



## Analytical Study on attitudes of Quran Exegetes about Denotation of Verses of TAHLIL on Unity of Being in Holy Quran

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v10i2.4354>

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### **Abstract**

The concept, which assumed as consistent with Unity of Being (Pantheism) in the clerical terminology, is one the justified probable notions in interpretation of TAHLIL Phrase: 'There is no God but Allah' (لا اله الا الله). From viewpoint of Muslim mystics, unity of being means that the existence possesses only a real example and none of creatures has actually benefited from this concept, except as the symbol and sign of that real being namely essence of Almighty God. Those interpretations which presented for TAHLIL Phrase (لا اله الا الله) are not consistent with the notion of this divine verse. Resorting to notion of this verse and this fact that existence of any other deities has been disproved other the Allah in this essay, and with respect to this point that any creature may be assumed actually or potentially as example of God, denotation of this verse has been demonstrated for Unity of Being (Pantheism) and a notion such as formative nature of this verse and lexical analysis has been done on term 'Allah' and other Quranic verses to interpret denotation of this verse as the basis for Unity of Being, including these Quranic Verses: 'Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting...' (Baghareh Sura 2:255); '...and there is no god but Allah, the One, the Dominant (of all)' (Sad Sura 38:65), and '...there is no god but He, everything is perishable but His countenance...' (Ghasas Sura 28:88).

**Keywords:** TAHLIL Verses; Comments of Exegetes; Unity of Being; Manifestation of God; God's Countenance; One yet the Dominant

### **Introduction//1. Interpretation of Subject**

According to the attitude of oratory scholars, philosophers and mystics, Pantheism (*Tohid*) includes various meanings and definitions; there is stark difference among some of these definitions. The Quranic Phrase of 'there is no God but Allah' (لا اله الا الله), as the most prevalent interpretation regarding

pantheism is deemed as the best criterion to determine and limit the concept of unity of God from perspective of Holy Quran.

The reality of being denotes relationship between creatures and plurality that has been philosophically interpreted in different forms. The contemporary philosopher, Mohammad Kazem Assar, has classified philosophical comments of related scholars in his treatise under title of 'Unity of Being':

- 1- Some scholars assume being as lexical commonality in all creatures, including Necessary Existent (واجب الوجود) and Possible Beings (ممكّنات).
- 2- Some other experts believe in semantic commonality of being among possible existents and lexical commonality between Necessary Existent and Possible Beings.
- 3- The semantic commonality of being between all creatures except Necessary and Possible Existents is deemed as the most prevalent comment in this regard. Those sagacious scholars who believe in this notion are divided into three groups: a) Peripatetic Philosophers believe in conflict of reality of creatures with each other. B) Sadr Al-Moteallehin (Molla Sadra) and followers of Transcendental Wisdom assume the reality of being as a single type in all creatures and deem it generally as dubious at various levels of intensity and weakness. c) Mystics assume only one real example for existence that is essence of Almighty God and consider no factual and original being for the creatures and suppose them as signs and consequents of God's existence. (Assar, 1971:9)

Shahid Motahari assumes mystic product as this fact that there is nothing may exist except God and His positions, names, attributes and manifestations. (Motahari, 2006:215). Ayatollah Javadi Amoli asserts that according to the attitude of mystic scholars, the united being is a essence that specified to Almighty God (Javad Amoli, 2008, vol. 1, p. 295). Those mystic scholars whose works are considered as main sources of theoretical mysticism, including author of book of '*Tamhid Al Qavaed*' (Saeneddin Tarakeh, 1981:118) and commentators of book of '*Nosus Al Hekam*' of Ibn Arabi e.g. Qeisari (Ashtiani, 1991:158), assumed being as a personal unit and pluralities as related examples and manifestations and conducted reasoning based on this belief. Some of philosophers with mystic conduct are unanimously agree with mystics in their attitude in some of their works. Sadr Al- Moteallehin, a leading philosopher says in this regard as follow: "*My lord led me in this way to divinely illuminated argument toward Right Path from being of existence and what exists within a united factual character who has not any partner in terms of factual existence and whatever observed in the world of existence are nothing except the manifestations of His Essence and symbols of His attributes surely as the truth of His original essence.*"<sup>1</sup> (Molla Sadra 1989, Vol. 2, p. 292) Similarly, in his book titled '*Taghdisat*', Mirdamad wrote: "*And He is entire existence and total being and whatever except Him are the beams of His Illumination and consequents of His being and under aegis of His Essence*"<sup>2</sup>. (Amin, 1997:13) Also, at the beginning of his treatise of 'Onset and Finale', Khajeh Nasireddin Toosi wrote: "The beginning of universe originates from Him (Necessary Being) and the end of all creatures is at His hand, but all of them are the same as Him." (Javadi Amoli, 2007, Vol. 5, p. 57)

The interpretations of philosophers and Muslim mystics were expressed briefly about term 'TAHLIL'. However, the problem is that given this phrase is one of illuminated verses in Holy Quran that signifies subject of Unitarianism (*Tohid*). As the describers of divine revelation when they are exposed to the word '*Elah*' (Deity) the exegetes of Holy Quran analyses the scientific aspect of term 'Allah' to present the fact which is compliant to phrase of TAHLIL in those verses that denote this subject in Holy Quran. Furthermore, when analyzing these verses based on various reasons, the given reasons and requirements are excluded from the comments presented by mystics and their presuppositions and they follow the fact of this subject from perspectives of exegetes of Holy Quran and looking at these verses per se.

كذلك هداني ربي بالبرهان النير العرشى، الى صراط مستقيم، من كون الوجود و الموجود منحصر في حقيقة واحدة شخصية لا شريك له في الوجودية الحقيقية؛ و كلما  
 1 - يترائي في عالم الوجود إنه غير الواجب المعبود فانما هو من ظهورات ذاته، و تجليات صفاته التي هي في الحقيقة عين ذاته  
 2 - هو كل الوجود و كله الوجود و ما سواه على الاطلاق لمعات نوره و رشحات وجوده و ظلال ذاته

## 2- Attitudes of Exegetes for Interpretation of Phrase (*There Is No God but Allah*) TAHLIL

- 2-1- They assumed meaning of TAHLIL phrase as obvious and clear with no interpretation and did not concern with a certain expression of intention in the given verse and mentioned it only as related to pantheism. (Beizavi, 1987, vol. 5, p.9; Nasafi, 1985, vol. 4, p. 31; Abu Hayan, 1991, vol. 8, p. 387; Jorjani, 1999, vol. 7, p. 272; Khazen, 1984, vol. 4, p. 18; Ibn Adel, 1990, vol. 16, p. 296; Kashani, dateless, vol. 7, pp. 466; Kashani, 1992, vol. 5, p. 549; Kashefi, dateless, p. 998; Sheikhzadeh, 1998, vol. 7, p. 126; Eshkevari, 1994, vol. 3, p. 771; Jamal, 1996, vol. 6, p. 327; Maraghi, dateless, vol. 23, p. 54; Balaghi, vol. 2007; p. 78; Nahavandi, 2007; vol. 5; p. 294; Tabarni, 2008, vol. 5, p. 302).
- 2-2- Another group of exegetes has expressed meaning of this phrase as lack of competency for being worshiped as God for any creature except Allah. (Sadreddin Shirazi, 1982, vol. 2, p. 103)
- 2-3- Another group of exegetes signifies lack of God position for anything except Allah. (Mataridi, 2006, vol. 8, P. 560; Abol Fotouh Razi, 1998, vol. 7, p. 356; Meibodi, 1992; Vol. 2; p. 636; Fakhr Razi, 1999, vol. 29, p. 357; Fakhr Razi, 1999; vol. 29; p. 357; Tayeb, 1990, vol. 12; p. 313; Zemakhshari, 1987; vol. 1, P. 210; Gonabadi, 1986, vol. 1, p. 159; Ibn Ashur, 1999, vol. 2, p. 74; & Aloosi, 1994, vol. 1, p. 428). Allameh Tabatabaei has mentioned this issue with more focus on this fact that the god that deserves factually for worship is nothing except Allah. (Tabatabaei, 1970, vol. 1, p. 395)
- 2-4- And some other expressions signify proving of existence of Allah. (Ibn Arabi, 1992, vol. 4, p. 142; Tabarsi, 1994, vol. 1, p. 94; Maleki Mianji, 1995, vol. 3, p. 132)
- 2-5- And also some other scholars have assumed this belief as confirmation for Unity of Being that deserved for worshiping. (Sheikh Ulvan, 1999, vol. 2, p. 214)

## 3- Analytical Study of Exegetes' Attitude About Interpretation of Phrase 'There Is No God but Allah'

Analysis on their attitudes may facilitate acquiring of proper intention of this verse after collection and classification of attitudes of exegetes:

### 3-1- Inter-Textual Evidences

#### 3-1-1- Sematic Analysis of Terms and Structure

The analysis on attitudes of exegetes indicates that the main defect of their approach lies in this fact that it makes restricted the information of the given verse. This verse never negates existence of any deity rather than Allah, but these exegetes have interpreted term 'Elah' (deity) as the meaning of a God that serves for worshiping. Term 'Elaheh' (goddess) lexically stands for worshiped object (Ragheb, 1997:17). Thus, whatever serves as worshiped object, is an example of 'Elah' (deity) and the phrase of 'There is no God but Allah' (لا اله الا الله) any 'Elah' has been renounced absolutely and not what deserves for title of 'Elah'. Such a constraint for deserving to being worshiped is deemed as contradicted to apparent concept of this verse without interpretation. Of course, if there is a premise for such an interpretation, this exegesis will be acceptable. However, it seems there is no such a premise, but there are several evidences that signify the concept of this verse, they will be reviewed in the followings. This constraint in expression of exegetes is due to inevitable illusion which exists absolutely in interpretation of this verse. There are many examples for *Elah* (deity) and 'Maboud' (worshiped object), and even the human may assume oneself as Elah and worshiped object. (*Have you ever seen ones who took his desire as deity?*<sup>3</sup> (Jathiyen Sura 45:23)) Therefore negation of existence of any deity rather than Allah was considered as false and exegetes restricted the concept of this verse to remove this constraint and they considered it as the negation of any deity (Elah) that deserves to worship. However, it is revealed on the other hand by this explanation that not only absolute negation of any deity rather than God lacks any

<sup>3</sup>أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ (جاثية 23:45)

constraint and it is according to wisdom and rationality and narratives, but it also recalls this point that negation of anything other than God is the same as what sophisticated group has said and they do not assume Being as illusion and imagination, but those who believe in Unity of Being by negation of existence of deity other than Allah is to renounce their existence by originality that may not contradict to consequential and figurative existence. (Ashtiani, 1991:118) This figurative and consequential existence is the same as manifestation for the Glorified God.

In order to clarify how we can reach to negation of existence of anything except God by negation of deities (Elaheh) in Phrase of ‘There is no God but Allah’, it should be noticed that all creatures are included in examples of deity (*Elah*) and worshiped object (*Maboud*) because firstly most of creatures have been so far worshiped by humans, ranging from stone and wooden idols to moon, sun, stars and some humans e.g. Pharaoh, Nimrud and Jewish scholars and nuns. Secondly, other creatures are also potentially as subjects to worshipping.

Thus, negation of deity creatures absolutely means negation of existence of any god rather than Allah. Some points that confirm this concept for this phrase (*There is no God but Allah*) are as follows:

- 1- *Elah* means worshiped object and worshipping denotes expression of humiliation and degradation (Ragheb, 1997:330); humiliation is done versus perfect creature. Therefore, it is derived from meaning of phrase (*There is no God but Allah*) that there is no perfection except divine perfections; however, humans may express humility against those for whom they attach some perfect attributes while phrase (*There is no God but Allah*) asserts that this humiliation should be performed only versus God. It is concluded that those perfect attributes to which human express humiliation and they worship owners of such attributes are nothing except perfect attributes of God. In the other words, their virtues are the manifestations of divine positive and negative attributes. Alternately, any being that possesses these attributes its existence is equivalent to perfection and any defect and limitation are attributable to other creatures. Therefore, negation of virtue of creatures other than God requires for negation of factual being of those creatures other than God.
- 2- One of the grammatical uses of Arabic word ‘الا’ (*Except*) rather than exception is nominal application as meaning of ‘rather’ and as equivalent to contradictory description. (Ibn Hesham, 1979, vol. 1, p. 98) Accordingly, work ‘الا’ in phrase (لا اله الا الله) means contradicted description. The contents of this phrase are designated for negation of whatever exists in conflict with Allah. In the other words, *Elah* (deity) has been negated only for something exists rather than Allah and this denotes negation of existence rather than Allah.
- 3- In Quranic verse of ‘*The praise deserves to God*: الحمد لله (Fateheh Sura: 1:2), Arabic article ال (AL) denotes kind or inclusion and in any case term الحمد لله covers all praises and thanksgiving which are employed for virtue-possessor or goodness giver. Whereas thanksgiving is a type of worship therefore meaning of term ‘الحمد لله’ is that any worshipping is performed only for God. It is possible to think term الحمد لله means that one should only thanks for God, but this concept is not the accurate meaning of this verse because term الحمد لله is and emerging order and verbal sentence not religious and commanding one. Thus, those worshipping performances, which are done for any one rather Almighty God; in fact, they are performed for Glorified God.

This point is also perceived of this Quranic verse: ‘...*Deity of people*,...<sup>4</sup>’ (Nas Sura, 114:3). In this verse, the glorified God has been introduced as worshiped object for all people and also God-believers. Namely, this Quranic verse asserts that even those who worship something rather than Almighty God, their real worshiped object is God. In other words, although their worshipping is subject to polytheism and blasphemy and this has been religiously renounced by the holy Sharia, the worshipping is performed by polytheist to a rejected worshiped object is done; in fact, it is for the sake of Almighty

4-...إله الناس... (ناس 114:3)

God because similar to other creatures, the given rejected worshiped object has no position except manifestation to the glorified God.

It has been implied in *Monajat Khamseh Ashar* (15 breviaries) of Imam Sajad (PBUH): ‘*You (God) are glorified in any place and worshiped at any time... and invited in any language and recalled in any heart.*’<sup>5</sup> (Qomi, 1998:213) I has been also explicitly emphasized in this statement that the Almighty God is worshiped by all creatures and therefore the only proper interpretation of this belief is what already mentioned according to mystic pantheism and Unity of Being.

- 4- What is apparently perceived from this phrase (*There is no God but Allah*) and it is normally assumed by any Muslim of this phrase suggesting that this Quranic phrase denotes a fact not a task. It expresses an emerging reality not religious command (although it requires for an obligatory order) and at the same time this belief is ascertained explicitly in Prayer’s call (Azan), *Eghameh* (recital before prayer), *Tashahod* as a part of prayers and in many other effective breviaries, but what exegetes have mentioned for interpretation of phrase (لا اله الا الله) may reduce its contents into an obligatory and clerical command because this fact that worshiping only deserves to God not otherwise denotes don’t worship except God is an obligatory order and it is not consistent with what mentioned in this verse. Any part of a clerical command is the same as its concept and subjunctive signified. With respect to this fact, it can be implied the phrase (لا اله الا الله) negates existence of deities not negation of their merit for worshiping. While Allameh Tabatabaei has the same attitude with other aforesaid exegetes concerning interpretation of this phrase under Quranic verse (Baghareh Sura 2:163), in another point of Al-Mizan (Quran Exegesis), he has mentioned a point about phrase (لا اله الا الله) that is in conflict with his previous interpretation and it is consistent with our attitude. He says: Phrase (لا اله الا الله) is sum of glorification and simile. (Tabatabaei, 1970, vol. 8, 169) Glorification and simile (in terminology of mystics) are assumed as characteristics of Unitarian belief and theoretical pantheism not practical Unitarianism and pantheism in worshipping. Therefore, this point is totally consistent with our interpretation about (لا اله الا الله).
- 5- Allah is the comprehensive noun including all virtues. This concept is one of the semantic requirements for this word because Arabic word ‘الله’ was originally ‘ال اله’ that means worshipped object (Ibn Fares, 2012:50). Worshipping is done versus virtue and the worshipped object something that possesses a virtue that stimulates human to worship it. Thus, application of concept of worshipped object requires for comprehensiveness for all virtues. Thus, God is an indefinite reality and unlimited being because finiteness and restriction are led to defect in terms of virtues. All Islamic philosophical schools, ranging from Peripatetic School to Molla Sadra’s School and also prominent methodological schools, agree unanimously over indefinite existence of Almighty God. (Yazdanpanah, 2009:265). The indefinite essence of glorified God results from His unity the same as the concept mentioned concerning Unity of Being because indefinite is not restricted by any constraint and boundary and never bears any limitation and it does not leave any opportunity for existence of other being. The unlimited being does not leave any place for another being as an example of essential example of existence and it fills all of existential fields. If it is practical to consider existent field in which indefinite being of Almighty God is not present with existential and objective essence, this means restriction of existence of God so it is not compliant to assumption of His indefinite being.

Based on acceptance of descriptive basis according causation concerning contents of word ‘Allah’ in all of related applications, including (لا اله الا الله) and with respect to the Rule of Suspension of Assumption and given negation of Elah (deity) in this phrase means description of Allah which requires for indefinite essence and negation of anything except oneself that has been suspended and therefore it can be clearly perceived this sentence absolutely negates any kind of being rather than Allah and of

<sup>5</sup>أُنْتُ الْمَسْبُوحُ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَالْمَعْبُودُ فِي كُلِّ زَمَانٍ... وَالْمَدْعُوعُ بِكُلِّ لِسَانٍ وَالْمُعْتَمَدُ فِي كُلِّ جَنَانٍ

course this concept is not in conflict with presence of possible beings as manifestations and symbols of Almighty God.

### 3-2- Context of Pantheist Quranic Verses

In addition to what mentioned in semantic analysis on phrase (لا اله الا الله), the context of those verses in which such a phrase is included also denotes Unity of Being, such as the following verses:

- 1- In 'Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist ...'<sup>6</sup> (Baghareg Sura, 2:55); 'He is the Living, there is no god but He ...'<sup>7</sup> (Al-Ghafer 40:65), term 'الحي' (Self-subsisting) is the subject at these both verses and using it with definite article signifies the limit. Therefore, living is restricted to life of God and the living creature has been restricted to the glorified God, but Holy Quran has also attributed the life to other creatures. In these verses: 'He (also) said: Therein shall you live ...'<sup>8</sup> (Al-Aaraf 7:25) and 'And He it is Who has brought you to life, then He will cause you to die ...'<sup>9</sup> (Al-Haj 22:66), and revival of earth (احياء الارض) (Ghafer 40:9), in order to remove apparent conflict between these verses there is no way except it is said the life of living creatures is the manifestation of life of glorified God. Namely, living of creatures depends on divine life. The contextual relationship among term 'الحي' and phrase (لا اله الا الله) in these two verses and denotation of word 'الحي' to Unity of Being is totally consistent with denotation of phrase (لا اله الا الله) to Unity of Being. Two sentences of 'هو الحي' and 'لا اله الا الله' has been rhetorically expressed by action in this verse of Al-Ghafer Sura and this action is presented because of perfect connection or apparent perfect relation between them that means unity of themes in both sentences.
- 2- In 'Allah, there is no god but He; His are the very best names...'<sup>10</sup> (Taha Sura 20:8) and sentence 'لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى...' (He has the best names...) the predicate is placed prior to the subject that denotes restriction. Therefore, this verse assumes virtuous attributes only belong to the Almighty God and this requires negation of virtuous attributes to anything except God, but each of creatures may enjoy although some of those virtues to the limited extent. This apparent conflict may be resolved based on Unity of Being similar to in what expressed about former verses.
- 3- In 'Your God is only Allah, there is no god but He; He comprehends all things in (His) knowledge'<sup>11</sup> (Tahah 20:98), this verse denotes comprehensive and extensive divine being versus all objects that require for having knowledge about them. This verse: '...surely Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing'<sup>12</sup> (Al-Baghareh Sura 2:115) denotes and confirms existential wideness of God and related link to divine knowledge. It is obvious this existential wideness is indefinite and unlimited; therefore, there is no opportunity left for creatures rather than God. Thus, it has been asserted on existential wideness of glorified God and His comprehensiveness versus all objects in this verse of Taha Sura. If the knowledge in this verse is interpreted as acquired knowledge and subjective image, denotation of this verse for the given concept may be problematic, but whereas knowledge of glorified God is kind of presentational knowledge; namely, presence of known object before knower and existential link among knower and the known there is no doubt left about designated meaning.
- 4- In '...there is no god but He! All praise is due to Him...'<sup>13</sup> (Ghasas Sura 28:70), sentence 'لَهُ الْحَمْدُ' (Praising belongs to Him...) denotes to Unity of Being from two dimensions: both because of precedence of predicate to subject that refers to limitation and also Arabic definite article (ال) for

6- الله لا إله إلا هو الحي القيوم (البقره 2:255)

7- هو الحي لا إله إلا هو (الغافر 40:65)

8- قَالَ فِيهَا تُحْيَوْنَ (الاعراف 7:25)

9- هو الذي أحياكم ثم يميتكم (الحج 22:69)

10-...الله لا إله إلا هو له الأسماء الحسنى... (طه 20:8)

11- إِنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَسِعَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا (طه 20:98)

12- إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ (البقره 2:115)

13-...هو الله لا إله إلا هو له الحمد... (القصص 28:70)

kind or inclusion in word 'الحمد' that covers all of praising that is used for all of given virtues. Praising is presented for the virtue; therefore, it is inferred from this verse that all virtues appertain to the glorified God. Thus, any virtue found in anything rather than God is the manifestation of perfection and virtue of glorified God.

- 5- In '...and there is no god but Allah, the One, the Dominant (of all)'<sup>14</sup> (Sad Sura 38:65), similar to this verse, name of the One (الواحد) has been used along with name of Dominant of all (القهار) as the attributes to the glorified God in five other Quranic verses: (Yousef 12:39; Raad 13:16; Ibrahim 14:48; Zomar 39:4; and Al-Ghafer 40:16). The unity of the Almighty God is of type of Dominant One according to these verses. Here, term 'dominancy' does not refer to dominance over enemies at these verses because this attribute is not consistent with description of attribute (the One: الواحد), but it denotes existential dominance. The attribute of 'Dominant of all' (القهار) has been juxtaposed to name of 'the One' (الواحد) and it describes this word and or it restricts this attributes. Thus, expression of attributes of 'the One, the Dominant of all' (الواحد القهار) denote that unity of glorified God is in such a way that it overshadows existence of other creatures; namely, it does not leave any position for the rest. As a result, He is the One and Unique. This concept has been implied in *Al-Mizan* (Quranic Exegesis) and Tasnim Exegesis concerning interpretation of term of (الواحد القهار) in brief. "Allah is a proper noun in which no mortality and annihilation penetrates so this being could not be restricted. Thus, God is the One and existence of other creates depends on Him and they never possess any independent existence." (Tabatabaei, 1970, vol. 11, p. 176) The One, the Dominant of all (الواحد القهار) is a united being against which no other essence could be imagined and whatever thing is assumed it has not existence but only with reliance on Him. The *dominant unity* (وحدت قاهره) is something which eliminates pluralities and leaves no position for real plurality. (Javad Amoli, 1963, vol. 40, p. 534) This concept has been asserted for term of (الواحد القهار) in statement of Imam Ali (PUBH): "And verily, Glorified God will survive alone after annihilation of the world with nothing together, similar to what was before the beginning of the universe so He will be like this after mortality of the world with no time and place and neither duration nor date. At that time, all of periods and times will be eliminated and years and hours will be removed and nothing will remain except God, the One, the Dominant of all."<sup>15</sup> (Seyed Razi, 2000:366)
- 6- In '... there is no god but He, everything is perishable but His countenance...' <sup>16</sup> (Ghasas 28:88), the phrase of 'كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ' (everything is perishable but His countenance) is expressed after TAHLIL term without referral. According to rhetoric rule of pseudo-perfection of link, it denotes causation for Unity of God (توحيد). This verse, which asserts on actual rejection of any creature except glorified God, serves as an absolute reason that proves the pantheist term of (لا اله الا الله) means Unity of Being. Ragheb Isfahani has interpreted term of 'Perishability' in this phrase (everything is perishable but His countenance) as annulment, elimination and mortality (Ragheb, 1997: 542). Term 'وجه' (Countenance) has been interpreted as Essence of God in most of Quranic exegeses, including Tebyan (Toosi, dateless, vol. 8, p. 184), Majma Al Bayan (Tabarsi, 1994, vol. 7, p. 466), Kashaf (Zemakhshari, dateless, vol. 3, p. 437), Anvar Al Tanzil (Beizavi, 1989, vol. 20, p. 318), Rouh Al Maani (Aloosi, dateless, vol. 20, p. 113) Nemouneh Exegesis (Makarem, 2008, vol. 16, p. 205), but Allameh Tabatabaei implies that term 'وجه' (Countenance) is anything to which we are exposed and God's countenance is His attributes e.g. His life, knowledge and power. (Tabatabaei, 1970, vol. 16, p. 90) If this definition proposed by Allameh Tabatabaei is assumed as the basis, countenance of anything means what can be confronted when exposing to that object and it is the same thing which appears in any object. Therefore, countenance of glorified God is the same as His manifestation and sign and he considers anything as existent as a

- وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ (سوره صاد 38:65).<sup>14</sup>  
 وَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ، يَتَعَوَّذُ بِعَدِّ قَنَاءِ الدُّنْيَا وَحَدِّهِ لَا شَيْءَ مَعَهُ. كَمَا كَانَ قَبْلَ الْبَتْدَانِهَا، كَذَلِكَ يَكُونُ بَعْدَ فَنَائِهَا، بِلَا وَقْتٍ وَ لَا مَكَانٍ، وَ لَا جَبِينَ وَ لَا زَمَانَ. عُدِمَتْ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ الْأَجَالِ وَالْأَوْقَاتِ، وَ زَالَتِ السَّنُونَ وَ الْمَسَاعِدُ. فَلَا شَيْءَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ<sup>15</sup>  
 - ... لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ... (سوره قصص 28:88).<sup>16</sup>

symbol of Almighty God and irrespective of living of that symbol he assumes it as null and void for the God.

The Quranic exegetes proposed several comments about the concept of perishability of anything except the glorified God, including four approaches as follows:

- a- Anything except God will be mortal. (Tabarsi, 1994, vol. 7, p. 466)
- b- Anything except God is subject to mortality and elimination. (Meibodi, 1938, vol. 7, p. 361 & Haghi Borousavi, 1952, vol. 6, p. 443)
- c- Anything except God is similar to mortal objects, as a perceivable example. (Aloosi, dateless, vol. 20, p. 113)
- d- Anything except God is currently mortal and lacks real existence. (Ibn Arabi, 1993, vol. 1, p. 322)

In this Quranic verse, mortality is independent from time and it has not been limited to a certain time. Those exegetes, who interpreted this verse as mortality and annihilation of objects in the future or as subjects of mortality, their interpretation contradicts to the apparent fact since according to this meaning, concept of mortal will be figurative while wherever this status is placed between truth and allusion, this premise is based on reality. The methodological scholars assume derivation for application of this separate concept for this object before separation from the original one. (Mozaffar, 1995:52) This verse has been also interpreted in Tasnim Exegesis as mortality and actual annihilation of objects not only in the future, but at present. (Javadi Amoli, 2004, vol. 6, p. 274) Author of commentary on book of *Al Nosus Fi Sharh Naqsh Al Fosus*, which is considered as one of foremost works in theoretical mysticism as well, also argues that hermeneutic concept of *perishable* (هالك) in this verse instead of phrase 'is perished' (يُهْلِك) may denote mortality of object into the existence of glorified God. (Jami, 1991:80)

With respect to what mentioned about contents of the phrase of 'كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ' (*everything is perishable but His countenance*), if meaning of phrase (كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ) in this Quranic verse is only designated for expression of unity of the worshiped object not Unity of Being, this sentence (كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ) will not serve as an appropriate causation for this purpose, but it would be better to tell 'كل 'معبود غيره هالك' (*All of worshiped object will be mortal except Him*) to become as a suitable causation, while it has been implied (*everything is perishable but His countenance*) which is a clear premise to denote TAHLIL phrase for Unity of Being.

There is another verse similar to this Quranic verse under discussion: 'Everyone on it must pass away. And there will endure forever the person of your Lord, the Lord of glory and honor'<sup>17</sup> (Al-Rahman 55:26-27) which signifies actual mortality of all creatures. Allameh Tabatabaei has interpreted this verse as the meaning of mortality in this world and transfer to the other world. (Tabatabaei, 1970, vol. 19, p. 101) while with respect to analysis on a verse in Ghasas Sura and according the aforesaid methodological rule, mortality is actual annihilation in this Quranic verse not gradual mortality and elimination. Context of this verse also denotes the same meaning because phrase of 'يبقى وجه ربك' (*And there will endure forever the person of your Lord*) is a time-independent (timeless) verb and endurance of glorified God is not survival in time, but it is substantial endurance with immortality. Therefore, mortality of creatures is also of substantial and timeless mortality.

## Conclusion

It can be clearly inferred from integration of analysis on Quranic verses and the reasons proposed for interpretation of given claim in this paper that the attitude taken by some Quranic exegetes to assume phrase of 'لا اله الا الله' (*There is no God but Allah*) as a meaning rather than Unity of Being may not be consistent with linguistic rules and related premises, including context of verses and separated premises

<sup>17</sup>كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ (الرحمن 26:55-27)



such as other Quranic verses. It seems methodological and philosophical presuppositions and prevalent traditional approaches about pantheism have played role in interpretation by exegetes. However, assuming the concept of this verse with meaning of negation of real existence of creatures rather than God except as the manifestation of Almighty God is fully aligned with methodological and linguistic rules. Pondering on those verses in which TAHLIL phrase has been included may reveal many implications about our designated meaning in these Quranic verses. Author believes there are tens of other verses which denote pantheism (توحيد) as meaning of Unity of Being (وحدت وجود) which has been discussed on them in other essays of this author.

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