

Inner Knowledge of Allah

Inner Knowledge Of Allah مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ

The Virtue of Attaining Inner Knowledge of Allah

فَضْلُ مَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَنْ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ كَمَلَتْ مَعْرِفَتُهُ1

1— The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who attains inner knowledge of Allah has achieved perfection in his knowledge indeed.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 7999]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ أَعْلَى الْمَعَارِفِ2

2— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The inner knowledge of Allah, Glory be to Him, is the highest of knowable truths.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 9864]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): مَا يَسُرُّنِي لَوْ مِتُّ طِفْلاً وَأُدْخِلْتُ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمْ أَكْبُرْ فَأَعْرِفَ رَبِّي عَزَّوَجَلَّ3

3— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘I would not be pleased to die as a child and be made to enter Paradise without being able to grow up and get to know my Lord, Mighty and Exalted.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 36472]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): ثَمَرَةُ الْعِلْمِ مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ4

4— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The fruit of knowledge is attaining inner knowledge of Allah.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 4586]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): مَنْ سَكَنَ قَلْبُهُ الْعِلْمُ بِاللَّهِ سَكَنَتْهُ الْغِنَى عَنْ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ 5

5— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He whose heart finds peace in knowing Allah, finds peace in being needless of Allah’s creatures.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 8896]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): لَوْ يَعْلَمُ النَّاسُ مَا فِي فَضْلِ مَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ مَا مَدُّوا أَعْيُنَهُمْ إِلَى مَا مَتَعَ اللَّهُ بِهِ الْأَعْدَاءَ مِنْ زَهْرَةِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَنَعِيمِهَا ، وَكَانَتْ دُنْيَاهُمْ أَقْلَ عِنْدَهُمْ مِمَّا يَطْوُونَهُ بِأَرْجُلِهِمْ ، وَلَنَعَمُوا بِمَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ ، وَتَلَذُّوا بِهَا تَلَذُّ مَنْ لَمْ يَزَلْ فِي رَوْضَاتِ الْجَنَانِ مَعَ أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ . إِنَّ مَعْرِفَةَ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ أُنْسٌ مِنْ كُلِّ وَحْشَةٍ ، وَصَاحِبٌ مِنْ كُلِّ وَحْدَةٍ ، وَنُورٌ مِنْ كُلِّ ظُلْمَةٍ ، وَقُوَّةٌ مِنْ كُلِّ ضَعْفٍ ، وَشِفَاءٌ مِنْ كُلِّ سُقْمٍ .

6— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘If people knew the virtue of knowing Allah, Mighty and Exalted, they would never extend their gaze to the splendour and bounties of the life of this world that Allah has granted to the enemies. They would then regard such people’s worldly goods to be more insignificant than the dust under their feet, and they would take great pleasure at attaining knowledge of Allah, Mighty and Exalted, and would savour it as if they were tasting the experience of being in the gardens of Paradise with the friends of Allah. Verily the inner knowledge of Allah is an intimate companion in every type of desolation, a friend in every type of loneliness, a light in every darkness, a source of strength from all weakness, and a cure for all ailments.’[al-Kafi, v. 8, p. 247, no. 347]

The Fruits of Inner Knowledge of Allah

ثَمَرَاتُ الْمَعْرِفَةِ

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ وَعَظَّمَهُ مَنَعَ فَاهُ مِنَ الْكَلَامِ وَبَطَنَهُ مِنَ الطَّعَامِ ، وَعَتَى نَفْسَهُ 7
بِالصِّيَامِ وَالْقِيَامِ .

7— The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who attains inner knowledge of Allah and aggrandizes Him forbids his mouth from speaking [vain] and his stomach from eating, and satisfies himself through fasting and praying.’[Amali al-Saduq, p. 444, no. 6]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): لَوْ عَرَفْتُمُ اللَّهَ حَقَّ مَعْرِفَتِهِ لَمْشَيْتُمْ عَلَى الْبُحُورِ ، وَلَزَالَتْ بِدُعَائِكُمُ الْجِبَالُ 8

8— The Prophet (S) said, ‘If you truly knew Allah as He is worthy of being known, you would be able to walk on the seas and the mountains would fall by your command.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 5893]

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): مَنْ كَانَ بِاللَّهِ أَعْرَفَ كَانَ مِنَ اللَّهِ أَخَوْفَ 9

9— The Prophet (S) said, ‘He who is most knowledgeable of Allah is most fearful of Allah.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 70, p. 393, no. 64]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): يسير المعرفة يُوجبُ الزُّهدَ في الدُّنيا¹⁰

10— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The least knowledge of Allah leads one to abstain from the vanities of this world.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 10984]

- الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): إِنَّهُ لَا يَنْبَغِي لِمَنْ عَرَفَ عَظَمَةَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يَتَعَظَّمَ ؛ فَإِنَّ رِفْعَةَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا عَظَمَتْهُ أَنْ لَا يَتَوَاضَعُوا لَهُ.

11— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Verily it does not befit one who has attained inner knowledge of the grandeur of Allah to behave proudly, for verily the elevation of those who acknowledge His grandeur comes from their abasing themselves in front of Him.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 147]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): غَايَةُ الْمَعْرِفَةِ الْخَشْيَةُ¹²

12— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The peak of inner knowledge of Allah is fear [of Him].’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 6359]

.. الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): أَعْلَمُ النَّاسِ بِاللَّهِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَهُ مَسْأَلَةٌ¹³

13— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The person who best knows Allah asks of Him the most.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 3260]

.. الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام): أَحَقُّ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُسَلِّمَ لِمَا قَضَى اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ: مَنْ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ¹⁴

14— Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘The creature of Allah most eligible for submission to the decree of Allah, Mighty and Exalted, is he who knows Allah, Mighty and Exalted.’[al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 62, no. 9]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): مَنْ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ خَافَ اللَّهَ ، وَمَنْ خَافَ اللَّهَ سَخَتْ نَفْسُهُ عَنِ الدُّنْيَا¹⁵

15— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘He who attains inner knowledge of Allah fears Allah, and he who fears Allah restrains himself from this world.’[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 2, p. 185]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): إِنَّ أَعْلَمَ النَّاسِ بِاللَّهِ أَرْضَاهُمْ بِقَضَاءِ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ¹⁶

16— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Verily the person who best knows Allah is the most content with the decree of Allah, Mighty and Exalted.’[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 2, p. 184]

The Description of the One who Knows Allah [or the Gnostic]

صِفَةُ الْعَارِفِ

.. الإمام علي (عليه السلام): الْعَارِفُ وَجْهُهُ مُسْتَبَشِرٌ مُتَبَسِّمٌ ، وَقَلْبُهُ وَجِلٌ مَحْزُونٌ¹⁷

17— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The gnostic’s face is cheerful and smily, whereas his heart is apprehensive and sorrowful.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1985]

.. الإمام علي (عليه السلام): الشَّوْقُ خُلَصَانُ الْعَارِفِينَ¹⁸

18— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Longing [for Allah] is the sincerest friend of the gnostics.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 855]

.. الإمام علي (عليه السلام): الْخَوْفُ جِلْبَابُ الْعَارِفِينَ¹⁹

19— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Fear is the cloak of the gnostics.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 664]

.. الإمام علي (عليه السلام): الْبُكَاءُ مِنْ خِيفَةِ اللَّهِ لِلْبُعْدِ عَنِ اللَّهِ عِبَادَةُ الْعَارِفِينَ²⁰

20— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Crying much due to fear of Allah for any possible distance between oneself and Allah is the regular worshipful state of the gnostics.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1791]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): ثِقُ بِاللَّهِ تَكُنْ عَارِفًا²¹

21— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Trust in Allah and you will attain inner knowledge [of Him].’[Tuhaf al-Uqul, no. 376]

The Lowest Degree of Inner Knowledge

أَدْنَى مَرَاتِبِ الْمَعْرِفَةِ

- الإمامُ الكاظمُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - لَمَّا سُئِلَ عَنْ أَدْنَى الْمَعْرِفَةِ -: الْإِقْرَارُ بِأَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ ، وَلَا شِبْهَ لَهُ وَلَا نَظِيرَ وَأَنَّهُ قَدِيمٌ ، مُتَبَتٌّ ، مُوجُودٌ ، غَيْرُ فَاقِدٍ ، وَأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ .

22- Imam al-Kazim (a.s.), when he was asked about the lowest degree of inner knowledge, replied, 'It is to affirm that there is no god but He, and that He has no likeness or match, and that He is eternal, positively proven to exist, present and not absent, and that there is nothing like Him.' [al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 86, no. 1]

Attaining Inner Knowledge of Allah Through Allah Himself

مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ بِاللَّهِ

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): اَعْرِفُوا اللَّهَ بِاللَّهِ ، وَالرَّسُولَ بِالرَّسَالَةِ ، وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ بِالْأَمْرِ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ .

23- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Get to know Allah through Allah, and the Prophet through the message he brought, and those vested with authority through their command to do good, their justice and righteousness.' [al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 85, no. 1]

- الإمامُ الحسينُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - فِي الدُّعَاءِ -: إِلَهِي تَرَدُّدِي فِي الْآثَارِ يُوجِبُ بَعْدَ الْمَزَارِ ، فَاجْمَعْنِي عَلَيْكَ بِخِدْمَةِ تَوْصِلُنِي إِلَيْكَ ، كَيْفَ يُسْتَدَلُّ عَلَيْكَ بِمَا هُوَ فِي وُجُودِهِ مُفْتَقَرٌ إِلَيْكَ؟! أَيْكُونُ لِغَيْرِكَ مِنَ الظُّهُورِ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ حَتَّى يَكُونَ هُوَ الْمُظْهَرُ لَكَ؟! مَتَى غِيبَتْ حَتَّى تَحْتَاجَ إِلَى دَلِيلٍ يَدُلُّ عَلَيْكَ؟! ... بِكَ أَسْتَدِلُّ عَلَيْكَ فَاهْدِنِي بِنُورِكَ إِلَيْكَ .

24- Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) said in one of his supplications, 'My God! My own obscure doubts about the signs [in nature] has caused my distance from my goal, so draw me near to You through Your service that may allow me to reach You. How can something that needs You for its very existence be used to prove Your existence?! Are other things more manifest than You that they be used to point to You?! When were You ever absent that You should need anything to prove Your existence?! Through You alone do I arrive at You, so guide me with Your light to Yourself.' [Bihar al-Anwar, v. 98, p. 225]

- الإمام زين العابدين (عليه السلام) - في الدعاء -: بِكَ عَرَفْتُكَ وَأَنْتَ دَلَلْتَنِي عَلَيْكَ وَدَعَوْتَنِي إِلَيْكَ ، وَلَوْلَا أَنْتَ لَمْ أُدْرِ مَا أَنْتَ .

25— Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) said in one of his supplications, ‘I have attained knowledge of You through You, and You are the One Who indicated me to Yourself and called me to Yourself, and were it not for You, I would not know who You are.’[Iqbal al-A’amal, v. 1, p. 157]

Prohibition of Pondering About Allah’s Essence

النَّهْيُ عَنِ التَّفَكُّرِ فِي ذَاتِ اللَّهِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): تَفَكَّرُوا فِي خَلْقِ اللَّهِ ، وَلَا تَفَكَّرُوا فِي اللَّهِ فَتَهْلِكُوا 26

26— The Prophet (S) said, ‘Ponder about the creation of Allah, but do not ponder about Allah Himself lest you be ruined.’[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 5705]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): إِيَّاكُمْ وَالتَّفَكُّرَ فِي اللَّهِ؛ فَإِنَّ التَّفَكُّرَ فِي اللَّهِ لَا يَزِيدُ إِلَّا تَبْهَةً ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَا يُوصَفُ بِمِقْدَارٍ .

27— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Beware of pondering about Allah, for verily pondering about Allah only increases one’s bewilderment. Verily Allah, Mighty and Exalted, cannot be perceived by the sights or described by any type of criteria.’[Amali al-Saduq, p. 340, no. 3]

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): مَنْ نَظَرَ فِي اللَّهِ كَيْفَ هُوَ هَلَكَ 28

28— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘How ruined is the one who examines Allah!’[al-Mahasin, v. 1, p. 371, no. 808]

The Intellects’ Incapacity to Fathom His Essence

عَجْزُ الْعُقُولِ عَنِ مَعْرِفَةِ كُنْهِهِ

- الإمام علي (عليه السلام): فَلَسْنَا نَعْلَمُ كُنْهَ عَظَمَتِكَ، إِلَّا أَنَّا نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ حَيٌّ قَيُّومٌ ، لَا تَأْخُذُكَ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ، لَمْ يَنْتَه 29 . إِلَيْكَ نَظَرٌ ، وَلَمْ يُدْرِكْكَ بَصَرٌ .

29– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘We do not know the essence of Your greatness. All that we do know is that You are Ever-Living and Self-Subsisting through Whom all things subsist. Drowsiness and sleep do not overtake You, vision does not reach You and sight cannot perceive You.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 160]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) - في صِفَةِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ -: إِنَّهُمْ عَلَى مَكَانِهِمْ مِنْكَ ، وَمَنْزِلَتِهِمْ عِنْدَكَ ، وَاسْتِجْمَاعُ أَهْوَائِهِمْ فِيكَ ، وَكَثْرَةُ طَاعَتِهِمْ لَكَ ، وَقَلَّةُ غَفْلَتِهِمْ عَنْ أَمْرِكَ ، لَوْ عَايَنُوا كُنْهَ مَا خَفِيَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْكَ لَحَقَّوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ ، وَلَزَرَوْا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ ، وَلَعَرَفُوا أَنَّهُمْ لَمْ يَعْبُدُوكَ حَقَّ عِبَادَتِكَ ، وَلَمْ يُطِيعُوكَ حَقَّ طَاعَتِكَ .

30– Imam Ali (a.s.) said in his description of the angels, ‘They are in their own places [distinct] from You, [and yet] their positions are near You. Their desires are all concentrated on You, their worship for You is abundant, and their neglect of Your command is little. If they were to witness the essence of what is hidden about You from them, they would regard their deeds insignificant, they would reproach themselves and would realize that they have not worshipped You as You deserve to be worshipped, and have not obeyed You as You deserve to be obeyed.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 109]

- الإمام زين العابدين (عليه السلام) - في الدَّعَاءِ -: عَجَزَتِ الْعُقُولُ عَنْ إدْرَاكِ كُنْهِ جَمَالِكَ ، وَانْحَسَرَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ دُونَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى سُبْحَاتِ وَجْهِكَ ، وَلَمْ تَجْعَلْ لِلْخَلْقِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى مَعْرِفَتِكَ إِلَّا بِالْعَجْزِ عَنْ مَعْرِفَتِكَ .

31– Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) said in one of his supplications, ‘The intellects are incapable of fathoming the essence of Your Beauty, the sights are restricted to looking at other than the splendour of Your Countenance, and You have not set aside any means for Your creation to get to know You except through their complete incapacity of knowing You.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 94, p. 150, no. 21]

.. الإمام الرضا (عليه السلام): كُنْهُهُ تَفْرِيقٌ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ خَلْقِهِ32

32– Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) said, ‘His essence is a partition between Himself and His creation.’[al-Tawhid, p. 36, no. 2]

- الإمام الرضا (عليه السلام) - في صِفَةِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ -: هُوَ أَجَلُّ مِنْ أَنْ يُدْرِكَهُ بَصَرٌ ، أَوْ يُحِيطَ بِهِ وَهْمٌ ، أَوْ يَضْبِطَهُ عَقْلٌ .

33– Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) said in his description of Allah, Glory be to Him, ‘He is too exalted for sight to be able to perceive Him, for imagination to be able to fathom Him, and for the intellect to be able to grasp Him.’[al-Tawhid, p. 252, no. 3]

The Extent to Which One is Allowed to Describe Allah

مَا يَجُوزُ تَوْصِيفُ اللَّهِ بِهِ

- الإمامُ عليّ (عليه السّلام): مَنْ وَصَفَهُ فَقَدْ حَدَّهُ ، وَمَنْ حَدَّهُ فَقَدْ عَدَّهُ ، وَمَنْ عَدَّهُ فَقَدْ أَبْطَلَ أَزَلَّهُ ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: 34- «كَيْفَ؟» فَقَدْ اسْتَوْصَفَهُ ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: «أَيْنَ؟» فَقَدْ حَيَزَهُ.

34— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He who [undertakes to] describe Him has defined Him, and he who defines Him has numbered Him, and he who numbers Him has nullified His eternity. He who asks ‘How?’ [about Allah] has indeed sought to describe Him, and he who asks ‘Where?’ has indeed confined Him.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 152]

.. الإمامُ عليّ (عليه السّلام): فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا يَبْلُغُهُ بَعْدُ الْهَمَمِ ، وَلَا يَنَالُهُ حَدْسُ الْفِطَنِ 35

35— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘So blessed be the One Whom the highest ambitions cannot reach and Whom the conjecture of intelligent minds cannot grasp.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 94]

.. الإمامُ عليّ (عليه السّلام): وَاحِدٌ لَا بَعْدَ ، وَدَائِمٌ لَا بَأْمَدٍ ، وَقَائِمٌ لَا بِعَمَدٍ 36

36— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘[He is] One, but not by enumeration. He is everlasting without extremity. He exists without any support.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 185]

- الإمامُ الصّادق (عليه السّلام): قَالَ رَجُلٌ عِنْدَهُ: اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، فَقَالَ: اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ؟ فَقَالَ: مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، 37- فَقَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عليه السّلام): حَدِّثْتُهُ، فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ: كَيْفَ أَقُولُ؟ قَالَ: قُلْ: اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أَنْ يُوصَفَ .

37— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) asked a man who said ‘Allah is Greater’ (Allahu Akbar), ‘Greater than what?’ So the man replied, ‘Greater than everything’, to which Imam (a.s.) retorted, ‘Then you have defined Him.’ The man then asked him, ‘So what should I say?’ Imam replied, ‘Say: Allah is too great for description.’[al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 117, no. 8]

- الإمامُ الكاظم (عليه السّلام): إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعْلَى وَأَجَلُّ وَأَعْظَمُ مِنْ أَنْ يُبْلَغَ كُنْهُ صِفَتِهِ ، فَصِفُوهُ بِمَا وَصَفَ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ، 38- وَكُفُّوا عَمَّا سِوَى ذَلِكَ .

38— Imam al-Kazim (a.s.) said, ‘Verily Allah is too High and too Exalted and too Great for the reality of His description to ever be possible, so describe Him as He Himself has described Himself, and desist

from anything other than that.’[al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 102, no. 6]

- الإمام الهادي (عليه السلام): إِنَّ الْخَالِقَ لَا يُوصَفُ إِلَّا بِمَا وَصَفَ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ ، وَأَنَّى يُوصَفُ الْخَالِقُ الَّذِي تَعَجُّزُ 39
الحواسُّ أَنْ تُدْرِكَهُ ، والأوهامُ أَنْ تَنَالَهُ ، والخطراتُ أَنْ تُحْدَهُ ، والأبصارُ عَنْ الإحاطَةِ بِهِ؟! جَلَّ عَمَّا يَصِفُهُ الْوَاصِفُونَ
، ، وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يَنْعَتُهُ النَّاعِتُونَ .

39– Imam al-Hadi (a.s.) said, ‘Verily the Creator can only be described by that which He Himself has described Himself, and how can the Creator ever be described anyway, Whom the senses are incapable of perceiving and the imaginations unable to grasp and the ideas unable to confine and the sights unable to contain?! He is too exalted for the description of those who undertake to describe, and too high to be attributed by those who seek to attach attributes to Him.’[Kashf al-Ghamma, v. 3, p. 176]

[Faith and Inner Knowledge of] The Divine Unity of Allah (tawhid)

التَّوْحِيدُ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): التَّوْحِيدُ نِصْفُ الدِّينِ 40

40– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Allah’s divine Unity is half of religion.’[‘Uyun Akhbar ar-Ridha, v. 2, p. 35, no. 75]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام): التَّوْحِيدُ حَيَاةُ النَّفْسِ 41

41– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Allah’s divine Unity is the life of the soul.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 540]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام): التَّوْحِيدُ إِلَّا تَتَوَهَّمُهُ 42

42– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘[Faith in] Allah’s divine Unity is that you do not subject Him to the limitations of your imagination.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 470]

- الإمامُ الصادقُ (عليه السلام) - لِرَجُلٍ -: أَمَّا التَّوْحِيدُ فَأَنْ لَا تُجَوِّزَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ مَا جَازَ عَلَيْكَ ، وَأَمَّا الْعَدْلُ فَأَنْ لَا 43
تَنْسِبَ إِلَى خَالِقِكَ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ عَلَيْهِ .

43— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, '[Faith in] Allah's divine Unity is that you do not deem applicable to your Lord that which applies to you, and [faith in] His divine Justice is that you do not blame Him for that which you are blameworthy.'[Ma'ani al-Akhbar, p. 11, no. 2]

- الإمام الرضا (عليه السلام): أَوَّلُ عِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ، وَأَصْلُ مَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ جَلَّ اسْمُهُ تَوْحِيدُهُ، وَنِظَامُ تَوْحِيدِهِ نَفْيُ 44
التَّحْدِيدِ عَنْهُ؛ لِشَهَادَةِ الْعُقُولِ أَنَّ كُلَّ مَحْدُودٍ مَخْلُوقٌ.

44— Imam Ar-Ridha' (a.s.) said, 'The very first step to Allah's worship is to attain inner knowledge of Him, and the origin of attaining inner knowledge of Allah, Exalted be His Praise, is through His divine Unity. The very basis of His divine Unity is to negate any kind of limitation from Him, since the intellects are able to witness that every limited being is created.'[Amali al-Tusi, p. 22, no. 28]

The Proof of Allah's Divine Unity

دَلِيلُ التَّوْحِيدِ

- الإمام علي (عليه السلام) - فَيَوْصِيَّتُهُ لِابْنِهِ الْحَسَنِ (عليه السلام) :- وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ لِرَبِّكَ شَرِيكَ لَأَتَتْكَ 45
رُسُلُهُ، وَلَرَأَيْتَ آثَارَ مُلْكِهِ وَسُلْطَانِهِ، وَلَعَرَفْتَ أَفْعَالَهُ وَصِفَاتِهِ، وَلَكِنَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ كَمَا وَصَفَ نَفْسَهُ، لَا يُضَادُّهُ فِي مُلْكِهِ أَحَدٌ، وَلَا يَزُولُ أَبَدًا.

45— Imam Ali (a.s.) said in his will to his son, al-Hasan (a.s.), 'And know my son that if your Lord were to have a partner, his messengers would surely have come to you, and you would have seen the signs of his dominion and his power, and you would know his acts and his attributes. He, however, is One God, just as He as described Himself. He is neither opposed by anyone in His kingdom, nor will He ever cease to be.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Letter 31]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) - مِنْ مُنَاطَرَتِهِ زَنْدِيقًا :- إِنْ قُلْتَ: إِنَّهُمَا اثْنَانِ لَمْ يَخْلُ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَا مُتَّفَقَيْنِ مِنْ كُلِّ 46
جِهَةٍ، أَوْ مُفْتَرِقَيْنِ مِنْ كُلِّ جِهَةٍ، فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَا الْخَلْقَ مُنْتَظِمًا، وَالْفَلَكَ جَارِيًا، وَاخْتِلَافَ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ، وَالشَّمْسِ وَالْقَمَرِ، دَلَّ صِحَّةَ الْأَمْرِ وَالتَّدْبِيرِ وَائْتِلَافُ الْأَمْرِ عَلَى أَنَّ الْمُدَبِّرَ وَاحِدٌ. ثُمَّ يَلْزِمُكَ إِنْ ادَّعَيْتَ اثْنَيْنِ فَلَا بُدَّ مِنْ فُرْجَةٍ بَيْنَهُمَا حَتَّى يَكُونَا اثْنَيْنِ، فَصَارَتِ الْفُرْجَةُ ثَالِثًا بَيْنَهُمَا قَدِيمًا مَعَهُمَا فَيَلْزِمُكَ ثَلَاثَةٌ، فَإِنْ ادَّعَيْتَ ثَلَاثَةً لَزِمَكَ مَا قُلْنَا فِي الْاِثْنَيْنِ حَتَّى يَكُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ فُرْجَتَانِ فَيَكُونُ خَمْسًا، ثُمَّ يَتَنَاهَى فِي الْعَدَدِ إِلَى مَا لَا نِهَايَةَ فِي الْكَثَرَةِ.

46— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.), when he was debating with an atheist, said, 'If you say that there are two gods, then they are either in complete agreement on everything or completely separate in their spheres of influence. But when we look at this orderly creation, the continuous orbits, the alternation of night and day, and the sun and the moon, the soundness of the situation and the organisation and sound

management of it indicates that the Director [of all creation] is One.’

Then if you still claim that there are two gods, then there must necessarily be some kind of difference between them for them to be two [and therefore distinct from each other], and this distinguishing characteristic between them is itself eternal like them, so you are forced to accept three such beings. And if you hold that there are indeed three, then you have to admit the same thing that we said for two such that they [the three] necessarily have two distinguishing characteristics between them [to differentiate them from each other] so then there are five [such eternal beings] altogether, and thus does the multiplication continue until infinity.’[al-Tawhid, p. 243, no. 1]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) - لَمَّا سُئِلَ عَنِ الدَّلِيلِ عَلَى أَنَّ اللَّهَ وَاحِدٌ :- اِتِّصَالَ التَّدْبِيرِ، وَتَمَامُ الصَّنْعِ ، كَمَا قَالَ 47
«اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ: «لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا

47– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.), when asked to give proof that Allah is One, said, ‘The continuous unity of management [in the cosmos] and the perfection of creation, as Allah, Mighty and Exalted, has said, **“Had there been gods in them (i.e. the heavens and the earth) other than Allah, they would surely have fallen apart”**’[Qur’an 21:22].’[al-Tawhid, p. 250, no. 2]

- الإمام الرضا (عليه السلام) - لَمَّا سَأَلَهُ رَجُلٌ مِنَ الثَّنَوِيَّةِ: إِنِّي أَقُولُ: إِنَّ صَانِعَ الْعَالَمِ اثْنَانِ ، فَمَا الدَّلِيلُ عَلَى أَنَّهُ 48
وَاحِدٌ؟ :- قَوْلُكَ: إِنَّهُ اثْنَانِ دَلِيلٌ عَلَى أَنَّهُ وَاحِدٌ ؛ لِأَنَّكَ لَمْ تَدَّعِ الثَّانِي إِلَّا بَعْدَ اثْبَاتِكَ الْوَاحِدِ ، فَالوَاحِدُ مُجْمَعٌ عَلَيْهِ ،
وَأَكْثَرُ مِنْ وَاحِدٍ مُخْتَلَفٌ فِيهِ.

48– Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) was asked the following by a man believing in dualism, ‘I believe that the creator of the world are two, so what is the proof that He is One?’ Im?m replied, ‘Your belief that there are two is proof in itself that He is One, for verily you have only claimed the second after having affirmed the existence of the One. So the One is already a unanimous fact – it is more than one that is controversial [and remains to be proven].’[al-Tawhid, p. 270, no. 6]

- تفسير القمّي: ثُمَّ رَدَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الثَّنَوِيَّةِ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا بِالْهَيْنِ فَقَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: «مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ 49
إِلَهٍ...» قَالَ: لَوْ كَانَا إِلَهَيْنِ كَمَا زَعَمْتُمْ لَكَانَا يَخْتَلِفَانِ ؛ فَيَخْلُقُ هَذَا وَلَا يَخْلُقُ هَذَا، وَيُرِيدُ هَذَا وَلَا يُرِيدُ هَذَا، وَيَطْلُبُ
كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا الْغَلْبَةَ، وَإِذَا أَرَادَ أَحَدُهُمَا خَلْقَ إِنْسَانٍ أَرَادَ الْآخَرُ خَلْقَ بَهِيمَةٍ، فَيَكُونُ إِنْسَانًا وَبَهِيمَةً فِي حَالَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ،
وَهَذَا غَيْرُ مَوْجُودٍ، فَلَمَّا بَطُلَ هَذَا ثَبَتَ التَّدْبِيرُ وَالصَّنْعُ لِوَاحِدٍ، وَدَلَّ أَيْضًا التَّدْبِيرُ وَثَبَاتُهُ وَقَوَامُ بَعْضِهِ بِبَعْضٍ عَلَى أَنَّ
«الصَّانِعَ وَاحِدٌ وَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ: «مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ» إِلَى قَوْلِهِ: «لَعَلَّا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ

49– It is written in Tafsir al-Qummi: ‘Then Allah, Mighty and Exalted, answered dualism and those who professed that there were two gods, saying: **“Allah has not taken any offspring, neither is there any god besides Him, for then each god would take away what he created, and some of them would surely rise up against others. Clear is Allah of what they allege!”** [Qur’an 23:91] If there were two

gods, as you claim, each one of them would seek superiority, and if one of them desired to create a man, the other would desire to oppose him and create an animal, so their joint creation would have to be the product of both their desires, in spite of their differing wills, man and beast at the same time. And this is the most impossible thing that does not even exist.

And if this argument is invalid and there is no difference between them, then the whole duality is invalid [with no distinction left between the two] and there is only one. Therefore, this order, unity of arrangement, subsistence of some things through other things, all indicate to One Maker, and this is the purport of Allah's verse in the Qur'an: "**Allah has not taken any offspring neither is there any god besides Him...**"[23:91] and "**Had there been gods in them (i.e. the heavens and the earth) other than Allah, they would surely have fallen apart.**"[21:22]"[Nur al-Thaqalayn, v. 3, p. 550, no. 107]

The Sights Cannot Apprehend Him but The Hearts Behold Him

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَتَرَاهُ الْقُلُوبُ

- رسول الله (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): لَمَّا أُسْرِيَ بِي إِلَى السَّمَاءِ بَلَغَ بِي جِبْرِئِيلُ مَكَانًا لَمْ يَطَّأهُ جِبْرِئِيلُ قَطُّ ، فَكُشِفَ 50
لِي فَأَرَانِي اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ مِنْ نَوْرِ عَظَمَتِهِ مَا أَحَبُّ

50— The Prophet (S) said, 'When I was taken on my Night Journey to the heavens, Gabriel took me up until a place wherein he himself had never set foot. The veils were pulled away for me and Allah, Mighty and Exalted, showed me whatever He liked from the light of His Greatness.'[al-Tawhid, p. 108, no. 4]

- لَمَّا جَلَسَ عَلَيَّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) فِي الْخِلَافَةِ ... فَقَامَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ يَقَالُ لَهُ ذَعْلَبُ ... فَقَالَ: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، هَلْ رَأَيْتَ 51
رَبَّكَ؟ فَقَالَ: وَيْلَكَ يَا ذَعْلَبُ! لَمْ أَكُنْ بِالَّذِي أُعْبَدُ رَبًّا لَمْ أَرَهُ! قَالَ: فَكَيْفَ رَأَيْتَهُ؟ صِفْهُ لَنَا؟ قَالَ: وَيْلَكَ! لَمْ تَرَهُ الْعُيُونُ
بِمُشَاهَدَةِ الْأَبْصَارِ، وَلَكِنْ رَأَتْهُ الْقُلُوبُ بِحَقَائِقِ الْإِيمَانِ.

51— Imam Ali (a.s.) said in reply to Dha'alab's question about his being able to see his Lord, 'Woe to you O Dha'alab! I do not worship a Lord Whom I cannot see!' So Dha'alab asked, 'But how do you see Him? Describe Him to us.' Imam (a.s.) replied, 'Woe betide you! Eyes do not see Him by looking with the sights; it is the hearts that behold Him with the realities of faith.'[Amali al-Saduq, p. 281, no. 1]

- الإمام الرضا (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: «لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ...»: - لَا تُدْرِكُهُ أَوْهَامُ الْقُلُوبِ ، فَكَيْفَ تُدْرِكُهُ 52
!أَبْصَارُ الْعُيُونِ؟

52— Imam Ar-Ridha' (a.s.), with regards to Allah's verse in the Qur'an: "**The sights do not apprehend Him...**" said, 'The hearts' fancies cannot apprehend Him so how can the eyesights apprehend

Him?!'[Amali al-Saduq, p. 334, no. 2]

.. الإمام العسكري (عليه السلام): إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى أَرَى رَسُولَهُ بِقَلْبِهِ مِنْ نُورٍ عَظَمَتْهُ مَا أَحَبُّ 53

53— Imam al-'Aaskari (a.s.) said, 'Verily Allah, Blessed and most High, displayed to His Prophet in his heart, whatever He liked from the light of His Greatness.'[al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 95, no. 1]

Eternal and Everlasting

أَزَلِّي وَأَبْدِي

- الإمام علي (عليه السلام): الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْأَوَّلِ قَبْلَ كُلِّ أَوَّلٍ ، وَالْآخِرِ بَعْدَ كُلِّ آخِرٍ ، وَبِأَوَّلِيَّتِهِ وَجَبَ أَنْ لَا أَوَّلَ لَهُ ، 54 .
وَبِآخِرِيَّتِهِ وَجَبَ أَنْ لَا آخِرَ لَهُ .

54— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Praise be to Allah, the First before every first, and the Last after every last, and His Firstness necessitates that there is no beginning to Him, and His Lastness necessitates that there is no end to Him.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 101]

.. الإمام علي (عليه السلام): لَا يَزُولُ أَبَدًا وَلَمْ يَزَلْ، أَوَّلٌ قَبْلَ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِأَوَّلِيَّةٍ ، وَآخِرٌ بَعْدَ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِلَا نِهَائِيَّةٍ 55

55— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'He never ceases to exist and will always be, the First before all things without a beginning, and the Last after all things without an end.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Letter 31]

- الإمام علي (عليه السلام) - وَقَدْ سَأَلَهُ رَجُلٌ يَهُودِيٌّ: مَتَى كَانَ رَبُّنَا عَزَّوَجَلَّ؟ -: يَا يَهُودِيُّ ، (مَا كَانَ) لَمْ يَكُنْ رَبُّنَا 56
فَكَانَ ، وَإِنَّمَا يُقَالُ: «مَتَى كَانَ» لِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَكُنْ فَكَانَ ، هُوَ كَائِنٌ بِلَا كَيْنُونَةٍ كَائِنٌ لَمْ يَزَلْ لَيْسَ لَهُ قَبْلٌ ، هُوَ قَبْلَ الْقَبْلِ ،
وَقَبْلَ الْغَايَةِ ، انْقَطَعَتْ عَنْهُ الْغَايَاتُ ، فَهُوَ غَايَةُ كُلِّ غَايَةٍ .

56— Imam Ali (a.s.) was once asked by a Jew, 'When did our Lord, Mighty and Exalted, come to be?', to which he replied, 'O Jew, It is not that our Lord was not and then came to be, for the question 'When did x come to be?' is posed regarding something that is not there and then comes to be. He exists without coming into being; He is ever existing having nothing before Him. He is before 'before' itself, before any limit. Limits do not apply to Him for He is the ultimate limit of all limits.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 77, p. 331, no. 18]

- الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام): إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى كَانَ وَلَا شَيْءَ غَيْرُهُ ، نُورًا لَا ظِلَامَ فِيهِ ، وَصَادِقًا لَا كِذْبَ فِيهِ ، 57

وعالمًا لا جهل فيه، وحيًّا لا موت فيه، وكذلك هو اليوم، وكذلك لا يزال أبدًا.

57– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘Verily Allah, Blessed and most High, existed when nothing else did, He is light not darkness, truthful with no falsehood about Him, all-knowing with no ignorance about Him, ever-living with no death about Him, and He is such today, and thus will He remain forever.’[al-Tawhid, p. 141, no. 5]

Living (Omnipresent)

حيّ

.. الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِمَ لَا جَهْلَ فِيهِ ، حَيَاةً لَا مَوْتَ فِيهِ ، نَوْراً لَا ظُلْمَةَ فِيهِ58

58– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Verily Allah is all knowledge with no ignorance about Him, He is all Life without any death around Him, and all Light with no darkness about Him.’[al-Tawhid, p. 137, no. 11]

.. الإمام الكاظم (عليه السلام): كَانَ اللَّهُ حَيًّا بِلا حَيَاةٍ حَادِثَةٍ ... بَلْ حَيٌّ لِنَفْسِهِ59

59– Imam al-Kazim (a.s.) said, ‘Allah is Omnipresent without any external source of life ... rather He lives through Himself.’[al-Tawhid, p. 142, no. 6]

All-Knowing (Omniscient)

عالم

- الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): وَلَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ عَدَدُ قَطْرِ الْمَاءِ ، وَلَا نُجُومُ السَّمَاءِ ، وَلَا سَوَافِي الرِّيحِ فِي الْهَوَاءِ ، وَلَا60
. دَبِيبُ النَّمْلِ عَلَى الصَّفَا ، وَلَا مَقْبِلُ الذَّرِّ فِي اللَّيْلَةِ الظُّلُمَاءِ ، يَعْلَمُ مَسَاقِطَ الْأُورَاقِ ، وَخَفِيَّ طَرَفِ الْأَحْدَاقِ

60– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The number of droplets of water, or of stars in the sky, or of gusts of wind in the air are not unknown to Him, and neither is the crawling of ants on rocks, nor the settling place of tiny particles in the darkness of the night. He knows the spots where leaves fall and the subtle movement of the pupils of the eyes.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 178]

- الإمام عليّ (عليه السلام): يَعْلَمُ عَجِيجَ الْوُحُوشِ فِي الْفَلَوَاتِ ، وَمَعَاصِيَ الْعِبَادِ فِي الْخَلَوَاتِ ، وَاخْتِلَافَ النَّيَّانِ61

في بحار الأنوار الغامرات ، وتلاطم الماء بالرياح العاصفات

61– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He knows the howls of beasts in the forests, the sins of the people committed in secret, the fish’s frequenting the deep seas and the rising of the waters by tempestuous winds.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 198]

.. الإمام علي (عليه السلام): خرق علمه باطن غيب السترات ، وأحاط بغموض عقائد السريرات62

62– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘His knowledge pierces through the inside of unknown secrets and encompasses the innermost beliefs of the hearts.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 108]

.. الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام): لم يزل عالماً بما يكون، فعلمه به قبل كونه كعلمه به بعد كونه63

63– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘He always knows what is to be, such that His knowledge of it before its coming into being is the same as His knowledge after its coming into being.’[al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 107, no. 2]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) - لما سُئل عن علمه بالمكان: أكان قبل تكوينه أم حينه وبعده ؟ :- تعالى الله ! بل64
لم يزل عالماً بالمكان قبل تكوينه كعلمه به بعد ما كونه، وكذلك علمه بجميع الأشياء كعلمه بالمكان

64– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) was once asked about Allah’s knowledge of space [i.e. the concept] and whether He knows it before its coming into existence or during it or after it, to which he replied, ‘Most High is Allah! He always knows space before its conception just as He knows it after He has created it, and such is His knowledge of all things like His knowledge of space.’[al-Tawhid, p. 137, no. 9]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): والعلم ذاته ولا معلوم ... فلما أحدث الأشياء وكان المعلوم وقع العلم منه على65
المعلوم.

65– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Knowledge is His very essence and not the object of knowing [or a known], such that when He created things, knowledge projected from Him onto the known things.’[Nur al-Thaqalayn, v. 5, p. 237, no. 41]

- الإمام الكاظم (عليه السلام): علم الله لا يوصف منه بأين ، ولا يوصف العلم من الله بكيف، ولا يفرد العلم من66
الله، ولا يبان الله منه ، وليس بين الله وبين علمه حد

66– Imam al-Kazim (a.s.) said, ‘The knowledge of Allah cannot be defined by where, nor can Allah’s knowledge be described by how. Allah’s knowledge cannot be separated from Him, nor can Allah be

distinguished from it, and there is no barrier between Allah and His knowledge.’[al-Tawhid, p. 138, no. 16]

Just

عادل

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ): وأشهدُ أنَّهُ عدلٌ عدلٌ، وحَكَمٌ فَصلٌ 67

67— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘And I bear witness that He is just and acts justly, and is an arbitrator who decides fairly.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 214]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السَّلامُ) - لَمَّا سُئِلَ عَنِ العَدْلِ -: العَدْلُ إِلَّا تَتَّهَمُهُ 68

68— Imam Ali (a.s.) when asked about faith in Allah’s divine justice, replied, ‘[Faith in] divine justice is that you do not accuse Him of anything.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 470]

- الإمامُ زينُ العابدِينُ (عليه السَّلامُ) - فِي دُعَائِهِ يَوْمَ الْأَضْحَى وَالْجُمُعَةِ -: وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ فِي حُكْمِكَ ظُلْمٌ، 69
وَلَا فِي نَقْمَتِكَ عَجَلَةٌ، وَإِنَّمَا يَعَجِلُ مَنْ يَخَافُ الْفَوْتَ، وَإِنَّمَا يَحْتَاجُ إِلَى الظُّلْمِ الضَّعِيفُ، وَقَدْ تَعَالَيْتَ يَا إِلَهِي عَنْ ذَلِكَ
عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا.

69— Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) said in his supplication for Friday and for the ‘Aayd al-Azha, ‘But I know that there is no wrong in Your decree and no hurry in Your vengeance. He alone hurries who fears to miss, and only the weak needs to wrong. But You are exalted, my God, high indeed above all that!’[al-Sahifat al-Sajjadiyya, p. 297, Supplication 48]

- الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عليه السَّلامُ) - وَقَدْ سُئِلَ عَنْ أَساسِ الدِّينِ -: التَّوْحِيدُ وَالْعَدْلُ . . . أَمَّا التَّوْحِيدُ فَأَنْ لَا تُجَوِّزَ عَلَى 70
رَبِّكَ مَا جَازَ عَلَيْكَ، وَأَمَّا الْعَدْلُ فَأَنْ لَا تَنْسِبَ إِلَى خَالِقِكَ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ عَلَيْهِ.

70— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) was asked about the foundation of religion, to which he replied, ‘[It is faith in] Allah’s divine Unity and divine Justice ... [Faith in] Allah’s divine Unity is that you do not deem applicable to your Lord that which applies to you, and [faith in] His divine Justice is that you do not attribute to Him that of which you are blameworthy.’[al-Tawhid, p. 96, no. 1]

The Creator

خالق

- دَخَلَ ابْنُ أَبِي الْعَوَّاءِ عَلَى أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) فَقَالَ: أَلَيْسَ تَزْعُمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ؟ 71-

فَقَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): بَلَى ، فَقَالَ: أَنَا أَخْلُقُ ! فَقَالَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) لَهُ: كَيْفَ تَخْلُقُ ؟ ! فَقَالَ: أُحْدِثُ فِي الْمَوْضِعِ ثُمَّ أَلْبِثُ عَنْهُ فَيَصِيرُ دَوَابٌّ فَأَكُونُ أَنَا الَّذِي خَلَقْتُهَا ! فَقَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): أَلَيْسَ خَالِقُ الشَّيْءِ يَعْرِفُ كَمْ خَلَقَهُ ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى ، قَالَ: فَتَعْرِفُ الذَّكَرَ مِنْهَا مِنَ الْأُنْثَى ، وَتَعْرِفُ كَمْ عُمُرُهَا ؟ فَسَكَتَ .

71– Marwan b. Muslim narrated: ‘Ibn Abi al-’Aawja’ once came to Abu ‘Aabdillah (a.s.) [i.e. Imam al-Sadiq], and asked, ‘Is it not true that you claim that Allah is the Creator of all things?’ to which Abu ‘Aabdillah (a.s.) replied, ‘Yes.’ So he retorted, ‘I create!’ So Imam asked him, ‘How do you create?!’ He replied, ‘I defecate in a place, then wait for it, and it becomes a creature, which I have created!’ So Abu ‘Aabdillah (a.s.) said, ‘Is it not true that the creator of something should know what he has created?’ to which he replied yes. Imam continued, ‘Well do you know the female from the male [of what you have supposedly created], and do you know its lifespan?’ to which he had no answer.’[al-Tawhid, p. 295, no. 5]

- الإمام الرضا (عليه السلام): الحمد لله فاطر الأشياء إنشاءً ، ومبتدعها ابتداءً بقدرته وحكمته ، لا من شيء 72- . فَيَبْطُلُ الْاِخْتِرَاعُ ، وَلَا لِعِلَّةٍ فَلَا يَصِحُّ الْاِبْتِدَاعُ ، خَلَقَ مَا شَاءَ كَيْفَ شَاءَ .

72– Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) said, ‘The Originator of all things from their conception, and their Inventor from the very beginning with His Power and Wisdom, [He creates] not from anything otherwise the very concept of invention would be nullified, nor for any cause otherwise the very concept of origination would be inapplicable. He creates whatever He pleases however He pleases.’[al-Tawhid, p. 98, no. 5]

All-Powerful (Omnipotent)

قادر

- الْمَسِيحُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - لَمَّا قِيلَ لَهُ: هَلْ يَقْدِرُ رَبُّكَ عَلَى أَنْ يَدْخُلَ الدُّنْيَا فِي بَيْضَةٍ -: إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى لَا 73- يُنْسَبُ إِلَى الْعَجْزِ ، وَالَّذِي سَأَلْتَنِي لَا يَكُونُ .

73— Prophet Jesus (a.s.) was once asked, ‘Can your Lord fit the world into an egg?’ to which he replied, ‘Verily Allah, Mighty and Exalted, cannot be attributed with incapacity, but that which you are asking cannot ever be.’[Mishkat al-Anwar, p. 259]

- الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): إِنَّ إبليسَ قالَ لعيسى ابنِ مريمَ (عليه السلام): أَيَقْدِرُ رَبُّكَ عَلَى أَنْ يُدْخِلَ الْأَرْضَ بَيْضَةً؛ لَا يُصَغِّرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا يُكَبِّرُ الْبَيْضَةَ؟ فقالَ عيسى (عليه السلام): وَيْلَكَ! إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُوصَفُ بِعَجْزٍ، وَمَنْ أَقْدَرُ! مِمَّنْ يُلَطِّفُ الْأَرْضَ وَيُعْظِمُ الْبَيْضَةَ؟

74— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) narrated, ‘Iblis [Satan] asked Jesus son of Mary (a.s.), ‘Is your Lord capable of fitting the earth inside an egg, without shrinking the earth or enlarging the egg?’ So Jesus (a.s.) replied, ‘Woe betide you! Verily Allah can never be ascribed with incapacity, and who is there more powerful than the One who can shrink the earth and enlarge the egg [if He so wills]?’[al-Tawhid, p. 127, no. 5]

The Speaker

مُتَكَلِّمٌ

- الإمام علي (عليه السلام): يُخْبِرُ لَا بِلِسَانٍ وَلَهَوَاتٍ، وَيَسْمَعُ لَا بِخُرُوقٍ وَأَدَوَاتٍ، يَقُولُ وَلَا يَلْفِظُ، وَيَحْفَظُ وَلَا يَتَحَفَّظُ... يَقُولُ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ كَوْنَهُ: «كُنْ» فَيَكُونُ، لَا بِصَوْتٍ يُقَرَّعُ، وَلَا بِنِدَاءٍ يُسْمَعُ، وَإِنَّمَا كَلَامُهُ سُبْحَانَهُ فِعْلٌ مِنْهُ، أَنْشَأَهُ وَمِثْلُهُ، لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْ قَبْلِ ذَلِكَ كَانِئًا، وَلَوْ كَانَ قَدِيمًا لَكَانَ إِلَهًا ثَانِيًا.

75— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He expresses information but not through a tongue or voice. He listens but not with the holes and organs of hearing. He speaks but does not utter words; He remembers but does not learn... When He wishes to create something, He says to it ‘Be’ and it is, but not through a voice that can strike the ears, nor a calling that can be heard. Rather, His speech, Glory be to Him, is an act of His that He creates and incorporates, which did not exist before, for were it an ever-existing thing it would be a second god.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 186]

The One Who Wills

مُرِيدٌ

- الإمام الكاظم (عليه السلام): إِنَّمَا تَكُونُ الْأَشْيَاءُ بِإِرَادَتِهِ وَمَشِيئَتِهِ؛ مِنْ غَيْرِ كَلَامٍ، وَلَا تَرَدُّدٍ فِي نَفْسٍ، وَلَا تُنْطَقُ بِلِسَانٍ.

76— Imam al-Kazim (a.s.) said, ‘Verily things come into being solely by His will and His wish; without the need for speech, alternation of breath or utterance with the tongue.’[al-Tawhid, p. 100, no. 8]

The Manifest and the Hidden

ظَاهِرٌ وَبَاطِنٌ

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الظَّاهِرُ بِعَجَائِبِ تَدْبِيرِهِ لِلنَّاطِرِينَ ، وَالبَاطِنُ بِجَلَالِ عِزَّتِهِ عَنْ فِكْرِ الْمُتَوَهِّمِينَ 77

77— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He manifests the wonders of His management for the onlookers, but by virtue of the exaltedness of His Might He is Hidden from the imagination of the thinkers.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 213]

.. الإمامُ الرِّضَا (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): ظَاهِرٌ لَا يَتَأَوَّلُ الْمُبَاشَرَةَ ، مُتَجَلٍّ لَا يَسْتَهْلِكُ رُؤْيَاهُ ، بَاطِنٌ لَا يَمُزَايَلُهُ 78

78— Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) said, ‘He is manifest though indiscernible through direct contact; He is evident though unapprehended by vision; He is hidden though not through withdrawal.’[al-Tawhid, p. 37, no. 2]

The Master

مَالِكٌ

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): كُلُّ مَالِكٍ غَيْرُهُ مَمْلُوكٌ 79

79— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Every master other than Him is a slave.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 65]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - فِي تَفْسِيرِ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ -: إِنَّا لَا نَمْلِكُ مَعَ اللَّهِ شَيْئاً ، وَلَا نَمْلِكُ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَنا ، 80
فَمَتَى مَلَكَنا مَا هُوَ أَمْلَكُ بِهِ مِنَّا كَلَّفَنا ، وَمَتَى أَخَذَهُ مِنَّا وَضَعَ تَكْلِيفَهُ عَلَنا .

80— Imam Ali (a.s.), in his explanation of the phrase ‘There is no power or strength save in Allah’, said, ‘Verily we are not masters over anything with Allah, nor are we masters over anything except what He has given us mastery over. So by making us masters over that which He is a superior Master, He has given us responsibility, and by taking away mastership from us He absolves us of our responsibilities.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 404]

The All-Hearing and The All-Seeing

سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ

.. الإمامُ عليّ (عليه السّلام): والسّميعُ لا بِأداةٍ 81

81– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He is the All-hearing but not by means of any organ.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 152]

.. الإمامُ الباقرُ (عليه السّلام): إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ، يَسْمَعُ بِمَا يُبْصِرُ ، وَيُبْصِرُ بِمَا يَسْمَعُ 82

82– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘Verily He is all-hearing and all-seeing, such that He hears with that by means of which He sees and He sees with that by means of which He hears.’[al-Tawhid, p. 144, no. 9]

- الإمامُ الرضا (عليه السّلام): لَمَّا لَمْ يَخَفْ عَلَيْهِ خَافِيَةٌ مِنْ أَثَرِ الذَّرَّةِ السَّوْدَاءِ ، عَلَى الصَّخْرَةِ الصَّمَاءِ ، فِي اللَّيْلَةِ 83
. الظُّلُمَاءِ ، تَحْتَ الثَّرَى وَبِحَارِ الْأَنْوَارِ ، قُلْنَا: بَصِيرٌ

83– Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) said, ‘Because of the fact that the secret trace of a black mustard seed on a massive rock in the darkness of the night, be it in the ground or in the seas, cannot remain hidden from Him, is what compels us to say that He is all-seeing.’[al-Tawhid, p. 65, no. 18]

The Subtle and The All-Aware

لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ

- الإمامُ الرضا (عليه السّلام): أَمَّا اللَّطِيفُ فَلَيْسَ عَلَى قَلَّةٍ وَقَضَافَةٍ وَصِغَرٍ ، وَلَكِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى النَّفَازِ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ ، 84
وَالْإِمْتِنَاعِ مِنْ أَنْ يُدْرَكَ ، أَمَّا الْخَبِيرُ فَالَّذِي لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ شَيْءٌ وَلَا يَفُوتُهُ ، لَيْسَ لِلتَّجَرِبَةِ وَلَا لِلْإِعْتِبَارِ بِالْأَشْيَاءِ ، فَعِنْدَ
التَّجَرِبَةِ وَالْإِعْتِبَارِ عِلْمَانِ ، وَلَوْلَاهُمَا مَا عِلِمَ ؛ لِأَنَّ مَنْ كَانَ كَذَلِكَ كَانَ جَاهِلًا

84– Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) said, ‘He is subtle not in terms of lack or delicateness or smallness, rather [He is subtle] in His penetration into everything without being perceived. He is all-aware through the fact that nothing escapes His attention or evades Him, independent of experience or consideration of things, for experience and consideration in turn result in two types of knowledge, without which He would not know [if he were to be dependent on them], and would therefore be ignorant.’[al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 122, no. 2]

The All-Strong and The Almighty

قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): وَكُلُّ قَوِيٍّ غَيْرُهُ ضَعِيفٌ⁸⁵

85— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘And every strong person besides Allah is weak.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 65]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): كُلُّ شَيْءٍ خَاشِعٌ لَهُ ، وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ قَائِمٌ بِهِ ، غِنَى كُلِّ فَقِيرٍ ، وَعِزُّ كُلِّ ذَلِيلٍ ، وَقُوَّةُ كُلِّ ضَعِيفٍ .

86— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Everything humbles before Him, and everything subsists through Him. He is the contentment of every poor, the honour of every disgraced one, and the strength of every weak one.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 109]

.. - الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): كُلُّ عَزِيزٍ غَيْرُهُ ذَلِيلٌ⁸⁷

87— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Every mighty one besides Him is abased.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 65]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَبَسَ الْعِزَّ وَالْكَبرياءَ، واختارَهُمَا لِنَفْسِهِ دُونَ خَلْقِهِ⁸⁸

88— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Praise be to Allah who wears the cloak of might and majesty, and has chosen them for Himself over the rest of His creation.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 192]

The All-Wise

حَكِيمٌ

.. الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - لَمَّا سُئِلَ: وَكَيْفَ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ؟ -: لِأَنَّهُ لَا يَفْعَلُ إِلَّا مَا كَانَ حِكْمَهُ وَصَوَاباً⁸⁹

89— Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) was once asked why it is that Allah cannot be questioned about what He does, to which he replied, ‘Because He only does what is wise and good.’[al-Tawhid, p. 397, no. 13]

The All-Embracing

صَمَدٌ

- الإمامُ الحسينُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الصَّمَدُ: الَّذِي لَا جَوْفَ لَهُ ، وَالصَّمَدُ: الَّذِي قَدِ انْتَهَى سُودُهُ ، وَالصَّمَدُ الَّذِي لَا يَأْكُلُ وَلَا يَشْرَبُ ، وَالصَّمَدُ: الَّذِي لَا يَنَامُ ، وَالصَّمَدُ: الدَّائِمُ الَّذِي لَمْ يَزَلْ وَلَا يَزَالُ.

90— Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) said, ‘The All-embracing is the One Who has no lack within Him; the All-embracing is the One Whose mastership is complete; the All-embracing is the One Who neither eats nor drinks; the All-embracing is the One Who does not sleep; the All-embracing is the Eternal One who is and will always be.’[al-Tawhid, p. 90, no. 3]

He is Everywhere

هُوَ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - فِي صِفَةِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ -: وَإِنَّهُ لَبِكُلِّ مَكَانٍ ، وَفِي كُلِّ حِينٍ وَأَوَانٍ ، وَمَعَ كُلِّ إِنْسٍ وَجَانٍ.

91— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, describing Allah, Glory be to Him, ‘And verily He is everywhere, each and every moment and time, and with every human and Jinn.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 195]

- الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) لَمَّا سُئِلَ عَنْ قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «وَهُوَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ» -: كَذَلِكَ هُوَ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ . قُلْتُ: بِذَاتِهِ ؟ قَالَ: وَيَحْكُ ! إِنَّ الْأَمَاكِينَ أَقْدَارٌ ، فَإِذَا قُلْتُ: فِي مَكَانٍ بِذَاتِهِ لَزِمَكَ أَنْ تَقُولَ: فِي أَقْدَارٍ . وَغَيْرَ ذَلِكَ ، وَلَكِنْ هُوَ بَائِنٌ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ ، مُحِيطٌ بِمَا خَلَقَ عِلْمًا وَقُدْرَةً وَإِحَاطَةً وَسُلْطَانًا وَمُلْكًا.

92— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) was asked by Abu Jau’afar regarding Allah’s verse in the Qur’an: **“And He is Allah in the heavens and in the earth”**, to which he replied, ‘Yes, similarly He is in every place.’ I [Abu Ja’afar] asked, ‘In His essence?’ Imam replied, ‘Woe betide you! Verily places are the objects of divine decree, so by your saying that He is in a place in essence, you are in fact compelled to say that He is both in the objects of His divine decree and separate thereof. He is, however, distinct from His creation, entirely encompassing what He creates in knowledge, power, control, authority and dominion.’[al-Tawhid, p. 133, no. 15]

Attributes of His Essence and Attributes of His Action

صِفَاتُ الذَّاتِ وَصِفَاتُ الْفِعْلِ

.. الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): رَبُّنَا نَوْرِيُّ الذَّاتِ ، حَيُّ الذَّاتِ ، عَالِمُ الذَّاتِ ، صَمَدِيُّ الذَّاتِ⁹³

93— Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Our Lord is luminant in His very essence, Living in His very essence, All-knowing in His very essence, All-embracing in His very essence.’[al-Tawhid, p. 140, no. 4]

- الإمامُ الرِّضَا (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): الْمَشِيئَةُ وَالْإِرَادَةُ مِنْ صِفَاتِ الْأَفْعَالِ ، فَمَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى لَمْ يَزَلْ مُرِيداً شَائِئاً⁹⁴ . فَلَيْسَ بِمُوجِدٍ .

94— Imam Ar-Ridha’ (a.s.) said, ‘Wish and will are among the attributes of Allah’s action, so whoever claims that Allah, most High, is eternally willing and wishing has not understood His divine unity.’[al-Tawhid, p. 338, no. 5]

Comprehensive Attributes

جَوَامِعُ الصِّفَاتِ

- الإمامُ عَلِيٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): أَوَّلُ الدِّينِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ ، وَكَمَالُ مَعْرِفَتِهِ التَّصَدِيقُ بِهِ ، وَكَمَالُ التَّصَدِيقِ بِهِ تَوْحِيدُهُ⁹⁵ ، وَكَمَالُ تَوْحِيدِهِ الْإِخْلَاصُ لَهُ ، وَكَمَالُ الْإِخْلَاصِ لَهُ نَفْيُ الصِّفَاتِ عَنْهُ ؛ لِشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ صِفَةٍ أَنَّهَا غَيْرُ الْمَوْصُوفِ ، وَشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ مَوْصُوفٍ أَنََّّهُ غَيْرُ الصِّفَةِ ، فَمَنْ وَصَفَ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ فَقَدْ قَرَنَهُ ، وَمَنْ قَرَنَهُ فَقَدْ ثَنَاهُ ، وَمَنْ ثَنَاهُ فَقَدْ جَزَّأَهُ ، وَمَنْ جَزَّأَهُ فَقَدْ جَهَّلَهُ ، (وَمَنْ جَهَّلَهُ فَقَدْ أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ) ، وَمَنْ أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ فَقَدْ حَدَّهْ ، وَمَنْ حَدَّهْ فَقَدْ عَدَّهْ ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: «فِيمَ ؟» فَقَدْ ضَمَّنَهُ ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: «عَلَامَ ؟» فَقَدْ أَخْلَى مِنْهُ ، كَائِنْ لَا عَنْ حَدَثٍ ، مَوْجُودٌ لَا عَنْ عَدَمٍ ، مَعَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُقَارَنَةٍ ، وَغَيْرُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُزَايَلَةٍ ، فَاعِلٌ لَا بِمَعْنَى الْحَرَكَاتِ وَالْآلَةِ ، بَصِيرٌ إِذْ لَا مَنَظُورَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ ، مُتَوَجِّدٌ إِذْ لَا سَكَنَ يَسْتَأْنِسُ بِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَوْجِسُ لِفَقْدِهِ .

95— Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The very first step in religion is acknowledging Him, and the perfect way to acknowledge Him is to testify to Him, and the perfect way to testify to Him is to believe in His divine unity, and the perfect way to believe in His divine unity is to regard Him as absolutely pure, and the perfect way to regard Him as absolutely pure is to negate all attributes from Him, for every attribute is a proof of its own distinction from the thing to which it is attributed, and everything that is attached and attributed is distinct from the attribute. Thus, whoever attaches attributes to Allah, Glory be to Him, associates Him with something else, and whoever associates Him regards Him as two, and whoever

regards Him as two identifies parts to Him, and whoever identifies parts to Him has indeed misunderstood Him, and whoever misunderstands Him singles Him out, and whoever singles Him out has confined Him, and whoever confines Him has enumerated Him. Whoever asks 'In what [is He]?' holds that He is contained, and whoever asks 'On what [is He]?' has excluded Him. He is [a Being] but not through any phenomenon of coming into being, He exists but not from non-existence. He is with everything but not in physical proximity, and is separate from everything but not through physical separation. He acts but without need for movements and instruments. He sees without need for an object of sight from among His creation. He is One such that He has no need for a source of comfort that may keep Him company nor any whom He may miss in his absence.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 1]

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