THE WILL OF ALLAH AND OUR DESTINY

Part VII: The Place of Allah's Attributes

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Abstract: *In this part, it is shown that Allah's names (*Asmaa*) and attributes (*Sifaat*) are of His supreme creations. The place of the manifestation of the Allah's attributes and qualities is discussed, including the states of satisfaction, dissatisfaction, mercy, wrath, sadness, etc., which are all parts of Allah's created will. Moreover, the meanings of medium of Allah, such as the face, eye, hand, and side that Allah attributed to Himself are discussed based on the evidence from the holy Quran and Hadith.*

Keywords:*The names of Allah; His attributes, His medium, His actions*

Introduction

As we discussed in the previous sections with evidence, the heart of *the proof of Allah* is the vessel of the will of Allah for both the will of knowledge and the will of command. In other words, the will of Allah is Allah's creation in the heart of the Imams *(PBUT)*. Consequently, their knowledge is the divine knowledge, and their command and satisfaction are the command and satisfaction of Allah. It is a rational fact that the actions, qualities, conditions,

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and the states that have been attributed to Allah in the holy Quran are not eternal as they vary in time and place. Moreover, we discuss that the names of Allah and His attributes are the medium and channel of connection to Allah, and are His creations. They are the interfaces that He has chosen such that all His actions over the rest of creation manifest through them. Allah is free of needs and interface, but He willed and designed the creations such that they need this medium to call upon Him and to receive His bounties, just as He willed that human require oxygen to remain alive. The oxygen acts as the medium of the life planned by Allah. In this section, we provide some evidence that explain the reality and function of this medium and system devised by Allah in the creation and in the religion.

The conditions and states attributed to Allah

In a very inspiring Hadith which includes several verses of the holy Quran as its supportive evidence, Hamza Ibn Bazi' narrated:

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ فَلَمَّا آسَفُونا انْتَقَمْنا مِنْهُمْ فَقَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ لاَ يَأْسَفُ كَأَسَفِنَا وَ لَكِنَّهُ خَلَقَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِنَفْسِهِ يَأْسَفُونَ وَ يَرْضَوْنَ وَ هُمْ مَخْلُوقُونَ مَرْبُوبُونَ فَجَعَلَ رِضَاهُمْ رِضَا نَفْسِهِ وَ سَخَطَهُمْ سَخَطَ نَفْسِهِ لأَنَّهُ جَعَلَهُمُ الدُّعَاةَ إِلَيْهِ وَ الأَدِلاَّءَ عَلَيْهِ فَلِذَلِكَ صَارُوا كَذَلِكَ وَ لَيْسَ أَنَّ ذَلِكَ يَصِلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ كَمَا يَصِلُ إِلَى خَلْقِهِ لَكِنْ هَذَا مَعْنَى مَا قَالَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَ قَدْ قَالَ مَنْ أَهَانَ لِي وَلِيّاً فَقَدْ بَارَزَنِي بِالْمُحَارَبَةِ وَ دَعَانِي إِلَيْهَا وَ قَالَ مَنْ يُطِعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطاعَ اللَّهَ وَ قَالَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبايِعُونَكَ إِنَّما يُبايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَكُلُّ هَذَا وَ شِبْهُهُ عَلَى مَا ذَكَرْتُ لَكَ وَ هَكَذَا الرِّضَا وَ الْغَضَبُ وَ غَيْرُهُمَا مِنَ الأَشْيَاءِ مِمَّا يُشَاكِلُ ذَلِكَ وَ لَوْ كَانَ يَصِلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ الأَسَفُ وَ الضَّجَرُ وَ هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُمَا وَ أَنْشَأَهُمَا لَجَازَ لِقَائِلِ هَذَا أَنْ يَقُولَ إِنَّ الْخَالِقَ يَبِيدُ يَوْماً مَا لِأَنَّهُ إِذَا دَخَلَهُ الْغَضَبُ وَ الضَّجَرُ دَخَلَهُ التَّغْيِيرُ وَ إِذَا دَخَلَهُ التَّغْيِيرُ لَمْ يُؤْمَنْ عَلَيْهِ الإِبَادَةُ ثُمَّ لَمْ يُعْرَفِ الْمُكَوِّنُ مِنَ الْمُكَوَّنِ وَ لاَ الْقَادِرُ مِنَ الْمَقْدُورِ عَلَيْهِ وَ لاَ الْخَالِقُ مِنَ الْمَخْلُوقِ تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَنْ هَذَا الْقَوْلِ عُلُوّاً كَبِيراً بَلْ هُوَ الْخَالِقُ لِلأَشْيَاءِ لاَ لِحَاجَةٍ فَإِذَا كَانَ لاَ لِحَاجَةٍ اسْتَحَالَ الْحَدُّ وَ الْكَيْفُ فِيهِ فَافْهَمْ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى.

On the commentary of the saying of the Lord of might and majesty: "When they made Us sad, We took revenge from them," (43:55) Imam al-Sadiq *(PBUH)* said, "Certainly, the Lord of might and majesty does not sorrow like we sorrow. However, He has created friends (*Awliyaa*) for Himself who become sad and become delighted (on His behalf). They are created, trained, and raised (by Him to act as such). Therefore, He made their satisfaction (as sign of) His Own satisfaction, and their dissatisfaction His Own dissatisfaction. It is because they are the callers to Him and the guides towards Him (i.e., His religion). For this reason, (based on the reactions of people) they transfer to such states and such conditions belong to them. It is not

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that such a state (i.e., sadness) would strike Allah as it strikes His creations. And this is the meaning of His saying (in the token of holy Quran mentioned above). He also said, 'He who insults a friend of Mine, he has indeed challenged Me to combat and called Me to it'. Moreover, He said, 'Whoever obeys the Messenger, he has indeed obeyed Allah.' (4:80) In addition, He said, 'Verily those who pledge allegiance to you, they have indeed pledged allegiance to Allah; the hand of Allah is over their hands.' (48:10) All of these issues and any other issues similar to them should be explained according to what I just mentioned. The same is the case with satisfaction, anger, and other things like them. If the state of sadness and frustration could have reached Allah while Allah is their creator and their originator, it would be possible for the person who holds such an idea to say that one day the creator would vanish. It is because if anger and frustration could get into Him, changes have taken place in Him, and if He is subject to change, He is not safe from destruction. Besides, in that case, no distinction would exist between the originator and the originated, between the mighty and the dominated, and between the creator and the created. Allah is far above such a thought, with a great glory. He created things without needing them. Since He does not need His creations, limit, state or condition is impossible for Him. Understand what I said if Allah, the glorious, so wills."[1]

Thus, the pleasure of the Imam *(PBUH)* is the manifestation and indication of the pleasure of Allah and it is a sign that defines "the pleasure of Allah" for us, because there is no change in the Essence of Allah from wrath to pleasure and vice versa. Allah does not need His creations since he was pre-existent. He creates these conditions and the states as signals to guide His servants. If Allah enters into a state or condition, His creation limits Him, and Allah is far above such a saying. Allah is distinct from His creations and their attributes. Therefore, it is logical that all such states or qualities that have been attributed to Allah in the holy Quran would belong to His vice-regents (*Khulafaa Allah*) among His creation. They are the places of His created attributes including mercy and wrath.

In another token in the holy Quran, Allah, the glorious, states:

إِنَّ اَلَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اَللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اَللَّهُ فِي اَلدُّنْيا وَ اَلْأَخِرَةِ وَ أَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذاباً مُهِيناً.

Those who annoy Allah and His Messenger, Allah has cursed them in this world and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating Punishment. (33:57)

Allah is far above from getting into the state of annoyance and irritation. Rather,

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He has defined the annoyance of Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)* as His. Allah has created them, and knew their full submission to His will. Thus, He created the states and the conditions to which their heart turn according to His will when facing different situations, and then He called those states as "His states". Hence, the meaning of the above token of the holy Quran becomes: "those who annoy the Messenger of Allah *(PBUH&HF)* and his Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)* …" Both Shia and Bakri (with some slight variations) narrated:

يَوْمَ شَكَاهُ بُرَيْدَةُ ... فَوَقَفَ بُرَيْدَةُ قُدَّامَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَ لَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ أَخَذَ جَارِيَةً مِنَ الْمَغْنَمِ دُونَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ص ثُمَّ جَاءَ عَنْ يَمِينِهِ فَقَالَهَا فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ فَجَاءَ عَنْ يَسَارِهِ فَقَالَهَا فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَ جَاءَ مِنْ خَلْفِهِ فَقَالَهَا فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ ثُمَّ عَادَ إِلَى بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ فَقَالَهَا فَغَضِبَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ غَضَباً لَمْ يُرَ قَبْلَهُ وَ لَا بَعْدَهُ غَضَبٌ مِثْلُهُ وَ تَغَيَّرَ لَوْنُهُ وَ انْتَفَخَتْ أَوْدَاجُهُ وَ ارْتَعَدَتْ فَرَائِصُهُ وَ قَالَ يَا بُرَيْدَةُ مَا لَكَ آذَيْتَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُنْذُ الْيَوْمِ إِنِّي سَمِعْتُ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ يَقُولُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَ الْآخِرَةِ وَ أَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذاباً مُهِيناً وَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ الْمُؤْمِناتِ بِغَيْرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلُوا بُهْتاناً وَ إِثْماً مُبِيناً قَالَ بُرَيْدَةُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا عَلِمْتُ أَنِّي قَصَدْتُكَ بِأَذًى قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ص أَ وَ تَظُنُّ يَا بُرَيْدَةُ أَنَّهُ لَا يُؤْذِينِي إِلَّا مَنْ قَصَدَ ذَاتَ نَفْسِي أَ مَا عَلِمْتَ أَنَّ عَلِيّاً مِنِّي وَ أَنَا مِنْهُ وَ أَنَّ مَنْ آذَى عَلِيّاً فَقَدْ آذَانِي وَ مَنْ آذَانِي فَقَدْ آذَى اللَّهَ وَ مَنْ آذَى اللَّهَ فَحَقٌّ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُؤْذِيَهُ بِأَلِيمِ عَذَابِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ.

… One day Buraida al-Aslami criticized the Commander of Faithful, Imam Ali *(PBUH)* before the Prophet *(PBUH&HF)* on an issue several times. The Messenger of Allah *(PBUH&HF)* became so angry that has not been seen before, to the extent that his color changed, his jugular veins swelled, his limbs shook, and said, "What is wrong with you, O Buraida, that you have annoyed me since the morning? Haven't you heard the saying of the Lord of might and majesty 'Those who annoy Allah and His Messenger, Allah has cursed them in this world and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating Punishment. And those who annoy believing men and women undeservedly, bear (on themselves) a calumny and a glaring sin.' (33:57-58)" Buraida replied, "I did not think it would annoy you." The Messenger of Allah *(PBUH&HF)* said, "Do you think you do not annoy me unless you intend (to annoy) me personally? Don't you know that Ali is from me and I am from Ali, and that he who annoys Ali, he has indeed annoyed me, and he who annoys me, he has indeed annoyed Allah, and he who annoys Allah, it is for Allah to annoy him with His most painful punishment in Hellfire?"[2]

A concise version of the above exchange is reported by the Bakri's. However, they have given the name of Amro Ibn

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Shaas al-Aslami as the person who irritated the Prophet *(PBUH&HF)*.[3]

The same explanation applies to the universally accepted Hadith in which the Messenger of Allah *(PBUH&HF)* said about his daughter:

يَا فَاطِمَةُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى لَيَغْضَبُ لِغَضَبِكِ وَ يَرْضَى لِرِضَاكِ.

"O Fatima! Most certainly Allah— Whose name is holy, Whose remembrance is high— becomes angry due to your anger and becomes pleased due to your pleasure."[4]

The above Hadith does not necessarily imply that Allah's will is the subject of the will of Lady Fatima *(PBUH)*, rather it stresses the fact that her feelings are always in line with what Allah expects from her so much so that her feelings should be viewed as "the feelings attributed to Allah". It naturally follows that such divinely-talented individuals who enjoy such a high status and represent the created attributes of Allah should be protected by Allah from any wrong feeling and wrong action. Allah has trained their hearts to feel and respond perfectly and they voluntarily submit to these inspired feelings. Although due to their volition, the actions of these protected individuals are not the actions of Allah in reality, Allah attributes their actions to Himself, because they always choose to do exactly as Allah commanded them to do through inspiration of His will in their submissive heart. As the Imam *(PBUH)* explained in an earlier Hadith, we should regard the Essence of Allah pure from such qualities and descriptions. Since these attributes and descriptions are proven facts in the holy Quran and collections of Hadith, the existence of such protected individuals is, therefore, proven.

Allah's names and His attributes of actions

The Hadiths of Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)* make it quite clear that unlike the Essence of Allah, His name and His attributes are not eternal, and are created. They are called His attributes because they belong to Him and are His chosen creation with supreme functionalities. Moreover, unlike His creation, His names are the same as His attributes. This is because Allah's Essence is free of attributes, and the created attributes merely act as the signs for Him as their owner and possessor, and are the means of addressing Him just as names do. However, Eternal knowledge, power, hearing, and sight, which are the same as the Essence of Allah, should not be called His attributes. There is no difference between the Eternal hearing, Eternal sight, and Eternal power. *We must only acknowledge and praise Allah with what He praised His Essence in the*

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holy Quran, but we should regard Him pure from any meanings of common terms that apply to His creation since nothing is like Him. Unlike the creation, Allah knows without mind, sees without eyes, hears without ear, etc. By these statements, we only mean He is undeniable and is not weak, nor is He ignorant of what can be heard or seen. Allah sees as He hears and as He is powerful. This statement looks meaningless due to lack of concept for the Essence Allah. The concepts of knowledge, power, hearing and sight that are familiar with us have meanings and diversity because they are created attributes by Allah and they do not have any similarity with His Essence. Any imagination or perception of Allah's Eternal knowledge, power, hearing and sight by us is a creation of our mind and their features cannot be attributed to Allah. We should regard His Essence (*Dhat*) pure (*Munazzah*) from all attributes of perfection because they are created entities which have quality (*Kayfiyya*) and quantity (*Kammiyya*). Allah is the creator of all such qualities, and Allah is not limited by the extension of qualities and concepts that we imagine. Allah does not need His creation.

The concept of power that we know is a quality created by Allah and has no similarity whatsoever with the Eternal Power, otherwise we have likened Allah to His creation. The power that we know is still deficient and implies weakness, because it is captured, sensed or perceived in the domain of creation. But Allah's Eternal Power does not have any limitation and weakness, and therefore by saying Him Powerful, we only mean He is pure from any type of weakness. However, we should not consider any opposite for Allah as He is the creator of opposite things. Although the literal negation of weakness is power but since the concept of power in the domain of creation involves weakness (because it is perceived by us in the domain of creation, needs means for manifestation, has features by which it can be compared), we cannot say logically that the negative of weakness is the concept of power that we know. Thus, it will be irrational and illogical to go beyond confirming purity for the Essence of Allah from all known and comprehensible concepts.

What we can perceive or imagine of knowledge, power, hearing and sight in their perfect sense are the created names and attributes of Allah and have been placed in His best creation, which is the sole or light of the Prophet *(PBUH&HF)* and His Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)*. We purify Allah from all such attributes even in their perfect senses. Several Hadiths make it clear that whoever believes that the name and attributes are the same as the Essence of Allah is a disbeliever and

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a polytheist, and that maintaining purity of Allah from is His attributes, is the foundation of belief in the Unity of Allah (*al-Tawhid*). Hear we provide some evidence in this regard. Let us study some Hadiths in this regard. It has been narrated that Imam Sadiq *(PBUH)* said:

مَنْ عَبَدَ اللَّهَ بِالتَّوَهُّمِ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ وَ مَنْ عَبَدَ الِاسْمَ دُونَ الْمَعْنَى فَقَدْ كَفَرَ وَ مَنْ عَبَدَ الِاسْمَ وَ الْمَعْنَى فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ وَ مَنْ عَبَدَ الْمَعْنَى بِإِيقَاعِ الْأَسْمَاءِ عَلَيْهِ بِصِفَاتِهِ الَّتِي وَصَفَ بِهَا نَفْسَهُ فَعَقَدَ عَلَيْهِ قَلْبَهُ وَ نَطَقَ بِهِ لِسَانُهُ فِي سَرَائِرِهِ وَ عَلَانِيَتِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع حَقّاً وَ فِي حَدِيثٍ آخَرَ «أُولئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا».

"He who worships Allah based on (the names and symbolic concepts developed by his) thoughts, has indeed disbelieved (Allah). He who worships the name (or attribute) instead of what it refers, has disbelieved as well, and he who worships both the name and its reference (i.e., the owner of name), has indeed associated (the names) with Allah. He who worships what is intended (by the names) by employing the names for Him (which are) the attributes that Allah praised Himself by them, and his heart believes in (worshiping Him through His name) and his tongue utters it secretly and openly, He is truly of the companions of the Leader of the Faithful, and 'they are the real believers' (8:4)."[5]

Abdurrahman bin Abi Najran narrated:

قُلْتُ لَهُ: جَعَلَنِي اللَّهُ فِدَاكَ نَعْبُدُ الرَّحْمَنَ الرَّحِيمَ الْوَاحِدَ الْأَحَدَ الصَّمَدَ؟ فَقَالَ: إِنَّ مَنْ عَبَدَ الِاسْمَ دُونَ الْمُسَمَّى بِالْأَسْمَاءِ أَشْرَكَ وَ كَفَرَ وَ جَحَدَ وَ لَمْ يَعْبُدْ شَيْئاً بَلِ اعْبُدِ اللَّهَ الْوَاحِدَ الْأَحَدَ الصَّمَدَ الْمُسَمَّى بِهَذِهِ الْأَسْمَاءِ دُونَ الْأَسْمَاءِ إِنَّ الْأَسْمَاءَ صِفَاتٌ وَصَفَ بِهَا نَفْسَه.

I asked Imam Javad *(PBUH)*, "Do we worship (the names of) the beneficent, the merciful, one, unique, and needless?" The Imam *(PBUH)* answered: "He who worships the name instead of Who is named by those names is a polytheist and disbeliever, and denied and worships nothing. Instead of worshipping names, worship (the Essence of) Allah Who is one, unique, and needless and is named by these names. *Verily, the names are the attributes by which Allah praised Himself*.[6]

Several traditionists narrated that the Commander of Faithful, Imam Ali *(PBUH)*, said the following in one of his sermons:

أَوَّلُ الدِّيَانَةِ بِهِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ وَ كَمَالُ مَعْرِفَتِهِ تَوْحِيدُهُ وَ كَمَالُ تَوْحِيدِهِ نَفْيُ الصِّفَاتِ عَنْهُ بِشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ صِفَةٍ أَنَّهَا غَيْرُ الْمَوْصُوفِ وَ شَهَادَةِ الْمَوْصُوفِ أَنَّهُ غَيْرُ الصِّفَةِ وَ شَهَادَتِهِمَا جَمِيعاً بِالتَّثْنِيَةِ الْمُمْتَنِعِ مِنْهُ الأَزَلُ فَمَنْ وَصَفَ اللَّهَ فَقَدْ حَدَّهُ وَ مَنْ حَدَّهُ فَقَدْ عَدَّهُ وَ مَنْ عَدَّهُ فَقَدْ أَبْطَلَ أَزَلَهُ وَ مَنْ قَالَ كَيْفَ فَقَدِ اسْتَوْصَفَهُ ...

"The foremost of devoutness and faith in Him is to recognize Him. The perfection of His recognition is to believe in His

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Oneness. The perfection of believing in His Oneness is to (rationally) deny attributes from Him (i.e., His Essence). Because every attribute is a testimony for the fact that it is different from the attributed entity, and attributed entity is a testimony for the fact that it is different from the attribute, and the (rational) testimony of (the existence of) both together is that it is impossible for both to be eternal. Thus whoever describe (the Essence of) Allah (by attributes) has indeed limited Him (by these qualities and characteristics); and he who has limited Him has indeed numbered Him (by the limits that has been we Him), and he who has numbered Him has indeed disproved His eternity. He who says 'How (Allah is)', has tried to describe Him (by condition and state) ..."[7]

Isma'il al-Qutaiba narrated from Imam al-Sadiq *(PBUH)* that the Leader of the Faithful *(PBUH)* said in a part of his sermon:

الْمُمْتَنِعَةِ مِنَ الصِّفَاتِ ذَاتُهُ وَ مِنَ الأَبْصَارِ رُؤْيَتُهُ وَ مِنَ الأَوْهَامِ الإِحَاطَةُ بِهِ .

It is impossible for the attributes to be His Essence, for the eyes to see Him, and for the mind to encompass Him."[8]

In another Hadith, Abu Hashim al-Ja'fari narrated:

كُنْتُ عِنْدَ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ الثَّانِي ع فَسَأَلَهُ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ أَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الرَّبِّ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى لَهُ أَسْمَاءٌ وَ صِفَاتٌ فِي كِتَابِهِ وَ أَسْمَاؤُهُ وَ صِفَاتُهُ هِيَ هُوَ فَقَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ ع إِنَّ لِهَذَا الْكَلَامِ وَجْهَيْنِ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقُولُ هِيَ هُوَ أَيْ إِنَّهُ ذُو عَدَدٍ وَ كَثْرَةٍ فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَنْ ذَلِكَ وَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقُولُ هَذِهِ الصِّفَاتُ وَ الْأَسْمَاءُ لَمْ تَزَلْ فَإِنَّ لَمْ تَزَلْ مُحْتَمِلٌ مَعْنَيَيْنِ فَإِنْ قُلْتَ لَمْ تَزَلْ عِنْدَهُ فِي عِلْمِهِ وَ هُوَ مُسْتَحِقُّهَا فَنَعَمْ وَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقُولُ لَمْ يَزَلْ تَصْوِيرُهَا وَ هِجَاؤُهَا وَ تَقْطِيعُ حُرُوفِهَا فَمَعَاذَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يَكُونَ مَعَهُ شَيْءٌ غَيْرُهُ، بَلْ كَانَ اللَّهُ وَ لَا خَلْقَ ثُمَّ خَلَقَهَا وَسِيلَةً بَيْنَهُ وَ بَيْنَ خَلْقِهِ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ بِهَا إِلَيْهِ وَ يَعْبُدُونَهُ وَ هِيَ ذِكْرُهُ وَ كَانَ اللَّهُ وَ لَا ذِكْرَ وَ الْمَذْكُورُ بِالذِّكْرِ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْقَدِيمُ الَّذِي لَمْ يَزَلْ وَ الْأَسْمَاءُ وَ الصِّفَاتُ مَخْلُوقَاتٌ وَ الْمَعَانِي وَ الْمَعْنِيُّ بِهَا هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا يَلِيقُ بِهِ الِاخْتِلَافُ وَ لَا الِائْتِلَافُ وَ إِنَّمَا يَخْتَلِفُ وَ يَأْتَلِفُ الْمُتَجَزِّئُ.

I was in the presence of Imam al-Jawad *(PBUH)* when a man asked him, "Inform me about the Lord—Whose name is holy, Whose remembrance is high—are His names and His attributes the same as His Essence?" The Imam *(PBUH)* replied, "This saying has two meanings. If you mean He is numerous, then Allah is exalted from that. And if you mean the names and attributes have always been, it may imply two meanings: If you say they have always been in His knowledge (i.e., Allah eternally knew what He would create of names and attributes) then this is correct. However, if you say that their image, their spelling, and their wordings were eternal, then I seek refuge in Allah from saying there was anything else with

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Allah. Rather Allah existed and there was no creation. He then created them (i.e., the names and attributes) as a means between Him and His creation so that His creation may implore upon Him by them and worship Him. They (i.e., the names and attributes) are His remembrance. Verily Allah existed and there was no remembrance (of Him). The One who is remembered by the remembrance is (the Essence of) Allah who was eternally pre-existent. *The names (Asmaa) and the attributes (Sifaat) are creations* and what is intended by them is (the Essence of) Allah Who neither variety nor union (of several things) befits Him. Only something that has parts and is dividable may have diversity or integrity."[9]

About the synonymy of name and attribute for Allah, Abdullah Ibn Sanan narrated:

سَأَلْتُ الرِّضَا ع عَنِ الِاسْمِ مَا هُوَ قَالَ صِفَةٌ لِمَوْصُوف.

I asked Imam Ridha *(PBUH)* what the name is. He said, "It is an attribute (*Sifat*) for that which to it is attributed (*Mausuf*)."[10]

It is also narrated that Imam al-Sadiq *(PBUH)* said:

اللَّهُ غَايَةُ مَنْ غَيَّاهُ، فَالْمُغَيَّا غَيْرُ الْغَايَةِ، تَوَحَّدَ بِالرُّبُوبِيَّةِ وَ وَصَفَ نَفْسَهُ بِغَيْرِ مَحْدُودِيَّةٍ، فَالذَّاكِرُ اللَّهِ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ وَ اللَّهُ غَيْرُ أَسْمَاءٍ، وَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِ اسْمُ شَيْءٍ سِوَاهُ فَهُوَ مَخْلُوقٌ، أَ لَا تَرَى قَوْلَهُ «الْعِزَّةُ لِلَّهِ» الْعَظَمَةُ لِلَّهِ وَ قَالَ «وَ لِلَّهِ الْأَسْماءُ الْحُسْنى فَادْعُوهُ بِها»، وَ قَالَ «قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوِ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمنَ أَيًّا ما تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْماءُ الْحُسْنى»، فَالْأَسْمَاءُ مُضَافَةٌ إِلَيْهِ وَ هُوَ التَّوْحِيدُ الْخَالِصُ.

"(The name of) Allah is the final target (only) for someone who considers Allah's Essence has goal, end, and limit[11]. However, the creator of the goals and limits is free of goals and limits. He is unique by His lordship and management. *He praised himself without limit*. Thus, the reminder of Allah (i.e., the sign, name, or attribute) is other than Allah, and Allah is other than His names… Don't you see His sayings, 'The majesty belongs to Allah,' (4:139) 'The greatness belongs Allah' (i.e., they are His creator and owner), 'And for Allah there are the best names, thus call upon Him by them.' (7:180) 'Say: call (Him) Allah or call (Him) Rahman. By any of these (authorized names) that you call upon Him (is permissible), because for Allah there are the best names.' (17:110) Thus, the names have been ascribed to Him (as His possessions and authorized means of referring to Him), and this (view) is the pure monotheism (*Tawhid*)."[12]

In one of the debates in the presence of Ma'mun (the Abbasid caliph), the

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following was exchanged between Imam Ridha *(PBUH)* and Imran al-Saabi:

... قَالَ عِمْرَانُ فَبِأَيِّ شَيْءٍ عَرَفْنَاهُ قَالَ بِغَيْرِهِ قَالَ فَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ غَيْرُهُ قَالَ الرِّضَا ع مَشِيَّتُهُ وَ اسْمُهُ وَ صِفَتُهُ وَ مَا أَشْبَهَ ذَلِكَ وَ كُلُّ ذَلِكَ مُحْدَثٌ مَخْلُوقٌ مُدَبَّرٌ .

… Imran asked, "Thus, by which thing do we recognize Him?" Imam Ridha *(PBUH)* replied, "By other than Him." He asked, "What exactly other than Him?" The Imam *(PBUH)* replied, "His will, His name, His attribute, and whatever similar to them. All these things are novel, created, and are devised (by Allah)."[13]

Hisham Ibn Hakam narrated:

عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ الْحَكَمِ أَنَّهُ سَأَلَ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع عَنْ أَسْمَاءِ اللَّهِ وَ اشْتِقَاقِهَا اللَّهُ مِمَّا هُوَ مُشْتَقٌّ فَقَالَ يَا هِشَامُ اللَّهُ مُشْتَقٌّ مِنْ إِلَهٍ وَ إِلَهٌ يَقْتَضِي مَأْلُوهاً وَ الِاسْمُ غَيْرُ الْمُسَمَّى فَمَنْ عَبَدَ الِاسْمَ دُونَ الْمَعْنَى فَقَدْ كَفَرَ وَ لَمْ يَعْبُدْ شَيْئاً وَ مَنْ عَبَدَ الِاسْمَ وَ الْمَعْنَى فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ وَ عَبَدَ اثْنَيْنِ وَ مَنْ عَبَدَ الْمَعْنَى دُونَ الِاسْمِ فَذَاكَ التَّوْحِيدُ أَ فَهِمْتَ يَا هِشَامُ قَالَ قُلْتُ زِدْنِي قَالَ لِلَّهِ تِسْعَةٌ وَ تِسْعُونَ اسْماً فَلَوْ كَانَ الِاسْمُ هُوَ الْمُسَمَّى لَكَانَ كُلُّ اسْمٍ مِنْهَا إِلَهاً وَ لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعْنًى يُدَلُّ عَلَيْهِ بِهَذِهِ الْأَسْمَاءِ وَ كُلُّهَا غَيْرُهُ يَا هِشَامُ الْخُبْزُ اسْمٌ لِلْمَأْكُولِ وَ الْمَاءُ اسْمٌ لِلْمَشْرُوبِ وَ الثَّوْبُ اسْمٌ لِلْمَلْبُوسِ وَ النَّارُ اسْمٌ لِلْمُحْرِقِ أَ فَهِمْتَ يَا هِشَامُ فَهْماً تَدْفَعُ بِهِ وَ تُنَاضِلُ بِهِ أَعْدَاءَنَا الْمُتَّخِذِينَ مَعَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ غَيْرَهُ قُلْتُ نَعَمْ فَقَالَ نَفَعَكَ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَ ثَبَّتَكَ يَا هِشَامُ

قَالَ فَوَ اللَّهِ مَا قَهَرَنِي أَحَدٌ فِي التَّوْحِيدِ حَتَّى قُمْتُ مَقَامِي هَذَا.

I asked Imam al-Sadiq *(PBUH)* about the names of Allah, their derivations, and the root from which the word Allah is derived. The Imam *(PBUH)* replied, "O Hisham, the word Allah is derived from *Ilah* (deity), and deity refers to (an entity) that is to be worshipped. The name is different from what is named. Whoever worships the name instead of what it refers (*al-Ma'na*) has become a disbeliever and, in reality, has worshipped nothing (deserved of worship). Whoever worships the name along with its reference (jointly), he becomes a polytheist and worshipped two. Whoever worships what the name refers instead of the name itself, he, in reality, has maintained monotheism. O Hisham, did you grasp it?" I said, "Please enlighten me more." The Imam *(PBUH)* added, "Allah has ninety-nine names. If each name had been the same as what it refers, then each name would have been a god. However, the Essence of Allah is what is intended and is addressed by all these names, and all these names are other than He Himself. O Hisham, bread is a name for something eatable. Water is a name for something drinkable. Dress is a name for something wearable. Fire is a name of something that burns. O Hisham, did you fully grasp the point so you can

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defend your belief and successfully contest against our opponents, who, accept things other than Him as their Lord along with the Lord of might and majesty?" I replied, "Yes." The Imam said, "O Hisham, may Allah benefit you thereby and grant you steadfastness." Hisham (the narrator) used to say, "I swear by Allah, no one has ever defeated me on the issue of the Oneness of Allah (*Tawhid*) since then."[14]

In some translations, the word "*Ma'na*" in the above Hadith has been translated to "meaning", which wrongly implies concept for Allah and negates the message of this and other Hadiths. On the other hand, the literal word of "*Ma'na*" according to lexicon is primarily "*Ma 'Uniya bih*" or "*Maqsud*", which means "what is intended or refered" and not always necessarily "meaning of a concept". The Essence of Allah is what is intended by the attributes, but He is neither the attributes, nor the meanings of the attributes. Attributes just give reference to their Creator and remind us of Him. They are the (means of) remembrance (*Dhikr*) of Allah.

An attribute is a quality (*Kayfiyya*) and Allah is the creator of the qualities. Allah has made quality as quality just as He created the properties of the things. Thus, there is no property, no quality, and no 'how' for His Essence. On the other hand, the heretical philosophical, mystical (*Sufi*), and gnostical (*Erfani*) cults who mixed Islam with eastern and western theories maintain the belief that the qualities and attributes defuses (*Faydh*) from Allah. This implies that Allah effectively give birth to them or as they say, Allah issues them from Himself. Such a belief negates the Oneness of Allah and His Uniqueness, and makes the creation nothing but the Creator, or just His reduced version with similar properties and genes!

All the names and attributes of Allah refer to His actions and His creating such perceivable attributes. For instance, in the holy Quran, Allah praises Himself with the name "subtle" (*Latif*). In several pieces of Hadith, the Ahlul-Bayt *(PBUT)* provided several meaning for this term:

1- إِنَّمَا سَمَّيْنَاهُ لَطِيفاً لِلْخَلْقِ اللَّطِيفِ؛ أَنَّهُ لَطِيفٌ بِخَلْقِ اللَّطِيفِ:[15] Allah is called subtle because He is the Lord and the creator of subtle things among His creations.

2- لِعِلْمِهِ بِالشَّىءِ اللَّطِيفِ:[16] He is called subtle due to His knowledge about the very subtle things.

3- النَّفَاذِ فِى الْأَشْيَاءِ:[17] He is called subtle because His knowledge penetrates even the subtle things without moving into their place, such that He is not ignorant of His subtle creation as all the things are in His sovereignty.

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4- لَطُفَ عَنْ إِدْرَاكِ الْأَوْهَام:[18] He is called subtle because He is absent from our understanding and is not imaginable, catchable, graspable even by subtle minds, otherwise He becomes limited, dividable, and a creation of the mind.

5- لَطُفَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَک وَ تَعَالَى عَنْ أَنْ يدْرَک بِحَدٍّ أَوْ يحَدَّ بِوَصْفٍ:[19] He is far subtle that be understood or reached by limits, properties, concepts, and descriptions used to define His creations.

Other attributes that belongs to Allah's has similar explanations. They are attributed to Allah not because the Essence of Allah takes such states but because Allah is their Lord. As another example, when we say "O the merciful", we mean "O Who in Whose hand is mercy." Mercy of Allah and His hand are the creations of Allah, and according to the traditions provided in the next section, they are the Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)*. Therefore, mercy belongs to Allah but it is not Allah. Whoever considers Allah "absolute mercy", he worships an idol, i.e., the goddess of mercy just as the Buddhists and ancient Greek philosophers used to do.

The medium of Allah

We have numerous Hadiths stating that the Prophet *(PBUH&HF)* and his Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)* are the "face" of Allah, His "eye", His "tongue", and His "hand", etc. Rationally, these terms cannot not mean organs since Allah is unique and is free from needs and parts. Allah is the creator of the face, eye, tongue and hand. Whatever is other than Allah falls into the category of His creation, including what is called the face of Allah, and Allah does not need any of His creation. Anywhere in the holy Quran that these words have been used for Allah, it actually refers to His chosen creation, not His Essence. It has been related from the Commander of Faithful, Imam Ali *(PBUH)* having said that:

وَ كُلُّ مَا فِي الذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ وَ الْكِتَابِ الْكَرِيمِ وَ الْكَلَامِ الْقَدِيمِ مِنْ آيَةٍ تُذْكَرُ فِيهَا الْعَيْنُ وَ الْوَجْهُ وَ الْيَدُ وَ الْجَنْبُ فَالْمُرَادُ مِنْهَا الْوَلِي .

"In any token in the Book of Allah where any of the words 'eye', 'face', 'hand', or 'side' is mentioned (for Allah) refers to *al-Wali*."[20]

The word *al-Wali* is Allah's representative who is authorized by Him over His creations and act according to His command. In another Hadith, Marwan Ibn Sabbah narrated that Imam al-Sadiq *(PBUH)* said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَنَا فَأَحْسَنَ خَلْقَنَا وَ صَوَّرَنَا فَأَحْسَنَ صُوَرَنَا وَ جَعَلَنَا عَيْنَهُ فِي عِبَادِهِ وَ لِسَانَهُ النَّاطِقَ فِي خَلْقِهِ وَ يَدَهُ الْمَبْسُوطَةَ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ بِالرَّأْفَةِ وَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَ وَجْهَهُ الَّذِي يُؤْتَى مِنْهُ وَ بَابَهُ الَّذِي يَدُلُّ عَلَيْهِ وَ خُزَّانَهُ فِي سَمَائِهِ وَ أَرْضِهِ بِنَا أَثْمَرَتِ الأَشْجَارُ وَ أَيْنَعَتِ الثِّمَارُ وَ جَرَتِ الأَنْهَارُ وَ بِنَا يَنْزِلُ غَيْثُ السَّمَاءِ وَ يَنْبُتُ عُشْبُ

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الأَرْضِ وَ بِعِبَادَتِنَا عُبِدَ اللَّهُ وَ لَوْ لاَ نَحْنُ مَا عُبِدَ اللَّهُ.

"Verily Allah has created us and made our creation the best. And He shaped us and made our shape the best. He made us His eyes among His servants, His speaking tongue among His creation, His outstretched hands of mercy and grace over his servants, His face and direction towards which must be turned and arrived, His door that guides to Him, and His treasures in His heavens and His earth. By us the trees bore fruit, the fruits ripened, and the rivers flowed. By us the rain falls from the sky and the plants grow from the Earth. And by our worshipping Him Allah is worshipped, and if we were not (to expound the Allah's religion as intended), Allah would not have been worshipped."[21]

Being the eye of Allah (*'Ain*) means that the grater soul of the Prophet *(PBUH&HF)* and his Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)*, namely, their holy spirit (*Ruh al-Qudus*) are witness to mankind. Nonetheless, this does not mean Allah needs of this soul for watching over the creation. Allah has full knowledge and is witness over all His creation. However, Allah has chosen them to be also witnesses over their actions much the same as He has chosen angels to be witnesses over every action of the human being.

"*Wajh*" means face or direction. When we want to pay attention to someone, we direct ourselves toward his face. Face is also the means of identification. In order to know Allah, one should direct himself toward His face who are the Prophet *(PBUH&HF)* and his Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)*. They are the means of remembrance and addressing Allah, and only through them one can properly recognize Him. The meaning of the word "*al-Hujja*" (the Proof of Allah) refers to the same fact. Imam Hasan al-Askari *(PBUH)* narrates from his fathers that Imam al-Ridha *(PBUH)* said:

يُعْرَفُ بِالْآيَاتِ وَ يُثْبَتُ بِالْعَلَامَاتِ.

"Allah is recognized by the signs and is proven by the indications."[22]

The greater the sign, the greater the recognition by recalling Allah as its creator and regarding His Essence pure from having their attributes. A person who has recognized the greatest sign of Allah (i.e., the Prophet *(PBUH&HF)* and his Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)*) and still discern such a great sign as a creation, has attained the purest recognition (*Ma'rifat al-Tanzihi*) of Allah.

Similarly, their being the tongue of Allah (*Lisan*) clearly means that Allah speaks to mankind through them. They inform people of Allah's orders and commandments, explain His message, and protect His religion.

As for them being the outstretched hand (*Yad*) of Allah in mercy means that the mercy of Allah reaches to His creation

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only through them. The also refers to power. Allah shows His power through them, and their actions evidently remind the existence of Allah as their creator and the creator of their power. The demonstrate power after weakness and weekness after power as an indication that they are created and administrated by their Creator. Certainly, Allah does not need anyone to work for Him, and He has no associate and no helper. Although not impossible, His glory is exalted to do simple jobs in person, and He wants to show and prove Himself to people through the sayings and actions of some of His creation. Thus, He has created some servants and angels and has assigned them different duties, while He has full control above them. Since their life and all their power belongs to Him, they should not be called His aids or associates in His affairs, but they are called His agents. Allah has not associated anyone in His lordship and has no aid or helper. He attributed the actions of His agents to Himself, because He has ordered them of those actions and because He knows that they exactly follow His commands, and remind people of Him and guide to Him by the sayings and actions that He inspires them to do.

In another Hadith, Abi Basir narrated from Imam al-Sadiq *(PBUH)* that the Commander of the Believers *(PBUH)* said:

أَنَا قَائِدُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَ أَنَا حَبْلُ اللَّهِ الْمَتِينُ وَ أَنَا عُرْوَةُ اللَّهِ الْوُثْقَى وَ كَلِمَةُ التَّقْوَى وَ أَنَا عَيْنُ اللَّهِ وَ لِسَانُهُ الصَّادِقُ وَ يَدُهُ وَ أَنَا جَنْبُ اللَّهِ الَّذِي يَقُولُ «أَنْ تَقُولَ نَفْسٌ يا حَسْرَتى عَلى ما فَرَّطْتُ فِي جَنْبِ اللَّهِ» وَ أَنَا يَدُ اللَّهِ الْمَبْسُوطَةُ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ بِالرَّحْمَةِ وَ الْمَغْفِرَةِ وَ أَنَا بَابُ حِطَّةٍ مَنْ عَرَفَنِي وَ عَرَفَ حَقِّي فَقَدْ عَرَفَ رَبَّهُ لِأَنِّي وَصِيُّ نَبِيِّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ وَ حُجَّتُهُ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ لَا يُنْكِرُ هَذَا إِلَّا رَادٌّ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِه.

“I am the leader of the believers towards Paradise. I am the strong rope of Allah, His most trustworthy handhold, and the word of *Taqwa*. I am the eye of Allah, His truthful tongue, and His hand. I am the side of Allah about whom (Allah) states: ‘Lest the soul should (then) say: ‘Ah! Woe onto me that I abused and neglected (my duties towards) the side of Allah (39:56).’ I am the outstretched hand of Allah in mercy over His creation, and I am the door of forgiveness. Whoever recognizes me and my rights, has indeed recognized His Lord (who authorized me), because I am the executor (*Wasi*) of His prophet on His earth and His proof over His creation. No one would deny this but he who has denied Allah and His Messenger.”[23]

“Side” is used to express extreme nearness. One’s side is the closest thing to an individual. Allah is the creator of place and thus He does not take place, and consequently, physical near to Him

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is meaningless. The Commander of Faithful, Imam Ali *(PBUH)* is called the "side" of Allah because he became "close" to Him through obedience so much so that he became the criterion of nearness to Allah and His recognition. In this manner, nearness to Imam Ali *(PBUH)* indicates nearness to Allah, neglecting his right indicates neglecting Allah's right, forsaking him indicates forsaking Allah, and recognizing him in one's heart indicates recognizing Allah. In other words, Allah has created a system of agents and defined their authorities according to His will. *Recognizing Allah's system and rules is a strict requirement for recognizing Allah and His absolute rights over His creation*.

As we discussed, the name of Allah is Allah's creation, and consists of a literal word (*Lafdhi*) as well as a real entity (*Takwini*) associated to it. The latter acts by leave of Allah when the former called upon. According to several Hadiths, the best names of Allah are the Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)*, and thus, His best names refer to real entities. In one Hadith, the Commander of Faithful, Imam Ali *(PBUH)* said:

أَنَا أَسْمَاءُ اللَّهِ الْحُسْنَى وَ أَمْثَالُهُ الْعُلْيَا وَ آيَاتُهُ الْكُبْرَى.

"I am the best names of Allah, His supreme symbols or exemplars (of His attributes), and His greatest signs."[24]

Nothing is similar (*Mithl*) to the Essence of Allah, but He has created exemplars or symbols (*Mathal*) that are the place of His attributes. Allah states in holy Quran:

وَ لَهُ اَلْمَثَلُ اَلأَعْلى فِي اَلسَّماواتِ وَ اَلأَرْضِ وَ هُوَ اَلْعَزِيزُ اَلْحَكِيمُ.

To Him belongs the supreme exemplar (of His attributes) in the heavens and the earth. (30:27)

وَ لِلَّهِ اَلأَسْماءُ اَلْحُسْنى فَادْعُوهُ بِها وَ ذَرُوا اَلَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمائِهِ سَيُجْزَوْنَ ما كانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ.

And for Allah are the best names, thus call upon Him by them. And leave (to Him) those who disbelieve in His (authorized) names. They will soon be requited for what they do. (7:180)

On the commentary of the latter token, Imam al-Sadiq *(PBUH)* said:

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ وَ لِلَّهِ الأَسْماءُ الْحُسْنى فَادْعُوهُ بِها قَالَ نَحْنُ وَ اللَّهِ الأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى الَّتِي لاَ يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ عَمَلاً إِلاَّ بِمَعْرِفَتِنَا.

"By Allah! We are the best names of Allah that Allah shall not accept any deed from anyone except through our recognition (*Ma'rifa*)."[25]

There are numerous Hadiths with references to the tokens of the holy Quran which prove beyond doubt that believing in the authority of Ahl al-Bait *(PBUT)* and rejecting all man-made

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authorities in the domain of religion is required for faith. Therefore, not only Allah's authorized agents should be approached because they act as the path and medium for attaining the pleasure of Allah and learning His religion, but also recognizing them as His exclusive authorities and as the only paths of Allah, believing in the rights of their guarianship (*al-Wayala*), and having absolute obedience to them are also required for salvation. One should recognize this exclusive medium and its rights so that this medium would benefit him by leave of Allah. More interestingly, it is related to Imam Ridha *(PBUH)* having said:

إِذَا نَزَلَتْ بِكُمْ شِدَّةٌ فَاسْتَعِينُوا بِنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ وَ هُوَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ وَ لِلَّهِ الأَسْماءُ الْحُسْنى فَادْعُوهُ بِها.

"When a hardship befalls you, seek Allah's help through us, and this is the saying of the Lord of might and majesty: 'And for Allah are the best names, thus call upon Him by them.' (7:180)"[26]

Conclusion

In this article, we provided some evidence to show that the names of Allah are Allah's best creations, and consist of the literal names (*Lafdhi*) as well as real entities (*Takwini*) authorized by Allah to act as medium of calling Him and the medium for His created mercy and power. The attributes and the states of satisfaction, dissatisfaction, mercy, wrath, sadness, etc., which are all parts of His created will, manifest in His best servants and do not penetrate His Essence. Allah has also named them as His face, eye, hand, and side, has made all of these functionalities necessary for the physical and spiritual life of His creation. In line with enforcing this will on the nature of creation (*Takwin*), Allah has set corresponding religious rules (*Tashri'*) and commanded people through His messengers that they must recognize Allah's system and the authority of His agents before Allah accept their other beliefs and deeds.

Endnotes

[1] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 144, Hadith 6; *al-Tawhid*, p. 168, Hadith 2.

[2] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 38, p. 66, Hadith 6, quoted from the *Tafsir* of Imam Hasan al-Askari *(PBUH)*.

[3] *Musnad*, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. 3, Musnad of Jabir Ibn Abdillah, Hadith Amro Ibn Shaas al-Aslami; *Majma' al-Zawa'id*, the book of *Manaqib*, Ch. 20, Hadith 14736; *Kanz al-Ummal*, vol. 13, the Virtues of Ali *(PBUH)*, Hadith 36445; Others books including *Tarikh*, al-Bukhari, *al-Mustadrak Ala al-Sahihain*, al-Hakim, etc.

[4] This Hadith has been reported by many Bakri traditionists. See for instance: *al-Mustadrak Ala al-Sahihain*, al-Hakim, vol. 3, p. 154; *Fadha'il al-Sahaba*, Abu Nu'aim; *Kanz al-Ummal*, vol. 12, the complement on Fatima *(PBUH)*, Hadith 34237 & 34238. For a Shi'i narration of this Hadith, see *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 43, p. 21, Hadith 12.

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[5] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 87, Hadith 1.
[6] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 87, Hadith 3.
[7] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 140, Hadith 6; Simillar Hadiths exist in: *Nahj al-Balagha*, Sermon 1; *al-Tawhid*, pp 34-35, Hadith 2; *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 4, p. 227, Hadith 3, p. 247, Hadith 5, p. 253, Hadith 6, p. 285, Hadith 17.
[8] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 139, Hadith 5.
[9] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 4, p. 153, Hadith 1, cited from *al-Ihtijaj*.
[10] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 113, Hadith 3.
[11] Similar to this phrase has been related from Imam al-Ridha in another Hadith: «وَ مَنْ غَيَّاهُ فَقَدْ غَايَاه» which means: "whoever sets a goal for Allah, he has set a common limit between Him and His creation. c.f., *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 4, p. 228, Hadith 3, cited from *al-Tawhid*.
[12] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 4, p. 160, Hadith 5, cited from *al-Tawhid*.
[13] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 10, p. 312, Hadith 1, cited from *Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha (PBUH)*.
[14] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 114, Hadith 2.
[15] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 3, p. 194.
[16] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 3, p. 194.
[17] al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 122, Hadith 1.
[18] Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 83, p. 346.
[19] al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 122, Hadith 1.
[20] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 25, p. 173, quoted from *Mashariq al-Anwar*.
[21] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 144, Hadith 5.
[22] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 3, p. 297, Hadith 23, cited from *al-Tawhid*.
[23] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 24, p. 198, Hadith 27, cited from *al-Tawhid*.
[24] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 53, p. 47, Hadith 20, cited from *Muntakhab al-Basa'ir*.
[25] *al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 143, Hadith 4.
[26] *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 91, p. 5, Hadith 7, cited from *Tafsir* Ayyashi.

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