

Tauheed-An Essence of Islam

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Abstract

Islam is one of the major world religions which have an essence that is called 'Tauheed' in Arabic. Allah created mankind to submit their will to one and only Him and to believe that Muhammad is the last messenger of Allah. It is also known as Sahadah, Islam does not permit the mankind to go beyond the concept of the Tauheed. Whole theories of Islam those are revealed to mankind are solely incorporated with Tauheed. It is a most important lesson in Islam. Whatever is practised out of Tauheed, that is 'Shirk' a major sin and unpardonable. The present short work tries to explain how Allah says concerning 'Tauheed' and its opposite word 'Shirk'

Keywords: *Tauheed, Sahadah, Shirk and Tauba*

Introduction

When we study the philosophy of religion it is understood that Islam is one of the major world religions. It has own origin theory. Allah¹ revealed His words/messages through Jibrael one of the selected angels. Jibrael narrated whole words of Allah to Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh)², summarily, it is known that Allah revealed Islam to Prophet Muhammad and the whole revealed messages were collected in book form that is called The Quran. It is on the other hand can be called a constitutional book of Islam. While Prophet Muhammad was in the position of seclusion at Hira cave in 610 CE, angel Jibrael came to him and instructed to read the messages brought from Allah. This episode of the meeting with prophet and angel Jibrael was initial point of receiving messages. From that onwards prophet was receiving messages from Allah till reach to nearly twenty three years and at the same time Prophet spread those messages to the people. It is to be noted that the religion what the Prophet Muhammad was preaching is called Islam. The teachings of Islam relates to creation of universe and its contents as well as seen and unseen creatures. It teaches concerning economy, political, ethical, scientific educations, education of worshiping, sociological aspects etc. Numerically Islam has the second largest devotees next to the Christianity. It is practiced in the most part of the globe.

Islam has five fundamental teachings; they are *Sahadah*(faith), *Salat* (Prayer), *Zakat* (charity), *Saum* (Fasting), *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) and in addition, the word 'belief' is also a core of Islam without which there is no single space in Islam of the man who submitted and

his/her submission is baseless and contradicted. According to Islamic tradition there are six belief principles such as Belief in Allah, Belief in Prophets, Belief in Books, Belief in Angels, Belief in Last day/day of Judgment (*Qiyamah*) and Belief in Devine Predestination. These teachings are equally important and obligatory for those who submitted to the Will of Allah.

Teachings of Islam are based on two authentic books one is The *Quran* a book of revealed messages of Allah. It has six thousands six hundred and sixty six verses. It is written in Arabic language and it is neither by prophet's own nor written by himself because prophet was unlettered. In presence of him one scribe was assigned to write. Prophet's understanding of the Quran is absolutely divine. Other book is *Hadith*; it is a collection of Prophet's indications, sayings and what he does during his life time. On the basis of these books Islam has numerous teachings on many aspects concerning life and life after death. Of these teachings there is an unchanged and unchangeable essence that is *Tauheed*. The present work will try to give a philosophical analysis on Tauheed.

What is Tauheed?

The Arabic word 'Tauheed' is literally interpreted as unity of God (Allah); one and only Allah. It is derived from another Arabic word '*Wahhada*' which means 'to unite'. The concept of Tauheed is in another term may be called as concept of monotheism of Islam. In Islam the explanation of Tauheed is entirely discussed through 'doctrine of oneness' beyond which there is no scope in Islam itself. Abdul Karim writes as "In Islamic theology, the word *Tauheed* is used in relation to Allah's oneness

which, according to Muslim sources, literally means the unity or eternity of Allah. Thus, *Tauheed* implies that Allah is the true and the only God, there is no one like Him and neither is there anyone that shares with him anything from his eternity, names and qualities”³

Another Islamic Scholar Shaykh Ibn Abdul Wahhab also pointed out as “Tauheed is the singling out of Allah for worship and service. It is the religion of the prophets sent by Allah to humankind”⁴. Further, Allah Himself says in the Quran concerning His oneness and unique; “Say, Allah is one, Allah the everlasting, the eternal, He has no given birth and was not born, And no one is comparable to Him”⁵. It is very powerful and enjoys tremendous beneficial to the Muslim⁶ who recites the *Sahadah*⁷. i.e. “there is no gods but God (Allah) and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah”. And this *Sahadah* is an obligatory to recite for those who want to embrace in to the fold of Islam. Further, if man recited once with keeping full faith to Allah in his life time, he is entitled to enter into the paradise after cleansing his all faults and sins in Hell, if he/she has. It is believed that each and every doctrines of Islam is entirely based on such Tauheed and mankind is instructed to do whatever within the conscience of Tauheed. It is on the one hand strictly prohibited to engage the life span beyond the Tauheed and a harsh punishment is deserved for. The opposite thesis and term of Tauheed in Islam is *Shirk*. The present work will give some detail about *Shirk* in further paragraphs. Before which it is to be discussed with regards to the different kind of Tauheed.

Kinds of Tauheed

Tawheed can be explained and discussed in three terms. Firstly, ***Tawheed ar- ruboobiyah***(Oneness of Allah in His Lordship), secondly, ***Tawheed al-uloohiyah***(Oneness of Allah in worship) and finally, ***Tawheed al asma was-siffat***(Oneness of Allah in His names and attributes)⁸. The following are the explanations concerned with the mentioned terms.

Tawheed ar- ruboobiyah (Oneness of Allah in His Lordship)

Allah is the one and only God who has the power to create, to give sustenance to everything and everybody. Whatever happened, happening and to be happened are only under the Lordship of Allah. He is the Master of the worlds. From smallest particle to largest object/ being activities are under the permission and power of Allah, without His will nobody can perform and nothing can be occurred. Not only the life world but life after world also is under the will and power of Allah. He created universe from a tiny single mass. Following verses clearly show the Lordship of Allah;

“Allah is the Creator of all things and He is the disposer and guardian of all affairs”⁹

“Blessed be He in whose hand is the dominion; and He is able to do all things”¹⁰

Tawheed al-uloohiyah (Oneness of Allah in worship)

In Islam, the worship to only Allah followed to the acceptance of one and only Lord (Allah) is a must to each and every devotee of Islam. With regard to the discussion about ‘Worship’, it is to be free from all manmade creatures as well as natural beings and non beings. This doctrine of worship strictly rejected the idea of worship associating with other. It is pure monotheistic concept of worship. No photographs, no images, no showcase to other, no sculpture or any other kinds of manmade objects are reliable and necessary. The worship is an unseen but it must to believe that He is powerful and most suitable ‘Being’ to worship despite unseen. There are certain codes of worshipping system for example praying five times, giving charity, fasting in Ramadan month, pilgrimage, remembering His names and reciting verses of Quran, to live coexistence, to help neighbors, and to speak only the true and truthful; avoiding backbiting, seeking forgiveness etc. Whatever is done in life world must be within the frame work of Islam which is laid down in Quran and Hadith. Allah says in the Quran concerning worship. It is said to Human being and *Jinn*¹¹ “I created the jinn and mankind only so that they might worship Me”¹²

“Your Lord has commanded that you should worship non but Him, and show kindness to your parents”¹³

“Then do not call upon beside Allah”¹⁴

Tawheed al Asma Was-Siffat (Oneness of Allah in His names and attributes)

Allah has ninety-nine names which are clearly mentioned in the Quran and such names give unique attributes of Allah Himself. The names indicate who Allah is. These names are distinct from all creations of Allah. This work does not permit to explicate all names here because of work’s volume is limited. Man created by Allah has also attributes but their attributes are limited whereas Allah’s attributes are unlimited, unending and without beginning. Allah is Supreme Being without compare. Some verses of the Quran may be mentioned and from which it is to be acknowledged what He described. “*God has most excellent names.*

Call on Him by His names and keep away from those Who distort them. They will be requited for what they do”¹⁵

“He is God-the creator, the originator, the giver of form. His are the most excellent names.

Everything in heaven and earth declares His glory”¹⁶

We have understood some knowledge about *Tauheed* from the above discussion. And it is also conceived that keeping faithful to Allah is none associating with other. However, if the faith is mixed or associated with other, it may be asked what is the thesis or doctrine at that regard? What are the instructions laid down in the Quran? Faith with mixing other is *Shirk* in Islam. *Tauheed* and *Shirk* are opposite to each other, they can't go together at all. The present work tries to explicate concerning what the *Shirk* is.

Shirk

Islam has own concept of *Sin* which bears explanations and meanings through the Quran and Hadith. What are the Sins and what are not, what are dos and what are don'ts for believers, all are also clearly mentioned in the *Quran* and *Hadith*. If the believer does/acts upon the dos, he/she will be rewarded whereas if they do act against the instructions, it is believed they committed *Sin* and they will be rewarded punishment. The *Sin* is divided as major Sins and minor Sins. In order to discuss regarding *Shirk*, the work shortened about *Sin*. *Shirk* is one of the *major Sin* and it is unpardonable. It is already perceived that Allah is the all powerful, most merciful, all knowing etc. Further it may be also mentioned that Allah can bestow his merciful and power of pardon to mankind committed *Sin* whom He wish and to those who performs *Tauba*¹⁷. At the same time Allah does not pardon whoever committed *Shirk*. It is an unfortunate of the Sinner in hereafter.

Allah says that 'Shirk' is greatest Sin, "God will not forgive anyone for associating something with Him, while He will forgive whoever He wishes for anything besides that. Whoever ascribes partners to God is guilty of a monstrous sin"¹⁸. Despite performs *Tauba* concerning the actions of *Shirk*, Allah will not pardon. *Shirk* can be divided into two forms, one is major (*Shirk al Akbar*) and other is minor (*Shirk al Ashgar*). According to Abu Backer Karolia¹⁹, major *Shirk* has five different types and minor also has two types. They are given as follows.

Major Shirk (Shirk al Akbar)

- (I) **Shirk ad Du'a** – Invoking or supplicating to a false deity besides Allah
- (II) **Shirk al-Niyah walraadawalQasd**– Having the intention and determination to deliberately worship a deity other than Allah.
- (III) **Shirk at- Ta'a** – Obeying any created being against the command of Allah.
- (IV) **Shirk al-Muhabbah** – Loving a created being or an object more than Allah
- (V) **Hidden Shirk as: Shirk al- khafi** -Means the hidden, or covert, association of partners with

Allah, the One and Only God. This is an insidious form of *Shirk*.

Minor Shirk (Shirk al Ashgar)

- (I) **Shirk ar- Rea** –Carrying out religious acts for worldly gain, e.g. showing off.
- (II) **Shirk at- Tasmee**– Swearing by other than Allah.

Conclusion

In Islam, creation of mankind is one of the greatest plans of Allah. He created mankind and *Jinns* to worship only Him. And *Jinns* are too accountable in last day. It is understood that mankind must live their life world with *Tauheed* oriented otherwise they are in astray away from the fundamental and essence of Islam. Distancing and avoiding from the *Tauheed* is verily and automatically engaged in the *Shirk*. We know from such short discussion that those who follow the Islam must follow with conviction to Allah. It must also think that *Tauheed* is an essence and only the way and for this living. According to Islamic tradition, it should also not be forgotten that *Shirk* destroys their life which leads to the Hell.

References

- [1]. Allah is an Arabic word denoting the 'God' a Supreme Being. Pronoun 'He' is used when narration. He is most powerful, most merciful, most beneficent etc.
- [2]. In Islamic tradition, it is mandatory to mention peace be upon him (Pbuh) when just to mention the word prophet Muhammad in writing and oral.
- [3]. Dr. Abdul karimAwad, Existence, Message of Islam
- [4]. Ibn Abdul Wahhab, Muhammad, Three Essays on Tawheed, North America Trust Publications, 1979, p.12
- [5]. The Quran, 1-4:114
- [6]. Muslim is an Arabic word. It is known to the person who follows Islam.
- [7]. Sahadah is one of the five tenets of Islam.
- [8]. Umm AbdurRahmanSakinaHirschfelder, Who is Allah? International Islamic Publishing House, p.49
- [9]. The Quran 39:62
- [10]. Ibid 67:1
- [11]. Jinn: it is a kind of concealed creature created from fire. They are advised to worship only to Allah. Human being can't see such type of creature. They are given super power than human being.
- [12]. The Quran 51:56
- [13]. Ibid 17: 23
- [14]. Ibid 72:18
- [15]. Ibid 7:180
- [16]. Ibid 59: 24
- [17]. *Tauba* (repentance) is a kind of refuge by supplication to Allah. Its method is to pray some verse of Quran so that Allah may pardon upon what he/she did against the instruction.
- [18]. The Quran 4: 48
- [19]. Abu Baker Karolia explained by article on *Shirk* and quoted about major *shirk* from same article. Article is accessed from the website [http:// www. islamtomorrow.com/articles/tawheed_nuradeen.htm](http://www.islamtomorrow.com/articles/tawheed_nuradeen.htm) on 02/0502014