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| **Date** | Wednesday, March 9, 2016 |
| **Topic** | The Quran defines God: A commentary on the “Throne Verse” (*Ayatu’l-Kursi*) |
| **Part** | 4 |

Let us conclude the verse, Quran (2):255



 ***“He knows what is before them and what is after/ behind them, and they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge except what He wills.”***

I have to read the speech of God from my perspective. When God says that “I know before they are created and after they are created”, as a listener, I have to ask what is before and after for me? The speech of God is applicable to me at my level according to my capacity. *How do I confirm this verse accordingly?* I need to look for the signs in this universe.

* For example when I look at the tree, is there any sign that the Creator of the tree knows before the tree is created and after? My observation shows me that the state of the tree before was that of a seed. The Creator of the tree is revealing His qualities to me by demonstrating that the seed is made into a tree. All the qualities of the tree have been preserved in the seed. We see that the after stage of a seed is a tree and the following stage is the tree with fruits. These fruits in turn have seeds showing that the next generation of trees is ensured.

This reality tells me that there is an order in creation. The order is such that we human beings can easily understand and follow how the creation is taking place. **From this I can conclude that the Creator of the order knows what is before and after the created beings. Through this order I get to know that the Creator of the order is revealing to me that if I need anything, I should ask my Creator to create it for me which is by following the order. I thus communicate with my Creator through following the order which is my supplication to the Creator of the order. If we are really conscious of it, most of our lives we are all following the order and are thus in a state of continuous supplication.**

* With the consciousness I can keep my connection with my Creator alive at all times.
* When I am aware that the order is the prayer, I can verbally express it comfortably in my ritual prayers.

This universe is dynamic i.e. creation comes into existence at every moment. The One that gives existence to everything keeps renewing it at every moment. From example above, a seed is already endowed with the qualities necessary to become a shoot. The seed itself has no power to create its own qualities. Similarly, my cells have no power to grow my nails for example. The cells are employed to carry Its mission. The signs show that the One who brings this universe into existence knows before and after each act of creation.

* Everything comes into existence with perfect knowledge.

Let’s try to understand the second part of the phrase: “they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge except what He wills”.

* Comprehending the knowledge = what Its knowledge encompasses: I can understand that everything in this universe comes into existence within His perfect knowledge. ***How much of this knowledge can I have?* As much as He wills/permits.** **As much as I investigate this universe, I discover the order in creation within the scope I investigated.** *Is it possible to know the whole order in creation? Can I know what will happen the next century?* The order in the universe has been arranged such that I can partially discover the order which is within the order Giver’s knowledge. All the sciences (biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, etc) comprise of detailing the observed order. This is what the Creator of the universe has enabled us to discover. Whatever is within our reach, we discover, i.e. we cannot go beyond what is not within our reach.

You do not have to relocate to another city to find and be near the Source of your existence. **Reflecting on creation and your own being is enough to know that the Creator exists.** When we discover something in the lab, we are just following the already established order in the universe. No one invents anything; people just discover new things that are part of the order in the universe. When we say “O lord, increase my knowledge.” That is, whatever I discover in the order is what its creator meant it to be. **The prayer is to discover creation as a result of which you will get to know your Lord. The more I study, discover, the more knowledge of creation and the universe I get, the more it helps me get acquainted with my Lord. My knowledge increases in getting to know my Creator which is within His knowledge as much as He meant it to be.**

* Whatever I discover in the order, I should be aware that it is by the will of God to reveal it to me. It is He Who enabled me to discover the order as much as my capacity allows me to discover.

***Muqarraboon*** – Those that are drawn closer to Him. This means that the more I study the creation, the more I become aware of the qualities of the Creator. Just like I am drawn to my mom because I know her qualities, I am drawn to my Creator/I get close to Him by discovering His qualities. I thus become an intimate friend (***Wali***) of God.



***“His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth.”***

Throne is a symbolic representation to Its Sovereignty. That is, “heavens and the earth”, which is the Quranic expression for everything, comes into existence by Its will. The existence of every single being and phenomenon in creation is by It. Its Majesty goes beyond our comprehension.

* Everything in the universe at every moment is under the Throne of the Creator of the universe.
* Nothing can act independently against Its will.

We may think that we act independently in our daily routines. Think about the air we breathe at every moment, the blinking of our eyelids, the walk to the bus/train/car, etc. Everything is under the Throne of the Creator of the universe. We are put in a position of choosing what is already within the order of the universe. Can I will anything which is not within the order of the universe? I only obey the order.

An extension of *Kursi* is the usage of *Arsh* in the scripture. It addresses the reader as: “Whenever you look at water, you can see easily My authority explicitly demonstrating, i.e. particularly on water. All of the qualities of the Creator can be found in water.



***“And the preservation of both tires Him not.
And He alone is truly exalted, the supreme in glory”***

From our understanding of the earlier part of the verse “neither sleep nor slumber overtakes Him”, this is another perspective where I see that the Creator of the universe does not lack anything.

There is no flaw in creation. Everything comes into existence with perfect wisdom and harmony. The sun runs around its course, night is followed by day, human beings are given old age… All this is part of the already discovered order in the universe. Each phenomenon is a miracle on its own.

The last part is the grand finale where I am told that I can easily confirm that It is truly exalted and supreme in glory. I can say that: **“You are Great. I cannot describe Your glory, Your majesty or comprehend You since there is nothing like You”.**

This whole single verse is a comprehensive description of God by the Quran. Many scholars mention that the other verses of the Quran that describe God fall under this verse’s umbrella.