

The Islamic Belief (Part 1) - The Proof of God

The Islamic Belief and subsequently the Islamic way of life is premised on an intellectual basis. Therefore, Islam is neither a religion nor set of values and rituals that arise from Blind Faith. Rather Islam is an intellectual belief which emanates a comprehensive socio-political and economical system. To understand the unique system that Islam offers necessitates the explanation of the Islamic belief i.e. the proof in God, Allah(SWT) and the word of God, the Qur'an.

God: The Arguments

Today if you mention God the you'll probably get a negative reaction. It has become the trend to get on with life and not bother to ask the question whether there is a God or not. In fact this question was not even asked much in the days of old, when you simply had to believe in God or be persecuted. Therefore, it is not surprising that people find it easy to believe that the existence of God is a myth, simply because they have never thought deeply about the idea. It is because people continued to believe in God blindly, i.e. Blind Faith, rather than use ration, that science and its attempted explanations of universal phenomena was hailed as the 'new God'. But let us deal with both arguments - for and against the existence of a creator - from a rational perspective. A common argument by many Christians and some other religions is that God is the God of many abstract attributes such as Love, Peace, Mercy which indeed are admirable qualities for human beings to aspire to. This characterisation of God is based upon an implicit assumption that God can be likened to human beings thus the attempt to understand God in a human framework. Accordingly, we find in some societies. such as early Greek. that individual gods are used to represent single human attributes, and other cultures gods have quality to reproduce.

The question this begs is whether the essence of an unlimited Creator is understandable through a limited, imperfect human mind when God lies beyond our perception? Rational thought would dictate that if God exists then knowledge of God's attributes can only come from Itself. Therefore, famine in the world leading to deaths of millions would not deny the justice, mercy or love of a supposed God, but would only if one attributed the human essence to God. Similarly, if one understands God as the Governor and controller of the Universe then the notion of God dying is nonsensical. This is the failure of Christianity and indeed all religions as their belief becomes a matter of Blind Faith. Consequently, they allow themselves to be plagued by rational contradictions which inevitably lead to intellectual refutation.

With regard to opposing view proposed by scientific theories to disprove the existence of God. Are these arguments valid? To understand the validity of any proposed argument the premise should be examined. Science is concerned with the methodology of processes in the physical world, i.e. it deals with 'how' and not 'why'. Thus scientists are not concerned with why gravity exists but how gravity influences bodies to shape this universe. The scientific method is limited in that it can only deduce rules by repeated observations of physical phenomena. Thus the question of the existence of God does not and cannot fall into the realm of scientific thought because science deals with the mechanisms of events and phenomena within the universe i.e. the tangible and not intangible. To test the hypothesis to apply scientific proof for or against God, one would effectively have said that God is "testable".

Therefore, logically one would conclude God to be within the universe since God must be physically tangible in order to test. Since God is tangible and contained within the universe, God must be limited and therefore cannot be God. Thus scientists are falling into the same trap as the blind followers of religion, that is they are implicitly defining a role to God as the 'one who makes things work'. Since scientists have explained how things work the question of God does not arise. Those who argue from this angle have falsely assumed an attribute/essence of God in the same way Christians say God has a son or is love. To prove or disprove the existence of a creator we need to go beyond the limitations of the scientific method and proceed rationally for it is only rational thought which has the ability to deal with an issue like this.

The Rational Thought

Man progresses as a result of his thoughts concerning everything around him. Thoughts are what distinguish man from other animals and without them man would be lost. Thought occurs when man receives information about something through his five senses. He then distinguishes it by linking it to previous information and experiences he has encountered. For example, a person comes across a plant. He knows that it is a plant due to previous knowledge of what a plant looks like. But only when he links it with previous information on the various types of plants will he be able to tell if it is edible or poisonous. Hence, just receiving information is not enough. It will remain only as information that we cannot appreciate or understand. However the process of linking it to previous information and distinguishing the information is the process of thought and is the key of understanding and progressing.

Consequently, when man becomes convinced of the correctness of thought, it becomes a concept which he carries, thus, affecting his behaviour. For example, if we carry a concept of dislike of someone, it will affect our behaviour towards that person. So we see that carrying false ideas has serious implications for a person and if such false ideas are carried widely it has serious implications for society. Thus the idea and question of God has serious implications because the answer obtained becomes the very basis by which we understand the creation and purpose of man, life and the universe. Therefore, the method used should not merely be the rational thought but be comprehensive and agree with reality. Anything hypothetical or emotional should be rejected since their basis disagree with ration and reality.

The Rational Proof

When we look around us at everything we can sense one factor is shared by these things, and that is that they are all limited. By limited we mean that they have restrictions, a starting point and an ending point, and they all have definable attributes, i.e. they are finite. Man is born and he dies. There is no-one alive who will not die. During his life span, he will grow to a certain shape, height and volume. The universe is defined as all the celestial bodies and plants. All these objects have a certain mass, shape, volume and so on. The life span of a star may be very long, but a point in time will come when it will cease to exist.

The universe is large, but is still a 'finite' space. No scientist could ever prove using hard facts that the universe has no bounds. In fact when they say the universe arose from a Big Bang and is expanding they inherently admit it is finite in size, otherwise it could not expand! There is nothing in reality which is unlimited. No matter how hard we try, man is unable to find anything unlimited around him. All he can perceive is the finite and limited. A further attribute of everything around us is that they are all needy and dependent in order to continue existing. They are not self-sustaining or independent. Man has needs. He has to satisfy in order to survive. He has organic needs. Man must eat and drink if he is to survive. If he does not he will die. We see need and dependency in plants and animals. They depend on other parts of the food chain for existence. The water cycle is dependent on the sun, which is dependent on the laws of the galaxies and burning mass, and so on... Nothing man can perceive is self subsistent. So things exist, but do not have the power of existence. They cannot control when they die or when other bodies die.

There is one fact that emerges from all this. If something is limited and finite, and does not have the power to be self subsistent then it must have been created. Applying this to everything we see will bring us to a conclusion. If everything in the universe is created because it has not the power of being in existence on its own, and is finite and limited, then there must be a creator. This creator by contrast has to be unlimited and not needy and dependent on anything to bring it into, or sustain it's existence. The universe; the sum of all finite and dependent objects is finite and dependent - but dependent on what? Dependent on something to start and sustain life, something to plan and

develop life. The only rational and intellectual solution to the question of creation is that there is a creator which has accounted for all that we see and perceive. Ration tells us that nothing can be created without a creator. Ultimately there must be a creator who is unlimited every aspect. Some scientists challenge this with a theory that everything depends on something for existence, which in turn depends upon something for existence, and so on ad infinitum. This theory is irrational as it does not explain how anything came into existence in the first place. It uses an idea of 'infinity' which know does no exist in reality. It does not, even make attempt, to explain the very first step in the sequence. It is illogical and incomplete in its theory, and far from being scientific. If at its basis the theory is weak, how possible to trust the proceeding theoretical argument for creation of the universe?

Conclusion

Hence, looking at any planet in the universe, contemplating on any phase of life, or comprehending any aspect of man provides a conclusive evidence for a Creator, what Muslims call Allah(SWT) - This intellectual proof of the existence of Allah(SWT) is an understanding open for everyone and obligatory for all Muslims to be convinced of. Each person must explore to the limit of his understanding. -Blind belief has no place in Islam. -Believing through instinctive emotions is unreliable and dangerous as emotions can change and error to ones belief and actions. And if the basis of belief is irrational and weak, how can a system of life be built upon it.