

WHY IS GOD ONE?

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WHY IS GOD ONE?

DIVINE REVELATION

Since a human being does not have all of these divine attributes, he cannot comprehend the nature of the God simply by thinking about Him. Since human beings are also different, their opinions on the nature of God will also be different as history attests.

As God in the Qur'an explains,

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِهِ عِلْمًا ﴿١١﴾

*He [God] knows what is happens to them in this world and what will happen to them, **but they will never compass anything of His Knowledge.***¹

Therefore, the only way for human beings to know God is for God Himself to reveal His Nature.

Muslims believe this divine revelation to be the Qur'an. On the basis that the Qur'an is indeed the Speech of God, God must therefore be One because He says so in the Qur'an:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾

Say, 'He is Allah (swt) [God], **[the] One.**'²

INDEPENDENT WILL

God is the Uncaused Cause of the universe and is personal with a will. Therefore, God must be able to impose His Will independently of all causes.

If, say, two personal gods exist and one wishes to create the universe but the other does not, then:

1. either one god wins and the other does not
2. neither win
3. both win

The second possibility cannot be true because this would mean the universe is neither created nor uncreated, and this is a logical impossibility.

The third possibility cannot similarly be true because the universe cannot be created and uncreated, and this is again is a logical impossibility.

In the first possibility, the one god who can impose his will must be God because He is the Cause of the universe and He is the First Cause, whereas the other god is not the First Cause and cannot prevent God from causing something. Therefore logically God can only be One because only One God can impose His Will independently of all other gods, of all causes. Only One God can, therefore, be the Cause of the universe.

¹ Surah Ta Ha Chapter 20 Verse 110

² Surah Al-Ikhlâs Chapter 112 Verse 1

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Indeed, the Qur'an refers to the impotence of these other gods:

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَاتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ ءَالِهَةً لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ مَوْتًا وَلَا حَيَاةً وَلَا نُشُورًا ﴿٢١﴾

He [God] to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and Who has begotten no son and for Whom there is no partner in the dominion. He has created everything and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements.

Yet they have taken besides Him other gods who created nothing but are themselves created and possess neither hurt nor benefit for themselves and possess no power [of causing] death nor [of giving] life nor of raising the dead.³

It could be argued that both gods might cooperate instead. However this scenario does not reveal the independent Will that is the exclusive characteristic of God as the Uncaused Cause. Therefore, the scenario of cooperating gods cannot distinguish divinity between one or many gods. There is of course no reason gods would cooperate in any case.

Indeed, the Qur'an refers to rivalry that would occur if there were many gods:

مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِذَا لَذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ سُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

*No son did Allah (swt) [God] beget nor is there any god along with Him. [If there had been many gods] then each god would have taken away what he had created and some would have tried to overcome others! Glorified is Allah [swt] above all that they attribute to Him!*⁴

So this rivalry would involve the destruction of the universe as each god used their creation to fight each other.

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Had there been therein [in the heavens and the earth] gods besides Allah (swt) [God] then verily both would have been ruined. Glorified is Allah [swt] the Lord of the Throne, above all that they associate with Him!⁵

³ Surah Al-Furqan Chapter 25 Verses 2-3

⁴ Surah Al-Mu'minun Chapter 23 Verse 91

⁵ Surah Al-Anbiya' Chapter 21 Verse 22

WHY IS GOD ONE?

OCKHAM'S RAZOR

The One-God explanation is the simplest most comprehensive explanation and, therefore, the best explanation by Ockham's Razor.

Since only One God is necessary for the creation of the universe and the suggestion of multiple gods raises more questions than answers, the best explanation for the creation of the universe is One God. Other gods are, therefore, examples of "entities multiplied beyond necessity."

CONCEPTUAL DIFFERENCES

In the universe, every entity has at least one conceptual difference, such as shape or size, with every other entity, and this proves the existence of that entity in relation to others.

However, these conceptual differences cannot exist outside the material universe because they are based on the material universe and God is immaterial. Therefore, there must either be any number of immaterial and, therefore, unknown conceptual differences, or there are no conceptual differences.

By Ockham's' Razor, the simplest most comprehensive explanation is that there are no conceptual differences outside the universe.

Any other explanation would require further explanation as to why there should be any conceptual differences outside the universe and as to what these immaterial conceptual differences could be. As material creatures, human beings cannot objectively conceive of immaterial conceptual differences and, therefore, cannot objectively explain why there should be immaterial conceptual differences outside the material universe.

The absence of any immaterial conceptual difference is then only compatible with the existence of a single entity.

Therefore, God can only be One.

CONCEPTUAL CAUSES

In the universe, every entity changes due to and depends on material causes, all of which can be traced back to the first uncaused immaterial cause, God. However, these material dependencies cannot exist outside the universe because they are based on the material universe, and God, being outside the universe, is immaterial. Therefore, there must either be any number of immaterial and, therefore, unknown dependencies, or there are no dependencies outside the material universe.

Finite regression removes any immaterial causes other than God. If God depends on an immaterial cause, He would not be the first Uncaused Cause of the material universe and, therefore, would not be God. Therefore, there cannot be any dependencies outside the material universe.

Therefore,

- God can only be One, because He is the only immaterial cause outside the material universe by finite regression
- He must be self-sufficient, free of all material and immaterial dependencies