

## How the Aqeedah Must be Established

Islam was revealed to be a mercy to all of mankind, and its message was indeed addressed to all of mankind, Muslim and non-muslim. Consequently when we discuss the establishment of the Islamic aqeedah it has to be done in light of this fact.

Using an ayah of the Quran may work on a Muslim but has no authority with the non-Muslim. Before addressing this topic the definition of the word aqeedah needs to be stated

Aqeedah- What the heart is knotted on or tied to, after the mind has become convinced. This aqeedah has to be decisive and based on evidences,

Also the meaning of iman is a decisive belief reached through evidences

From the first two definitions it becomes clear that the mind is an important feature at arriving at the aqeedah. As a matter of fact it is the only way sanctioned by Islam towards reaching or arriving at the aqeedah. Before discussing this further let us look at ways in which people in general arrive at belief or aqeedah.

### Imitation

Imitation in belief is a common practise among people. Usually children assume the belief of their parents without any questioning of the belief by itself. This is an invalid method since the belief is taken regardless of its correctness.

So, we find many people worshipping cows, rocks or men only because their parents did so!

### Emotion

Arriving at belief through the emotions alone is invalid. As a matter of fact mankind started worshipping idols because they were led by their emotions. The emotions at all times should be led by their mind and chaos results if emotions are left unchecked.

### Reaction

Reactionary belief is also invalid. We find for example some African Americans adopting either egyptology, ancestor worship as a reaction to the "white man", enslavement, rejecting christianity, which is portrayed as a religion where the saviour has a blonde hair and blue eyes.

So when they carry belief, they went far, saying that God is black, white man is devil which is completely absurd!

Consequently, the correct way to arrive at belief is through the mind and emotions (fitrah). The Quran addressed this in many ayah. For example...

"And of his signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the difference of your languages and colours. Lo! Herein indeed are signs for men of knowledge." ~3U:22]

"Will they not regard the camels, how they are created! And the heavens, how they are raised! And the hills, how they are set up! And the earth how it is spread! [88:17-20]

We can quote many ayah which call mankind to think, consider and contemplate and ponder over creation in order to arrive at proper belief. After the mind is convinced to the point where there remains

no doubt which is in compliance with fitrah(emotions), the heart automatically knots and clings to this decisive unshakable belief or aqeedah.

When we say that the mind is the tool used to arrive at belief, we do not mean that the process one uses has to be as rigorous as a scientist, analysing the makeup of the atom or the cell, to arrive at the aqeedah.

Rather, we mean that from simple exercises in rational thinking, one can undoubtedly reach this conclusion. Let us look at some occurrences in history where this was applied.

Prophet Ibrahim had a debate with a ruler regarding the creator of the heavens and the earth.

Ibrahim(as)

said that his Lord gave life and caused death. The ruler in response told his ministers to bring to men in front of him. He gave an order to kill one and allowed the other to live, and then declared, 'I also give life and cause death.' Our father Ibrahim then addressed him with the following challenge, 'My Lord causes the sun to rise from the East. Can you make it rise from the West?.' The ruler was of course left speechless and embarrassed.(This was mentioned in al-Baqarah:259)

Umar bin Al-Khattab, the second Kalifah of Islam(ra), was seen crying and laughing. He was asked why did he do so, to which he replied, 'We used to make our gods out of dates, and when we became hungry we used to eat them, that is why I am laughing.'

Abu Haneefah, a foremost scholar in the history of Islam, had a debate with an atheist regarding the Creator. On the day of the debate Abu Haneefah sent his students to the place of the debate to wait with the atheist for his arrival. Abu Haneefah arrived purposefully late and was asked by the irate atheist as

to his tardiness. Abu Haneefah told him, that on his way to the debate, he reached a river, and there were

no boats no people present. He waited for while only to see a tree fall and immediately carve itself into a

boat. The boat then came to the river bank and summoned him to get in. He did so and the boat took him

to the other side of the river.

The extremely irritated atheist replied that this was absolutely unbelievable. Abu Haneefah then retorted that if this was unbelievable, how then can one say that the sun, moon and the universe was created in the same fashion. The debate was over.

Consequently, the tool used to reach belief for the aqeedah must be the mind and the evidences used to ascertain this belief must be decisive. This method is called the rational method. This is the only method that should be used to arrive at belief

#### Rational Method

Some people believe that the rational method is very rigid and philisophic, and other believe it to be blasphemy to even suggest using this method to arrive at belief. As we mentioned before, the Quran pushes us to ponder upon the earth, camel, sea, stars, the development of the foetus in the womb and many other situations to reach a certain conclusion.

When we study the rain for example we find that the rain follows a definite rule or law, that can be called

evaporation or condensation. This is a well mechanised process, where every step is systematic and cannot be changed. When the rain exists as a liquid (water), its chemical makeup is H<sub>2</sub>O or two atoms of

hydrogen and one atom of oxygen. During the evaporation process where the form of the rain water changes to a vapor or gas, its chemical makeup remains the same. Oxygen and hydrogen exists abundantly in the atmosphere, but this does not affect the evaporation process at all.

There are some scientists who claim that things in the universe happen randomly and haphazardly, without any system. If this were so, then there would be at least one or more times when one of these

hydrogen or oxygen atoms would collide with the vapor form of water to change or alter the evaporation process. As far as we know the evaporation and condensation process occurs over and over again, according to the same process, without interference. It is rather irrational to call such a process a random haphazard process. That is because it is well known that any two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom, does not make water. There has to be a specific system or process that causes these elements to combine to make water. We inevitably have to deduce that this and many other processes and systems present in the universe are all being controlled by a power and force with the ability and might to run and control them all at once.

When we look at the human being, we find that the human being sleeps and dies, but these universal systems run perpetually, so it cannot be said that a human is in control of the systems of the universe. Nor can it be said of an anima, albeit, it cannot be said of anything within the universe. We then reach the conclusion that this force or power or might that runs the universe in this systematic way is the Lord, Master, Creator, Originator, Organiser of the universes, Allah the Glorified, the Exalted.

We just employed the rational method to reach this Ultimate Conclusion. We applied our senses to a subject matter (rain), transferred it to the brain, and then linked this subject matter to previous information that we had about rain (evaporation, condensation, chemical makeups etc..) and finally connected this information to other related information (systems could not be created or controlled by anything within creation), to reach our Ultimate Conclusion. (Allah alone controls the universe.) So we see that this is not a philosophical process since philosophy incorporates hypothetical guesses, illusionary thinking and logic. Yes logic! Logic is an invalid way of thinking vis a vis, reaching the Ultimate Conclusion.

Logic

What is meant by logic here is the ancient Greek way of thinking which influenced many Muslims such as the 'Mu'atazilah'. It is an invalid type of thinking regarding the Ultimate Conclusion because it usually results in deceiving or misleading and contradicting conclusions. The process of logic is to state an introductory premise, then to build steps or points towards reaching a conclusion. The danger in this type of thinking is that if the premise is incorrect or if any of the intermediate steps are incorrect, the conclusion may be correct, and there are times when the premise or step is correct and the result is incorrect. Hence, the conclusion may be deceiving or misleading. An example of logical process is to say, a blackboard is made of wood, wood burns, therefore all blackboards burn. Also, logic is controlled by formulas and techniques and does not care about the information, as long as the techniques and sequences, regardless of whether or not the information is correct. However, we can see instances where logic can lead to contradictory results. Consider the following examples:

So we find that using logic can lead to two contradictory results. Regarding the Ultimate Conclusion, the Christians for example, used logic to arrive at a very erroneous and dangerous conclusion. They claimed that God's image is that of a man. Then after a while they commissioned an artist to paint the likeness of God and His representation was that of a blond haired, blue eyed white man. (We seek refuge in Allah from ever making this type of error.)

Another feature of logic, is that there are no limits to the types of conclusions that can be reached with logic. As the previous examples have shown, those who use logic have anthropomorphized (represented in human characteristics) Allah. Even the Muslims who have employed logic have fallen prey to this error.

We find that even to this day, some Muslims debating on the form or shape, texture or quality of Allah's "hands", "face", "sitting", "ascending" etc... These Muslims do not recognise that thinking about such concepts depends upon the ability to sense the topic. Since we can only sense what is within the limits of the universe, and since Allah has told us that He has only given us a small amount of information, then the human mind is limited to the amount and degree of things that it can think about.

This does not mean that since Allah is outside of this universe, then we cannot think about Allah. As we have shown before, we are able to arrive at the Ultimate Conclusion based on the effects of the aspect of Allah as the Creator, the Organiser, the Originator and the Controller of the Universe. We do not initiate a discussion about the essence of the Creator. Any discussion about the essence of the Creator, is an exercise in futility.

Consequently only the rational method can lead to the Ultimate Conclusion, in a way that leaves one with decisive certainty and that is in accordance with man's nature. And consequently filling the heart with tranquility.

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