

A Study on Prophethood (Part I)

Dr. Hatem Karim Al-Jiyashi

Abstract

Prophethood is not merely a message conveyed by the prophet to humanity; it is also an essential support upon which people rely. This necessity is dictated by reason, as it encompasses all aspects of human life—whether religious, social, political, or intellectual. Furthermore, the prophet represents the most complete and righteous individual chosen by God to serve as an intermediary between Him and humankind, guiding them back to the divine path after they have strayed. Therefore, prophethood stands as humanity's sole refuge in times of trials and tribulations, serving as a divine envoy. This highlights the profound significance of the individuals chosen by God as prophets, who attain the highest levels of spiritual perfection and moral excellence. They possess unique capabilities and rare qualities, particularly the final Prophet (s). Given the gravity of this divine mission and its role in guiding humanity, the selection of prophets rests solely in God's hands. This study seeks to explore the foundational principles of prophethood, clarify its key concepts, address misconceptions, and refute objections, providing the reader with a comprehensive understanding of this fundamental doctrine.

Keywords: prophethood, revelation, religious experience, prophetic mission, prophets.

David Hume and Immanuel Kant's Objections to Proofs for the Existence of the Necessary Being: A Critique in Light of Mulla Sadra's Burhān al-Ṣiddīqīn

Dr. Hamid Reza Ayatollahi

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the reasoning behind Burhān al-Ṣiddīqīn (the Proof of the Truthful), as formulated by the Muslim philosopher Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, known as Mulla Sadra. It critically examines various arguments for proving the existence of the Necessary Being—God, the Almighty—while addressing the objections raised by Western philosophers David Hume and Immanuel Kant. Where relevant, the study also references the perspectives of Anselm, Descartes, and Leibniz. The research demonstrates that the systematic critiques posed by these two Western philosophers against traditional theological arguments and their variations do not hold against Mulla Sadra's Burhān al-Ṣiddīqīn, which is distinguished by its precision and rigor. Through a critical analysis, this study refutes the various objections that have been raised in this context, highlighting the philosophical robustness of Mulla Sadra's argument.

Keywords: Burhān al-Ṣiddīqīn, Necessary Being, existence, Mulla Sadra, Kant, Hume.



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Calling to God: A Study of Methods and Outcomes

Dr. Muhammad Kazim Hussein Al-Fatlawi

Abstract

The Islamic framework, in both its doctrinal and legislative dimensions, is comprehensive in addressing the affairs of individuals and society. Today, the Muslim community is in dire need of being reminded of this holistic system. This study argues that returning to God is the only path to rescuing the youth from confusion and deviation, serving as a barrier against the relentless assaults of misguided ideologies and materialistic trends in the modern world. The revival of the nation can only be achieved through the same means that ensured its righteousness in the past—by turning back to God, His righteous religion, His glorious Quran, and the teachings of the Infallible figures (a). This research is structured into an introduction and two main sections: the first explores the methods of calling to God, while the second examines the individual and societal outcomes of faith, highlighting both spiritual and behavioral effects. The study also incorporates scholarly perspectives to elucidate theological concepts.

Keywords: calling to God, da'wa, faith.

The Oneness of Acts from the Perspective of Muslim Theologians

Sheikh Hassan Tarkashvand

Abstract

The oneness of acts (tawḥīd af'ālī) is an aspect of divine unicity, and Muslim theologians have presented varying perspectives regarding its nature and proofs. The Ash'arites, under the principle that "there is no effective agent in existence except God," attribute all occurrences directly to God, asserting that all actions originate solely from Him. From their perspective, there is no causal system among created beings; rather, the relationships between phenomena are based on divine habit, perpetual coincidence, or at most, a consistent pattern. In contrast, the Mufawwiḍa (those advocating delegation) attribute all actions of creation to the creatures themselves, denying any divine involvement. By upholding the principle of causality and rejecting the possibility of a single act being attributed to two agents, they see no need to reconcile causality with tawḥīd af'ālī. Imāmī theologians, drawing from narrations of the infallible Imams (a), uphold a doctrine of causality where divine actions remain independent, while natural phenomena rely on immediate causes yet ultimately depend on God. They view God as the ultimate cause at the top of the chain of causation, with all actions linked to Him in a hierarchical manner. This is explained through distinguishing between real and preparatory (i'dādī) causes, where natural causes merely serve as conditions for the existence of their effects, whereas the true cause (God) grants existence itself. Consequently, effects can be attributed both to God and their immediate causes. Another perspective within this framework considers causality as a form of divine manifestation (tajallī) and emanation, where every being derives its existential status and agency from a divine attribute proportional to its ontological capacity. Regarding tawḥīd af'ālī and human free will, the Ash'arites, in their effort to uphold divine unity, deny human agency and free choice. Conversely, the Mu'tazilites, in their defense of divine justice and in an effort to absolve God from any association with evil or imperfection, advocate for human autonomy and the delegation of actions (tafwīd). The Imāmiyya reject both absolute determinism (jabr) and absolute delegation, adopting instead the doctrine of "the matter between two matters" (al-amr bayna al-amrayn), which maintains both divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

Keywords: unity of acts (tawḥīd af'ālī), causality, the matter between two matters, delegation (tafwīd), determinism (jabr), free will.



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The Oneness of Divine Attributes from the Perspective of Muslim Theologians

Sheikh Hossein Roštami

Dr. Behrouz Mohammadi Monfared

Abstract

All Islamic sects agree that God possesses attributes of perfection, as affirmed by Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions. However, there is a theological debate on how these attributes relate to the divine essence. Muslim theologians have developed four main perspectives on this issue: the theory of the identity of attributes and essence, also known as *tawḥīd ṣifātī*; the theory that attributes exist as additions to the essence (*ziyādat al-ṣifāt ‘alā al-dhāt*); the theory that the essence substitutes for the attributes (*niyābat al-dhāt ‘an al-ṣifāt*); and the theory of states (*nazariyyat al-aḥwāl*). Proponents of each view have provided various arguments in support of their position while also critiquing the opposing theories. This article examines these perspectives, evaluates the evidence behind them, and responds to objections raised against each. A detailed analysis indicates that the theory of the identity of attributes and essence, which is widely endorsed by Shi‘a and Mu‘tazilite theologians, is the most precise and well-supported. Additionally, objections to this theory are systematically addressed, and its validity is further reinforced by several Quranic verses and narrations from the infallible Imams (a).

Keywords: relationship between essence and divine attributes, theory of identity, theory of addition, theory of substitution, theory of states.

Essential Oneness (Tawḥīd Dhātī) from the Perspective of

Muslim Theologians

Dr. Jaber Mousavi Rad

Abstract

Muslim theologians have interpreted tawḥīd dhātī (the essential oneness of God) in two primary ways: the negation of any partner (sharīk) and the negation of any composition (juz'). Accordingly, tawḥīd dhātī necessitates the denial of any form of plurality, partnership, or resemblance to God. In Islamic narrations, these two aspects are conveyed through the terms tawḥīd aḥādī (absolute oneness) and tawḥīd wāḥidī (singular oneness), where the concept of God's absolute oneness in these traditions aligns with the doctrine of tawḥīd dhātī. Muslim theologians have presented various arguments to affirm God's essential oneness. Scriptural proofs directly establish tawḥīd dhātī, particularly through the well-known "Burhān al-Tamānu'" (Argument from Mutual Hindrance), which asserts that the existence of multiple gods would necessitate limitations in divine power. A second rational argument holds that if multiple deities existed, they would have sent messengers of their own, whereas all prophets throughout history have exclusively preached monotheism. A third argument derives from the order and unity observed in the universe, which implies a single creator. The well-known "Burhān al-Furja" (Argument from Separation) posits that a plurality of deities would necessitate a distinguishing factor between them, leading to an infinite regress, which is logically untenable. Additionally, two further arguments reinforce tawḥīd dhātī: the simplicity of the divine essence and the absoluteness (ṣarāfa) of God's being, both of which inherently necessitate divine unity.

Keywords: essential oneness (tawḥīd dhātī), Islamic theology (kalām), negation of partnership, negation of composition, Argument from Mutual Hindrance (Burhān al-Tamānu').



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