is no difference between him and the other slaves and servants of God.

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ. Who is closer to Him? Who wields power in front of Him? Who can stand in front of Him? Yes. **إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ**. Some can intercede but only with His permission. He surely does not allow oppressors to intercede. He allows Imams (‘a) to be intercessors. He does not let trouble-makers intercede nor permit them to stop others from interceding. The Prophets,

the guardians, the good-doers, the martyrs, the high-ranking believers and those who led bitter and hard lives and consequently developed healthy souls; they fulfilled their responsibilities; they were hard on themselves to elevate themselves; they are the ones who can intercede with God. And the reason they can is because they served God more; they were more obedient to God. No one during the time of our Prophet (S) worshipped God like him. No one during the time of the Commander of the believers worshipped like him. No one during the time of Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a) worshipped like him. The Prophet (S) was superior to everyone else; Imam Ali (‘a) was superior to everyone else; Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a) was superior to everyone else; it was not because they were Arabs but it was due to their servitude to God. This is why their rank is so high and their place is so great. This verse puts forth a principle that all realities, all creation and the whole universe are humble servants of the Lord, the Omnipotent. Whoever wants to get closer to Him needs to obey Him more. This is one verse.

God's Son

We have selected the second verse – 88th verse of Surah Maryam (Mary) – and the subsequent verses.

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا. They say, “God has a son.” The non-believers have said it differently; Christians in another style; Jews in their own way; Quraish and the pagans of Arabia in another; the pagans of other areas in some other way. Some used to say that God had a daughter; others said, He had a son; some said, He had both. Some said, He had one child; others said, He had countless; some said, He had a family. In any case, they said:

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا. God has children. In what context, did they say so? Let us examine this point. The claim of some pagans, Christians and Jews about God having a family implied that there was someone in the creation of the universe that did not have servant to Owner relationship with God but children to father relationship. When the Jews said, “عَزَيْرُ بْنُ اللَّهِ. Uzair is the son of God”, what they implied was that while rest of the universe was God’s slave, Uzair was an exception. He was not a servant of God; rather he was his son. Christians say the same thing about Jesus. The non-believers said similar thing about Lat, Munat and Uzza⁶ that they were God’s daughters. The pagans of Greece and Rome had similar beliefs about God having children. So, while we observe two ranks – one of God and the other of the creation that is obedient to God, they made three ranks – God, ordinary creation and the elite consisting of God’s children. The verses of Surah Maryam deny it. You should study and reflect on these verses till the end.

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا. They say that the Merciful (Rahman) has adopted a son. لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِدًّا. Verily they have made a most atrocious statement. You see the way God presents it. He calls it atrocious, dreadful and dangerous belief. تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَنْفَطَرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشَقُّ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا. It is so likely that the sky falls; the earth cracks open and the mountains break apart.

وَلَدًا أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَنِ. They declared a son for the most Merciful (Rahman) and started believing in it. It is obviously a serious matter. God is not like that. He is not emotional to feel offended by abusive

language. What He gives as faith is important for achieving Godly goals; and what He prohibits in the form of wicked belief is something that plays a role in fomenting trouble in the society. Negating mischievous belief is refuting a root of suffering in the society. Having a faith that God has children leads to disorder in the society; we will gain more knowledge about the damage it does as we progress through the Unity of God discussion. In reality, this is an excuse to make servants obedient to someone other than God.

وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَنِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا. It is not befitting for God, the most Merciful, to have a son.

إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا. There is no one in the universe who is not His servant. Whatever exists in the heavens and the earth is His slave. لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا. God has surrounded them; He has control over them and keeps a tab on all of them. This was another verse from Surah Maryam.

To summarize, what we discussed today, was understanding the meaning of Tawhid (unity of God) in the Islamic vision of the universe. We also discussed Tawhid as an important principle in the vision of the universe. God willing, in the next discussion we will look at Tawhid as an important principle in the Islamic ideology. You see these are two different concepts. One is the precursor and foundation of the other. This is Islamic way of thinking. What does this thinking tell us? What path, plan and roadmap does it present to us? How does Tawhid fit in? It is in the Islamic ideology.

Supplement

In the Islamic vision of the universe, every existence in the universe is linked to a powerful creator and this power or omnipotence is God, Who has all the basic good attributes such as knowledge, control, will, life etc.

From the smallest particle to the heavens, moon, stars and unknown galaxies, everything is in His control. Every reality in the universe, human being and others owe their creation and life to Him and are His slaves and servants.

This ideology in the Islamic religion is the foundation of all roadmaps, plans and life-forming thoughts. The voice of Tawhid is heard in hundreds of verses in glorius Qur'an. As an example, let us look at the following few lines.

Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Verse 255:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ. *There is no god but Allah.*

الْقَيُّومُ الْحَيُّ. *He is live and the whole universe is there because of Him.*

لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ. *He does not need to sleep or doze off.*

لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ: **Whatever is there in the heavens and the earth belongs to Him.**

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ: **Who can intercede in His court without His permission.**

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ: **He knows whatever is in front of them and behind them.**

وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ: **And they cannot acquire even a small fraction of His knowledge except what He wills.**

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ: **His knowledge and omnipotence is greater than the heavens and the earth.**

وَلَا يَؤُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا: **And He has no trouble in protecting His possessions.**

وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ: **His stature is high and His greatness is unbounded.**

Surah Maryam (19), Verses 88–94:

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا: **And these people say that the most Merciful has adopted a son.**

لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِدًّا: **Verily, you have spoken a horrendous thing.**

تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشَقُّ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًا: **It is so likely that the sky falls; the earth cracks open and the mountains break apart.**

أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدًا: **They declared a son for the most Merciful (Rahman).**

وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَنِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا: **It is not befitting for the most Merciful to have a son.**

إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا: **There is no one in the heavens and the earth who is not going to appear in His court as a slave.**

لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا: **God has surrounded everyone and keeps their count.**

1. Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe was compiled by John Clover Monsma. It has forty articles about the existence of God written by experts in modern sciences. The book has been translated into Farsi by Ahmad Aram, Ali Akber Mojtehid and Sayyid Mehdi Ameen.

2. Qur'an, 2:255

3. Tafseer Noor us Al-Thaqalayn, Surah Ibrahim, Verse 28

4. One of the great Roman emperors who used to torture Christians. He was captured in his last days in a battle with Sasanians. Christians called his capture God's punishment.

5. This is the name of the God of Jews used in Torah.

6. These names of the pagans' idols have been mentioned in Surah Najam Verses 19 and 20.

<https://www.al-islam.org/tawhid-monotheism-six-speeches-sayyid-ali-khamenei/first-speech-tawhid-islamic-vision-universe>