

Misconceptions about Allah (part 2 of 3): Allah - the One and Only

Description: If God is One why does Quran use the word We?

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Allah is God. He is the one you turn to in your hour of need. He is the one you thank when the miracles of this life become clear. Allah is a word that contains many layers of meaning. It is the name of God (the master of the universe) and it is the foundation of the religion of Islam. He is Allah, the One worthy of all worship.

""He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How can He have children when He has no wife? He created all things and He is the All-Knower of everything. Such is Allah, your Lord! *La ilaha illa Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone), and He is the Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian, over all things. No vision can grasp Him, but His Grasp is over all vision. He is the Most Subtle and Courteous, Well Acquainted with all things." (Quran 6:101-103)

In the Arabic language, the word for God (Allah) comes from the verb *ta'allaha* (or *ilaha*), which means, "to be worshipped". Thus, Allah means, the One, who deserves all worship.

Allah is God, the Creator, and Sustainer of the world, but differences and confusions arise because the English word god is able to be made plural as in gods, or change gender, as in goddess. This is not the case in Arabic. The word Allah stands alone, there is no plural or gender. The use of the words He or Him are grammatical only and in no way indicate that Allah has any form of gender that is comprehensible to us. Allah is unique. In the Arabic language, His name is unchangeable. Allah describes Himself to us in the Quran:

"Say (O Muhammad), He is Allah, (the) One. Allah-us-Samad (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks). He begets not, nor was He begotten; And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him." (Quran 112)

This short chapter of the Quran is known as the chapter of purity, or sincerity. In just a few short words, it sums up the Islamic belief system; that Allah or God is One. He is alone in His majesty; He is alone in His omnipotence. He has no partners or associates. He was there in the beginning and He will be there in the end. God is One. Some may ask, 'If God is One, why then does Quran use the word We?'

In the English language we understand the use of the royal "we", or the grammatical construction known as the majestic plural. Many other languages use this construction including Arabic, Hebrew, and Urdu. We hear members of various royal families or dignitaries using the word we, as in "we decree", or "we are not amused". It does not indicate that more than one person is speaking; rather it denotes the excellence, power or dignity of the one who is speaking. When we hold that concept in mind, it is obvious that there is none more worthy to use the royal we than Allah - God.

"(This is) a Book, which We have revealed unto you (O Muhammad) in order that you might lead humankind out of darkness into light (of belief in the Oneness of Allah)..." (Quran 14:1)

"And indeed, We have honoured the Children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, have provided them with lawful good things, and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preferment." (Quran 17:70)

"And if We willed, We could surely take away that which We have revealed to you (i.e. this Quran). Then you would find no protector for you against Us in that respect." (Quran 17:86)

"O humankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then verily We have created you (i.e. Adam) from dust..." (Quran 22:5)

Respected Islamic scholar of the 13th century, Sheikh al Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said that, "Every time Allah uses the plural to refer to Himself, it is based on the respect and honour that He deserves, and on the great number of His names and attributes, and on the great number of His troops and angels."

The use of the words we, *nahnu*, or verily we, *inna*, in no way indicate that there is more than one god. They have no correlation at all to the concept of a trinity. The entire foundation of the Islamic religion rests upon the belief that there is only One God, and Muhammad is His final messenger.

"And your god is One God; there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful." (Quran 2:163)

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