Al-Islam.org
Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project
Published on *Al-Islam.org* (https://www.al-islam.org)

Perpetuity and Eternity

Perpetuity and eternity are among the attributes of the Praised One. Likewise, the “Perpetual One” and the “Eternal One” are among His Names. In their places, both “Timeless” and “ever-Present” may instead be used. The absolute timelessness, and so is ever-presence, are His attributes. He, the most Praised One, therefore, is timeless, perpetual, ever-present, eternal.

The first two names are applied to Him because He is the companion of the sum of all times that will come to be or those that have already been in the past. The last couple is applied to Him because He is the One Whose presence continues to be in the upcoming times, be they actualized or decreed. He may also be described as being the everlasting in the sense the One Who combines in Him the total of all periods, the past and the future ones.

Briefly, describing Him as the perpetual with regard to the past, and the ever-present, the eternal with regard to the future, is what scholars of logic have agreed about while explaining these names and attributes.

But this explanation suits one whose presence is timed, who accompanies realized or decreed times, the past or the future ones, whereas Allah, Praise belongs to Him, is above time and above accompanying it. Rather, He is the One Who created time, the past, the present and the future. He, therefore, is above time and place. Time does not surround Him, place does not contain Him.

Thereupon, what is right in making an explanation is to say that what is present by the self is one whose presence is not initiated by this self. Rather, it is preceded by void, and existence takes place due to a cause within him. The opposite to the latter is the One that creates existence, the One Whose presence is innate, a must by itself, the One that cannot be affected by nonexistence, nor is He affected by it. Such One is not preceded by void, so He is timeless, perpetual. Likewise, void never affects Him, so He remains eternal, ever-present.

Briefly, the need for existence and its imminence dismisses void forever, for good. Otherwise, His presence will not be a must but a probability, which is the contrary to the supposition.

As regarding the proof for these four attributes that follow the need for His presence, we have already explained it when we discussed the imminence of probable existents ending at a necessary must that stands by himself, on his own. Otherwise, the existents, what is possible of them, will cease to be; they will not materialize.

As regarding the inclusion of the Perpetual, Eternal, Timeless and ever-Present among His Names, Praise belongs to Him, this depends on saying that His Names, Praise belongs to Him, require a lengthy halt. The Almighty cannot be called except what the Quran and Sunnah call Him. The texts in this regard narrated from the Holy Prophet (S) and Imams (as) indicate that the latter names, I mean the "timeless" and the "ever-present", are the ones that are mentioned as you will come to know at the end of the chapter when we discuss His Names as they exist in the Quran and Sunnah.

Up to here, the research is completed about the positive entitative attributes which are not restricted to the eight ones we have discussed. Any perfection that is regarded as absolute belongs to Him, any shortcoming there is, He is above it. All His Names that exist in the Quran and Sunnah, point out to His perfection, the most Exalted One that He is. They negate His having any need or shortcoming, the Holy One that He is.

So, if we want to describe the most Praised One by one collective Name, it is the absolute perfection, or the pure independence. And if we want to explain this perfection and description that combines all the attributes, it suffices to apply the eight positive attributes that we discussed. Thus, the one single Name, from among all of His Names, which symbolizes the Self that incorporates all attributes of perfection is "Allah".

All this discussion revolves round the entitative positive attributes, and we have already stated the difference among them. We are going to refer to them anew.

Source URL:
https://www.al-islam.org/al-ilahiyyat-volume-1-sheikh-hassan-muhammad-makki-al-amili/perpetuity-and-eternity#comment-0