

THE TRUE RELIGION (PART 3 OF 8): GOD AND CREATION

Rating: 4.2

Description: The third chapter of the book “The True Religion.” How Islam calls man away from the worship of creation to the worship of God alone.

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Published on: 04 Dec 2006

Last modified on: 23 May 2021

Since the total submission of one's will to God represents the essence of worship, the basic message of God's divine religion, Islam, is the worship of God alone. It also requires the avoidance of worship directed to any person, place or thing other than God. Since everything other than God, the creator of all the things, is God's creation, it may be said that Islam, in essence, calls man away from worship of creation and invites him to worship only his Creator. He is the only one deserving of man's worship, because it is only by His will that prayers are answered.



Accordingly, if a man prays to a tree and his prayers are answered, it is not the tree which answers his prayers, but God, who allows the circumstances prayed for to take place. One might say, “That is obvious.” However, to tree-worshippers, it might not be so. Similarly, prayers to Jesus, Buddha, or Krishna or Saint Christopher, or Saint Jude or even to Muhammad are not answered by them, but are answered by God. Jesus did not tell his followers to worship him, but to worship God, as the Quran states:

“And behold! God will say: ‘O Jesus, the son of Mary! Did you say to men, worship me and my mother as gods besides God?’ He will say: ‘Glory to you, I could never say what I had no right (to say)...’” (Quran 5:116)

Nor did Jesus worship himself when he worshipped, but rather he worshipped God. And Jesus was reported in the Gospels to have said:

“It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.’” (Luke 4:8)

This basic principle is contained in the opening chapter of the Quran, known as Surah al-Faatihah, verse 4:

“You alone do we worship and from You alone do we seek help.” (Quran 1:5)

Elsewhere, in the final book of revelation, the Quran, God also said:

“And your Lord says: ‘Call on Me and I will answer your (prayer).’” (Quran 40:60)

It is worth emphasizing that the basic message of Islam (namely, the worship of God alone) also proclaims that God and His creation are distinctly different entities. God is neither equal to His creation nor a part of it, nor is His creation equal to Him or a part of Him.

This might seem obvious, but man’s worship of creation instead of the Creator is to a large degree based on ignorance, or neglect, of this concept. It is the belief that the essence of God is everywhere in His creation or that His divine being is or was present in some parts of His creation, which has provided justification for the worship of God’s creation and naming it the worship of God. However, the message of Islam, as brought by the prophets of God, is to worship only God and to avoid the worship of His creation either directly or indirectly.

In the Quran God clearly states:

“For we assuredly sent amongst every people a prophet, with the command worship God and avoid false Gods...” (Quran 16:36)

When idol worshippers are questioned as to why they bow down to idols created by men, the invariable reply is that they are not actually worshipping the stone image, but God, who is present within it. They claim that the stone idol is only a focal point for God’s essence and is not in itself God! One who has accepted the concept of God being present in any way within His creation will be obliged to accept this argument for idolatry. Whereas, one who understands the basic message of Islam and its implications would never agree to idolatry no matter how it is rationalized.

Those who have claimed divinity for themselves down through the ages have often based their claims on the mistaken belief that God is present in man. Taking one step further, they claim that God is more present in them than in the rest of us, and that other humans should therefore submit to them and worship them as God in person or as God concentrated within their persons. Similarly, those who have asserted the godhood of others after their deaths have found fertile ground among those who accept the false belief of God’s presence in man.

It should be abundantly clear by now that one who has grasped the basic message of Islam and its implications could never agree to worship another human being under any circumstance. God’s religion, in essence, is a clear call to the worship of the Creator and the rejection of creation-worship in any form. This is the meaning of the motto of Islam:

“Laa Ilaaha illaa Allah” (There is no true god (deity) but God (Allah))

The sincere declaration of this phrase and the acceptance of prophethood automatically bring one within the fold of Islam, and sincere belief in it guarantees one Paradise. Thus, the final Prophet of Islam, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him^[1] is reported to have said:

“Anyone who says: ‘There is no true god (deity) but God (Allah) and dies holding that (belief) will enter paradise.’”

Belief in this declaration of faith requires that one submit his/her will to God in the way taught by the prophets of God. It also requires the believer to give up the worship of false gods.

Footnotes:

[1]

‘Peace be Upon Him’: A phrase which is stated after mentioning any of the prophets out of respect.

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