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The One and Only.

Fourteen hundred years ago, the polytheists and Jews in Arabia asked Prophet Muhammad (s.a.a.w.) questions about God. Some of these questions were:

Tell us of your Lord's ancestry.

O Muhammad, tell us attributes of your Lord, who has sent you as prophet.

What is your Lord made of?

Is He made of gold, silver, iron or what?

Does He belong to a race of Gods?

Does He have parents or children?

Who will inherit the earth after Him?

The answer came in the following verse of the Holy Quran:

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Say: "He is Allah, the One and Only." (The Holy Quran, Surah Al-Ikhlās, Ayah 1, 112:1)

Let us first analyze the sentence, "Huwa-Allahu Ahad", □□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□ lexically.

In this sentence, Huwa is the subject (mubtada) and Allahu its predicate (its khabar), and Ahad-un its second predicate (second khabar). According to this parsing the sentence means: "He (about Whom you are questioning me) is Allah, the One and Only." Another meaning according to the language rules can be, "He is Allah, the One."

Here, the first thing to understand is the unusual use of **AHAD** in the sentence.

Generally, the word is either used in the possessive cases (mudhaf, mudhaf elaih) like **yaum ul-ahad**

(first day of the week

), **fab'atho ahada kum**

(send one of your men) or to indicate total negative (nafi 'aam) as

Ma jaa a-ni ahad-un

(No one has come to me), or in common questions like

Hal `indika ahad-un

(Is there anyone with you?), or in conditional clauses like

In ja'a-ka ahad-un

(If someone comes to you), or in counting as

ahad, ithnan, ahad ashar

(one, two, eleven). Apart from these uses, there is no precedent in the pre-Qur'anic Arabic that the mere word

ahad

might have been used as an adjective for a person or thing. After the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, this word has been used only for the Being of Allah, and for no one else. This extraordinary use by itself shows that being single, unique and matchless is a fundamental attribute of Allah; no one else in the world is qualified with this quality: He is One, He has no equal.

Then, keeping in view the questions that the polytheists and the followers of earlier scriptures asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about his Lord, let us see how they were answered with **ahad-un** after **Huwa-Allah**.

First, it means: "He alone is the Sustainer: no one else has any share or part in providence. And since He alone can be the **ilah** (Deity) Who is Master and Sustainer, therefore, no one else is His associate in Divinity either."

Secondly, it also means "He alone is the Creator of the universe: no one else is His associate in this work of creation. He alone is the Master of the universe, the Disposer and Administrator of its system, the Sustainer, of His creatures, Helper and Rescuer in times of hardship; no one else has any share or plan whatever in the works of Godhead, which as the polytheists of Makkah acknowledged, are works of Allah.

Thirdly since they had also asked the questions: of what is your Lord made? what is His ancestry? What is his gender? From whom has He inherited the world and who will inherit it after Him? -all these questions have been answered with one word **ahad** for Allah. It means:

1. He alone has been, and will be, God for ever; neither was there a God before Him, nor will there be any after Him;
2. there is no race of gods to which He may belong as a member: He is God, one and single, and none is homogeneous with Him;
3. His being is not merely One (wahid) but is Ahad, in which there is no tinge of plurality in any way: He is not a compound being, which may be analyzable or divisible. which may have a form and shape, which may be residing somewhere, or may contain or include something, which may have a color, which may have some limbs, which may have a direction, and which may be variable or changeable in any way. Free from every kind of plurality He alone is a Being Who is Ahad in every aspect.
4. Here, one should fully understand that the word **wahid** (not AHAD) is used in Arabic just like the word "one" in English. A collection consisting of great pluralities is collectively called wahid or one, as one man, one nation, one country, one world, even one universe, and every separate part of a collection is also called one. But the word Ahad is not used for anyone except Allah. That is why wherever in the Qur'an the word wahid has been used for Allah, He has been called Ilah wahid (one Deity), or Allah-ulWahid-ul-Qahhar. (One Allah Who is Omnipotent), and nowhere just wahid, for wahid is also used for the things which contain pluralities of different kinds in their being. On the contrary, for Allah and only for Allah the word Ahad has been used absolutely, for He alone is the Being Who exists without any plurality in any way, Whose Oneness is perfect in every way. (Tafheemul-Quran)

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