

Evaluating 'Rububiyyah': The Philosophy of Lordship in Islamic Tradition

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Abstract

The idea of "Rububiyyah," which means Lordship in Arabic, is at the core of Islamic theology and philosophy; it refers to the supremacy and wisdom of God who is the sovereign and provider over the creations. This article shows the theological matrix of Rububiyyah in the context of the Islamic tradition by addressing its evolution, cardinal precepts and significance to theological discussion. Based on Ijtihad (interpretation of classical Islamic sources), Modern Scholarship, and rational thinking (philosophy), the article is intended to present a holistic analysis of Rububiyyah's essence and implications. The article is opened with Quranic and Hadith footing of Rububiyyah taking the audience into a historical journey back to the foundations of Islamic cosmology and last day. Next, it proceeds to the striking philosophical facets of Rububiyyah and put them in relation to those which intersect Tawhid (Oneness), divine attributes, and human free will. Through Ibn Rushd's lens, meticulous emphasis is placed on the notion of Jabariyyah, the tension between divine sovereignty and human agency, the idea of Khilafat, and that rational inquiry and science can go hand in hand with Rububiyyah without being compromised. It specifically deals with determinism versus free will dilemma, theodicy, and the nature of the supernatural and its intervention in the world. It also wonders how Akhlaq encompasses Fiqh, Governance, and the beholden responsibility of human under God's directorship. Critically examined studying classic and modern sources will augment in learning Rububiyyah as a philosophical dimension of Islam and establish its position in the contemporary Islamic thinking. The purpose of this paper is structuring the notion as to its theological, philosophical and practical dimensions in hopes of enriching theological discussions and to contribute a little to the comprehension of which God or Allah is in Islamic theology.

Keywords: Rububiyyah, Philosophical Dimensions, Theological, Lordship, Islamic Tradition

Introduction

Rububiyah, or Lordship, is a foundational concept in Islamic theology, emphasizing the absolute sovereignty and providence of Allah over the universe (Quran 2:116). It emphasizes the idea of Islam being the only way of truth which existed before the creation of the world and which will exist long after. This concept can be found in the Quranic text that Allah is both the source and lord of both the cosmos and all that holds it. For instance, Surah Al-Fatiha, the opening chapter of the Quran, begins with the phrase "All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds" (Quran 1:2). He also argues that his mission was to inform people about the fact that Allah is superior to anything in creation. As well, 'min verses the Quran move to the fact that Allah is the master of all things including nature, people affairs and the universe, affirming his absolute control.

Recognizing the philosophical themes of Rububiyah within an Islamic mystical framework is equally important for comprehending a theological framework of Islam (Rahman, 2009). It gives the impressions that the management style of God, the mutual Nature of the Creator and His creation, as well as the role being played by human beings in the whole process are valuable topics. The Rububiyah, a term for Islamic monotheism (Tawhid) and the relation between Tawhid and human life is an area that every theologian and Muslim scholar wants to study intensively and possibly excel in (Chittick 1989). This is the main postulate of Islamic theology which Muslims consider in establishing their beliefs about Allah's obliges, His attributes and the connection between Allah and the believer (Mohammad, 2006). It also lays ground for the meaningful debates of the Islamic idea of justice of God, providence and the implication of it on human existence.

The aim of this article is indeed diving into the philosophical principles supporting Rububiyah, in search of its theological meanings and implications for the Big Philosophy. The aim is to trace out the concept's historical evolution, cover the fundamental principles, and highlight its

contemporary interpretations for a holistic assessment to capture the uniqueness of divine Lordship in Islam viewed as a multifaceted phenomenon. By undertaking this endeavor, we aim to broaden our knowledge of the philosophical aspects of divine nature as well as its role in modern philosophy and theology.

Defining Rububiyyah

Rububiyyah, a foundational concept in Islamic theology, translates to "Lordship" and emphasizes Allah's absolute sovereignty and providence over the universe (Quran 2:2). Such a verse gives a hint that He is referring to what Allah sees as the most basic belief in that He is the only God who is the Creator, as well as the One who holds our existence in His wings. This is a key idea in the Islamic doctrine, which is laid as a basis of Ishaq. In many verses, Quran affirm and guide Allah's Lordship. The opening chapter, Surah Al-Fatiha, sets the tone by declaring, "All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds" (Quran 1:2). This verse points out to Allah acceptance of his boundless authority within everything, from the high expanse of heavens till the subtle details of living beings. Furthermore, numerous verses emphasize Allah's control over nature's phenomena, stating, "He is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them and the Lord of the Buruj (the constellations of the Zodiac)" (Quran 52:49). Similarly, Allah's dominion over human affairs is established in verses like, "And Allah is the Provider for all creation" (Quran 29:62) he significantly adds His situation to the former creation of the world where He is clearly defined as the only source of life and goodness.

Aside establishment and caretaking, Rububiyyah is comprising the notion of divine dominion. The Quran portrays Allah as the ultimate ruler, stating, "He it is who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six days and then established Himself

[above] the Throne" (Quran 57:4). These verses indicate that God has prescribed and mandated the orders of the world under his refereeing thus creating the divine order governing all existence. The role of hadiths in the sense of Rububiyyah, the Arabic term for the supremacy of Allah, is also strengthened. The hadiths have many references or sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which they relate to Allah's infallibility. Another hadith which says, "O Allah, our lord the absolute sovereign you set up the sovereignty whoever you want and remove the sovereignty from whoever you want" is narrated by the blessed Prophet (PBUH). In this Hadith Allah's domination over all the domains of power and so Ladyship is revealed; this is another aspect of Lordship. Rububiyyah is a concept which explains the sovereignty of Allah. It helps Muslims to have a deeper vision of their relationship with Allah which entails the fact that Allah has created everything, it is He who sustains all the living beings and it is the wonderful plan of Allah which is being executed. This idea or principle plays a vital role in the foundation of Islamic thought, as it encompasses how Muslims see and differentiate the world and their own existence within it.

Historical Development

The spiritual aspect of Rububiyyah has undergone a glorious and mechanical transformation throughout the Islamic history. Islamic thought at the start has been in search of the idea of order divine creation throughout the ages, covering up the absolute sovereignty of Allah and blessing the universe uniting. One of the scholars who explored it extensively was Imam Abu Hanifa (d. 767 CE), the founder of the school of Fiqh or Islamic law, the Hanafi School. He stated that divine reason shall with scripture bring His understanding. Ahmed Bahiliya proposed that perfect nature and perfect world are just evident that there is supreme power and huge knowledge (Rahman, 2009).

Afterwards, Imam al-Ghazali (d. 1111 CE), a theologian, philosopher and an authority in Islamic thought, then praised al-Ghazali's contributions in the field the philosophical aspect of the concept of Rububiyah. He made a distinction about between the "Essence" of God and His Attributes (sifat), the point being that the former idea is unattainable, while the latter ones are evident through the working of the logic and the scripture (Chittick, 1989). It ceased to be unfeasible for Omniscience and Omnipresent and omnipotent to reconcile as the concept of a single, all-powerful God.

The Andalusian thinker Ibnu Rushd (d. 1198 CE), who was viewed as a philosopher of high caliber, took the rational comprehension of Rububiyah as against the restrictive one. There, he tried to keep harmonization of religious beliefs and rationality, and, in this connection, state that sitting with theology and philosophy makes it proximal. While, according to some historians, Ibn Rushd (Leaman, 1989) suggested that harmony and uniformity of nature witness to the sense and intention of its Creator. The concept of Rububiyah was also the key concept Sufism in its mystical form, a specific branch of Islam. Scholar such as Rabi 'a al-Adawiyya (died in 801 CE) who argued for the devotion to Allah was actually only an outward sign of His Lordship. By interpreting the universe as a reflection of divine love, believing that all life, including their own being, is the consequence of Allah's creative power (Wolff, 2007).

Philosophical Underpinnings

The concept of Rububiyah, or Lordship, in Islam goes beyond mere belief. It's a cornerstone of Islamic philosophy, sparking intellectual debates and inspiring a profound sense of awe in the believer. Philosophers throughout Islamic history have grappled with the concept, constructing intricate arguments to support Allah's absolute sovereignty and reconcile it with a seemingly ordered universe.

One of the most compelling arguments centers on the idea of Wahdaniyyah (Oneness of God). Imagine a world without a single, all-encompassing ruler. Chaos would likely ensue. Similarly, Islamic philosophers argue, a universe without a singular, omnipotent Lord would be inherently flawed. The intricate design of the cosmos, from the perfect balance of celestial bodies to the delicate ecosystem of a single flower, points towards a single, intelligent architect – Allah (Chittick, 1989). This leads to another crucial question: How can a single entity be all-powerful and all-knowing while the universe appears to unfold in a seemingly predetermined way? Here, the concept of Sifat (Divine Attributes) comes into play. Scholars like Imam al-Ghazali (d. 1111 CE) proposed that while Allah's essence (dhat) is beyond human comprehension, His attributes, such as power (Qudrat) and knowledge (Ilm), are demonstrable through reason and scripture (Rahman, 2009). By attributing these attributes to Allah, Islamic philosophers reconcile the concept of a singular, omnipotent God with the complexities of the universe.

The idea of Rububiyyah also compels us to contemplate creation itself. Did Allah create the universe in one stroke, or is it an ongoing process? Some scholars, drawing upon the Quranic description of creation happening in "six days" (Quran 57:4), envisioned a finite act of creation. Others interpreted these "days" metaphorically, suggesting an ongoing creative process overseen by Allah. The idea of Rububiyyah in Islam is described by the word Lordship and takes the understanding of faith to the next level. At the same time the concept of God is one of the main principles of Islamic Philosophy and it serves as fuel for deep intellectual disputes and mystery of Sufism presence among believers. Philosophers in Islam since the dawn of Islamic history have spent a great deal of time auditing the notions and adding buildings to the concepts particularly regarding Allah's absolute sovereignty to incorporate the universe with an orderly nature.

Implications of Rububiyyah

Whether it is the Muttazila or Ashari approach, this argument portrays the movements and dynamism of philosophical inquiries in the context of Rububiyyah (Leaman, 2011). Ultimately, the process of Rububiyyah isn't about finding true answers and solutions in a predictable manner. It's more of a journey of discovering intellectual patience, applying reason and scripture, to increasing our knowledge of Allah being the Lord. By partaking in Philosophy, we can say goodbye to blind faith and at the same time, realize a profound feeling of being specially honored by the being who created and maintains everything.

The philosophy of lordship (Rububiyyah) wasn't about an impotent intellectual theorizing in a collection of lost books but an active probing into the reality of real world. This matter reverberates into every area of Islamic ideology and practice where it serves as an inseparable element that guides Muslims to be righteous and to strengthen their connection with God. The role which Rububiyyah plays in these different areas of life is briefly highlighted below:

1. Deepening Tawhid (Oneness of God): Rububiyyah is an indisputable evidence for one of the principles of Tawhid. By recognizing Allah Himself as the only Creator and Provider, Muslims establish that Allah completely occupies His position as Sovereign and sources of life are only in His hands. We could only rely on Him alone to be a partner, unequalled, in any matters, even the little details of life to the grand cosmic order which totally He is the powerful ruler. (Ahmed, 1999).

2. Cultivating Gratitude and Dependence: In regard of Allah as the Almighty Provider in Rububiyyah, individuals have positive perception and feeling of thankfulness. In their praying, Muslims acknowledge Him as the Source of their very life and as the Owner of all their blessings. This is the very reason why such basic practices as daily devotional prayers or charitable

works are encouraged by believers with a purpose of staying thankful every minute to their Lord (Mohammad, 2006).

3. Ethical Framework and Accountability: Awareness of the fact that Allah is the true Judge and the Chief within his sovereignty urges the followers of Islam to act according to their ethics. The Quran states, "And worship your Lord until certainty comes to you" (Quran 15:99). This verse highlights the sense of being His person and He shall ask you about your doings any day you will go before Him to account for what you have done.

4. Finding Purpose in Creation: Even the minor insignificance of Rububiyah, also known as divine approbation, plays the role of metaphysical transformation for one's life, providing an assurance that one is an integral part of an undoubtedly divine plan. This principle not only informs human life with direction, but encourages people to make the best out of their abilities and resources for the larger good of the whole world in that they perform for Allah's right. So, if this is done, one has fulfilled their duty in accordance with Allah's creation (Rahman, 2009).

5. Seeking Knowledge and Understanding: Seeking Knowledge and Understanding: Process of striving for spirituality encourages intellectual endeavors. Through reflecting upon the mysteriousness of the universe involving the form of Allah, Muslim believers will arrive at knowledge and understanding as a result. This aligns with the Quranic verse, "Say, 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge'" (Quran 20:114) Lordship and its role in Muslim societies is a profound prism through which the world is looked at by Muslims. It enhances self-discovery as it prompts intense feelings of wonder, gratitude, and responsibility, molding both their actions and ideals. When Muslims treat Allah as the one and only Lord, they understand the importance of their life and try to be true to the prevailing order of things.

Conclusion

In consideration of Rububiyyah, the philosophical attitude about sovereignty in Islam, a crucial framework for the Islamic worldview, has been revealed. It's quite obvious that it underscores the Allah's absolute sovereignty and providence, therefore Him is recognized as the only one operator who created the universe and manages the affairs of the universe. In Rububiyyah, we get a glimpse into the world that has no start or end; from very beginning up to the part where God alone is left. This picture does not represent only a god who is majestic. People find their place in his open-minded concept that stretches far and wide across the Universe. Through recognizing that we are in Rububiyyah, we come to realism that we exist as the parts of a purposeful creation and should strive to dwell in the ethical way holding hands in building up the world. This builds up a sense of thanksgiving for Allah's gifts in you and guides you walk the path of bringing you and Him closer to each other. Rububiyyah's philosophy, being as old as time itself, is not an animation of the past. Even now, it is the way of life that permeates all the lives of Muslims, reflecting their orientation and guiding them in the process of navigation through the complexities of the modern world. Digging this topic more will help us to develop a deeper sense of understanding of our relationship with Allah and also we will find our real purpose in life again.

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