

The Theological Implications of the Story of Ibrahim & the Stars

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[So, when the night enveloped him, he saw a star. He said,] Compelling the disbelievers, for they used to worship idols and stars, venerate them and believe that all matters returned to them. Thus he wished to point out to them their misguidance and guide them to the truth by means of contemplation (*nazar*) and deduction so he said **["This is my Lord."]** Meaning is this my

lord? He said this as a supposition, for the one who argues for the incorrectness of a statement cites as it is stated by the opponent, then he returns to it to refute it...it is not possible for Allah to have a Messenger who at any time be except that he is affirming the oneness of Allah and is knowledgeable of Him, and is disassociated from all other than Him which is worshipped. How can this be mistakenly thought for one whom Allah has protected, purified and given guidance (*rushd*) from before. He said in 'al-Shifa': Allah (Most High) said: We gave Ibrahim his guidance from before - meaning We guided him when he was young as was stated by Mujahid and others. Ibn Ata said: He chose him before his being created **[But, when it vanished,]**

Meaning the star disappeared **[he said, "I do not like those who vanish."]** Meaning I do not love the worship of that which changes from state to state, because change is a sign of temporal origin (*huduth*), because that which is without beginning (*qadim*) is not a place of accidents (*hawadith*) and temporal origin (*huduth*) negates divinity (*uluhiyyah*).

[Later, when he saw the moon rising] In the beginning of its rising/appearance **[he said, "This is my Lord."]** This statement regarding the sun and the moon is after the completion of the argument/deduction regarding the star and is only to compel the opponent, as an allusion

(*isharah*) is sufficient for the intelligent one. Ibrahim (Upon him be peace) with his complete intellectual/deductive strength cannot be imagined to have needed another deduction (*istidlal*) to complete his argument **[But, when it vanished, he said, "Had my Lord not guided me, I would have been among those gone astray."]** He said this thanking the blessing of

guidance from Allah (Most High) as the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) said: "If it was not for Allah we would not have been guided, we would not have given charity nor have prayed". In it is guidance to his people and a warning to them that the moon due to its changing state is also not befitting for divinity, and that the one who takes it as a god is misguided.

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ
 اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا
 قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي
 فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا
 أُحِبُّ الْآفِلِينَ (76)
 فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ
 بَازِغًا قَالَ هَذَا
 رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ
 قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ
 يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ
 مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ
 (77) فَلَمَّا رَأَى
 الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ
 هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا
 أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ
 قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي
 بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ

[Thereafter, when he saw the sun rising, he said, "This is my Lord. This is greater."] Than the stars, he declared it greater arguing and making clear the doubt of the opponent **[Again, when it vanished]** Set **[he said, "O my people, I disown whatever you associate with Allah]** He disassociated from all false gods when he clarified that the stars, moon and sun despite

their being great elevated shining bodies were not befitting for divinity. This was because of their being the location of created change requiring a creator to create them and specify them with that which is specific to them. Thus idols and other than them from the lowly bodies are more deserving of not being taken as gods. And this means of addressing of the people and disassociating from that which they worshipped after the completion of the proof is a clear proof that this speech from Ibrahim (Upon him be peace) was not except to compel the opponent, and not in order to seek verification.