

Theology (Ilahiyat) Part 1 Wahdaniyah to Ressurrection

Monotheism (wahdaniyah)

Imam Tahwai says: Verily Allah is one(wahid).

What are the implications of the word *wahid*? Is there any difference between *wahid* and *ahad*?

Wahid and Ahad are synonyms. They both come in the Quran to describe Allah as being one. Some scholars however are of the opinion that they differ slightly, and that one give meaning that the other doesn't. Those scholars say then, that *Wahid* means one in number(dhat) and *Ahad* means one of a kind(sifat)

What does *tawhid* mean?

Tawhid means to make Allah one, meaning that one believes in the oneness of Allah as described above and does not believe that anyone can equal Allah in anything he does.

Recognizing(having ma'rifah of) Allah, explanation of it's requirements and methods.

Is obtaining ma'rifah(knowing Allah) *wajib*?

Yes, according to the unanimous agreement of the upright scholars.

How does one obtain this ma'rifah?

The way to come to know Allah lies in Nazr(thought) and Istidlal(problem solving). This knowledge of Allah's being is not something that is inherent, it must be sought after and needs proof. These proofs are found in divine revelation and logical reasoning.

Establish the existence of Allah.

How do we classify the world around us?

Everything that exists around us is either Mumkin(Accidental) or Hadith(Transient) or a mixture of both. These things are classified as Jawhar(Particles) and 'Ard(Qualities). Every mumkin thing needs a reason for its existence. Every hadith thing needs something to put it there(mudith).

Why is Allah necessary?

Our creator Allah the most high tells us in Quran that he needs nothing, In the science of Kalam(Islamic Metaphysics) Allah, the creator is wajib al-Wujud. The uncreated necessary existence upon which every mumkin thing relies on to exist. Every mumkin thing needs a reason for its existence, if the creator was mumkin, he would also need a cretor, this would start an infinite regressing series which is logically unsound. Therefore there must be an ending point. That point is Allah's creation of the universe.

How do we prove this?

There are two ways to prove this point, through outer contemplation(dalil afaq) and inner contemplation(dalil anfus)

What is dalil anfas?

Everyone necessarily knows that at one point he did not exist, and then he existed. Everything that came into existence was brought into existence. This thing that brought him into existence was not himself, nor was it truly his parents, or any other created thing, because it is known necessarily that they are unable to create the likes of him as they will. At this point a person should realize that there must be an eternal being, responsible for the original creation, separate and distinguished from all created things.

What is dalil afaq?

The observable universe is constantly changing, it is observed from the changing of the seasons, through the alternating of day and night, the rising and setting of the sun and other natural phenomenon that everything that changes is transient(hadith) and eventually ends. This creates the necessity for an originator(muhdith) who is eternal and outside the scope of time because if not, then you would need a new transient originator for every new transient thing, this leads to circular logic(dawr) and an infinite regress(tasalsul) and both are logical fallacies.

Is using this logic permitted in Quran and Sunnah?

The Quran is full of prophets using similar reasoning. Most famously Nuh may peace be upon him continuously argued with his people about the existence of Allah. Ibrahim peace be upon him is also famous for realizing Allah's existence through the transience of the heavenly bodies.

Examples of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) dealing with those that rejected the existence of Allah

Did the Salaf Salih ever use this logic?

Yes. All of the 4 imams and their predecessors from the tabi'in are recorded proving the existence of Allah logically.

How did Imam Ja'far Sadiq prove Allah's Existence?

A group of Athiests came to Ja'far Sadiq denying the existence of Allah. Imam Ja'far asked them if they knew the horrors of the sea. When one of them replied in the affirmative, Imam Ja'far asked him to tell him about what he experienced. After listening to him narrate his life or death struggle, Imam Ja'far asked him who he was relying on to survive when he had nothing left, he realized it was Allah, and accepted Islam on Imam Ja'fars hand.

How did Imam Abu Hanifah prove Allah's Existence?

A group of Dahriyah came to kill Imam Abu Hanifah in the masjid. He asked them to allow him to ask them a question before they killed him. The question was about the viability of a self propelled boat and if such a thing was possible. When they negated the possibility of a boat steering itself, Imam Abu Hanifah asked them why they think the world can do the same, they accepted Islam at his hand.

How did Imam Malik prove Allah's Existence?

Harun al-Rashid asked Imam Malik how he could be sure Allah existed. Imam Malik answered him by saying the variations of sounds, pitch and voices are enough to convince him of an intelligent designer.

How did Imam Shafi'i prove Allah's Existence?

Philosophers once came to Imam Shafi'i asking for proof that Allah exists, he replied by asking them if they knew of the mulberry tree, upon them replying in the affirmative, he then said that worms eat the leaves of the tree and produce silk, bees go to the tree and produce honey, sheep eat from the tree and produce manure, deer eat from the tree and musk is produced in their bodies. All of these things from the same source manifest in different ways, isn't this proof of a creator? They accepted Islam at his hands.

How did Imam Ahmad prove Allah's Existence?

Imam Ahmad used to give the example of a mighty impenetrable stone fortress, upon which one can not observe any gap. It suddenly breaks open and a living breathing animal emerges. The fortress is an egg and the animal is a chick.

Refuting Dualism (Dalil al-tamanu')

What can we assume would happen if there were two creators?

When there is more than one creator, disagreement becomes possible. When disagreement becomes possible this becomes a sign of their or one of their transientness(huduth). If one of them wanted to give life to a person, while the other wanted that person dead, for both of their wills to take place is impossible. One of their wills must take place, which proves that one of them is stronger than the other, or none of their wills takes place proving their powerlessness.

Types of polytheism and their refutations

Imam Tahawi says: He has no partners.

What does shirk mean?

To say Allah has no partner(sharik) is to refute the idea of partnership with Allah. In the arabic language partnership means equality.

How many types of shirk are there?

Shirk is either:

1. Inherent(fi dhat) Like the zoroastrian belief in the two equal gods of good and evil
2. Nominal(fi tasmiyah wa ibadah), Like the pagan arabs who believed in one supreme creator god(Allah) but made other lesser beings the target of actual worship
3. Qualitative(fi sifat), Like those Jasmiah who claim that Allah has a body like us, leaving no difference between the creator and created

Imam Tahawi says: Nothing is like him.

Does this apply to those ayat where Allah describes himself as having a hand or sitting on a throne?

Yes. Nothing is like Allah. In the Quran Allah says that there is nothing like him, this ayah is *muhkam*, meaning its meaning is very clear and apparent, any *mutashabih* ayah that is unclear will be judged in accordance to the *muhkam* ayat, and this ayah of surah al-Shura negates every type of equivalence with Allah and affirms his transcendent being.

Imam Tahawi says: Nothing weakens him.

Is Allah able to do anything? Can he make something he can't do?

Allah is a being of absolute power, it is through his existence that everything else exists, for him to be unable to do anything while he is a being of absolute power is paradoxical and logically unsound. He is always able and never unable to do anything. For something to exist that he is unable to have complete control over is impossible.

Imam Tahawi says: There is deity but him.

What is the difference between this line and the previous, "He has no partners"?

The previous statement dealt with the issue of partnership and all its different types, this issue specifically concerns the word *ilah*, which in arabic means something worthy of worship and devotion (*ibadah*). It is best rendered as "There is nothing worthy of worship except him".

Eternity and Everlastingness

Imam Tahawi says: Eternal (*qadim*) without beginning

What does *Qadim* mean?

Linguistically *qadim* can be rendered as ancient, and different things have different standards for ancientness. Here however, *qadim* describing Allah is not a fixed set of time but a description of how Allah existed without a beginning. In this science of Islamic Metaphysics, the opposite of *Qadim* is *Hadith*, that thing which has a beginning.

Imam Tahawi says: Everlasting(*da'im*) without end

What does it mean that Allah is everlasting (*da'im*)?

Once it is established that Allah is eternal, it is also established that he is *da'im*, because being eternal (*qadim*) means he is never non-existing. Imam tahawi specifically mentions the fact that Allah is everlasting in order to clarify the fact that Allah's everlastingness is not restricted to a time that will eventually end. Together these two statements summarize the ayah of Allah, That he is the first and the last. Allah created time and space and is not bound to them.

Imam Tahawi says: He doesn't fade away or disappear.

Does Allah ever change?

No. Imam Tahawi here one signifying a gradual disappearance the other destruction in order to emphasize the fact that Allah always was and will exist forever. The first word specifically refers to changes in the essence or dhat of Allah. The second to the qualities or sifat of Allah.

Will of Allah

Imam Tahawi says: Nothing happens except that he wills it.

Does Allah have a will? Does he want things?

Yes, Every single thing that exists exists by the permission and will of Allah. Every other thing besides Allah is mumkin, every mumkin thing is defined as haven relative equal existence and non-existence, what then makes it so that some mumkin things exist and others don't? This is the will of Allah, and no one can will things into existence besides him.

What does *Irada* mean?

Irada is a quality that necessitates the distinction of an object for one reason over the other in one time over another. It is the system through which things are brought into existence over other things, in specific times. If hypothetically, there was no *irada* to specify an order for creation to come into existence, every mumkin thing would exist in the same place and come into existence in the same way. The fact that we see things come into existence orderly is a proof of the existence of *irada*.

The Dissimilarity between Allah and transient things(*hawadith*)

Imam Tahawi says: Thoughts(Wahm) cannot reach him, and Ideas(Fahm) cannot contain him

What is the difference between *Wahm* and *Fahm*?

Wahm is the ability to recognize particulars(juziyat). Fahm is the ability to recognize universals(kuliyat). To be able to classify something as a particular it needs to be within a class or group which Allah is not. In order to classify something as a universal it needs to have clear bounds which Allah does not have. Allah can therefore not be classified by our intellects as we would classify other things. Allah says in Qur'an that intellects cannot encompass him.

Imam Tahawi says: He does not resemble creation(*Anam*)

What is the meaning of *al-Anam*?

There are three possibilities for the meaning of *al-anam*.

1. Everything with a soul
2. All of creation
3. Humanity

The third option, humanity is most likely what Imam Tahawi meant, because this statement is meant as a refutation against the mushabbihah and mujassimah who famously claim that Allah has a body that resembles the shapes and forms of mankind.

This also serves as a refutation against the Christians who claim Allah has a son and wife like normal people do.

Why did Imam Tahawi add this after saying “nothing is like him”?

There are different types of resemblance. The previous statement that there is nothing like him is general, this is specific. Resemblance in arabic has different names depending on how many degrees of separation there are between the two things¹.

Life of Allah

Imam Tahawi says: He is living and does not die.

What does it mean to say that Allah is alive?

Allah is al-Hayy al-Mutlaq, the source of all life. Every created thing that is living, that has some ability, power and awareness, received those things from Allah who is perfect in power and awareness. After going through the logical postulations that allowed us to realize that Allah necessarily knows everything, and necessarily controls everything. We must also establish the fact that Allah is living eternally and is never devoid of life as he is never devoid of power or awareness.

Allah stands by himself (qiyam binafsihi)

Imam Tahawi says: He is enduring(qayyum) and does not sleep

What does qayyum mean?

There are four opinions on the meaning of qayyum, all of them related to the other

1. He is the judge of what all things have done
2. He is the protector of all
3. He is the establisher of the affairs of creation
4. He stands alone, and props up everything else

What does it mean to say that Allah does not sleep?

It means that there is never any time that Allah is not aware of what is going on. He does not sleep, rest, nap or ever become heedless of the affairs of creation. Sleep is a persio of time in which one is not aware. After establish the qualities of Allah being all able and knowing, sleep becomes something that can never be associated with Allah.

Imam Tahawi says: He creates without need

Does Allah need anything from the creation?

No. Need is a defect, a deficiency that needs to be fulfilled. Allah is self-sufficient without need or deficiency. Allah ordered the creation to worship him, not out of a need, but in order to benefit them. Allah ordered the creation to stay away from bad things and to enjoin in good things, if they obey they are rewarded, if they disobey, it doesn't harm Allah in the least bit.

¹ This require a background in mantiq and knowing the difference between terms like jins, naw' and fasl which would take too long to explain here.

Imam Tahawi says: He gives(raziq) without difficulty

How does Allah provide for the creation?

Whenever Allah wants to create something, he only needs to say be and it is. From this quranic example, we see that for Allah to create or give anyone anything, does not decrease is boundless treasure in any way.

Imam Tahawi says: He ends life(mumit) without fear

How does Allah govern life and death?

Everything other than Allah is mumkin. For Allah it is the same whether all mumkinat exist or do not exist. When it is time for a persons lifespan to end, Allah ends it without fear. It is because of him that this thing exists, so there exists no such thing as fear, nervousness or regret when the Almighty, All Powerful and sole existence described with being eternal and everlasting does anything.

Imam Tahawi says: He revives(ba'ith) without difficulty

Will Allah revive the dead to judge them?

Yes. Allah created the world and everything in it without difficulty, as we've discussed above. Logically, reassembling what has already been created, is much easier than creating something from nothing. Therefore it is illogical to assume that Allah can create everything as we've proven, but not be able to recreate what has perished.

-part 1 end-
part 2 begins with sifat