

A CONTEMPLATION ON THE ROLE OF REASON IN DIVINE RECOGNITION

A Discourse by Professor Mohammad Hossein Assar

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***Abstract:** This essay explores the role of reason in understanding God (theology) from the perspective of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and elucidates the distinction between monotheism (Tawhid) and recognition of God (Ma'rifat Allah). The author, referencing the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them), posits that while humans are obligated to uphold monotheism, true recognition of God is a gift from the Almighty. Through reason, a person becomes aware of a Creator to whom they are innately drawn; this awareness is bestowed by God Himself. This recognition is of a profound and ineffable nature, meaning that humans are overwhelmed by the essence and nature of the known and can only describe God with the attributes He has revealed. Understanding these attributes, however, is purely a matter of transcendence.*

Key words: Reason, Monotheism, Recognition of God, Innate

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Recognition, Removing from Extremes, Awakening of Reason.

Introduction

Mohammad Hossein Assar : Lecturer and Researcher in Ahl al-Bayt Teachings

Assar entered Tehran Polytechnic University in 1961 and graduated with a master's degree in electronics in 1967. From a young age, he was connected with the scholars of Tehran through his father and benefited from their religious and scholarly guidance; this relationship continued until his last days. The condolence messages sent to his family by scholars such as Jafar Sobhani and Seyyed Jafar Seyyedani after his passing are a testament to this connection. His greatest source of inspiration was his teacher, Mahmoud Halabi, with whom he studied from 1957 and continued for forty years. Part of this period was dedicated to learning the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them), which Halabi had learned from his own teacher, Mirza Mahdi Gharavi Esfahani, and began teaching in 1973. Assar was engaged in researching and teaching the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and also devoted himself to social and cultural services. He passed away in March 2010 after returning from a pilgrimage to the holy sites. Through him, dozens of people became acquainted with the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them).

This essay is a report of a speech delivered by the late Professor Mohammad Hossein Assar in 2006. After being edited and sources cited, it is now presented as a tribute to Ayatollah Seyyedani - may Allah protect him. Since the nature of a speech requires brevity, Assar addresses important topics here in summary form, though he has discussed them in detail in his lectures.

Monotheism and Its Relationship with Reason

One of the issues discussed in theological teachings is the recognition of God and the relationship between reason and divine recognition. Some critics who seek to find faults in the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and the Imams (peace be upon them) attack from this angle, claiming that reason is disregarded or not accepted in these teachings. However, if we can properly explain the relationship between theological concepts and monotheism with reason, conscience, and the definition of God, we will have reached an important point.

We know that in divine teachings, the recognition of God and the understanding of God are solely through God's own creation and action, and there is no way for any intelligent being or creature to truly know God.¹ This is because rational recognition of God implies that reason would have dominance and control over God in order to understand Him; however, it is impossible for a creature to encompass the Creator.

Reason never has this power or capability, and since God has no likeness or counterpart in the universe,² He cannot be known through similarity either. This means that one cannot take something similar to God in the world, multiply it a thousand, hundred thousand, or infinitely, and then claim to have recognised God.

¹From Muhammad ibn Hakim, who said: I asked Abu Abdullah (Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (peace be upon him)), "Whose creation is recognition?" He replied, "It is the creation of God; the servants have no role in its creation." Al-Kafi by al-Kulayni, Volume 1, P. 163.

²"There is nothing like unto Him." Surah Ash-Shura, Verse 11

The Difference between Monotheism and Recognition of God

Monotheism is different from the recognition of God. We are obligated to uphold the monotheism of God.³ We are commanded to maintain the oneness of God (Among monotheism is that you do not imagine Him);⁴ however, regarding recognition, it is said, "Recognition is the creation of God." We do not have the means to recognise God, and we are not tasked with recognising God;⁵ rather, we are tasked with monotheism. This means that when God introduces Himself to us, we must understand what duties we have in response, how we should speak of His perfections, His essence, attributes, and actions, and what beliefs we should hold. Introduction is the

³From Muhammad ibn Sama'a: Some of our companions asked Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him), "Tell me, which deed is the best?" He replied, "Your belief in the Oneness (Tawhid) of your Lord." They then asked, "What is the greatest sin?" He said, "To liken your Creator to something else." *Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 3, P. 8.*

All the hadiths in the chapter "The Reward of the Monotheists and Those Who Know God, and the Explanation of the Obligation of Knowing God" convey this same meaning. It is also narrated from Amir al-Mu'minin (Imam Ali, peace be upon him): "The most virtuous and obligatory of duties upon a person is the knowledge of the Lord and the acknowledgment of His servitude."

Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 3, P. 54.

⁴Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said to Hisham ibn al-Hakam: "Shall I give you a summary of justice and monotheism?" Hisham replied, "Yes, may I be your ransom." The Imam said: "Part of justice is that you do not accuse Him (God), and part of monotheism is that you do not imagine Him." *Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 5, P. 58.*

⁵From Abdul A'la, who said: I asked Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him), "May God make you prosper! Has God placed within people a tool through which they can attain knowledge?" He replied, "No." I then asked, "So, are they obligated to have knowledge?" He said, "No. It is upon God to make it clear; God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity, and He does not burden a soul except with what He has given it." *Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 163.*

action of God, but monotheism is our duty. When examining related traditions, we must be careful not to confuse the two. Monotheism is distinct from the recognition of God. Recognising God is through His own introduction; however, monotheism is our responsibility in terms of how we should believe in the God who has introduced Himself to us and how we can speak about Him.

Transcending the Two Extremes

In all actions, perfections, and divine attributes, our monotheism involves transcending the two extremes: the extreme of likening God to creation (tashbih) and the extreme of negation (ta'til).⁶ When we say "God exists," we mean that God is not non-existent;⁷ however, any existence that a person can imagine, perceive, or reason about does not apply to God.⁸ We remove God from the extreme of negation, which is non-existence, but the existence that I understand or possess does not relate to God, and God transcends it.⁹ God is "knowledgeable," but this means that He is not

⁶Imam al-Baqir (peace be upon him) was asked: "Is it permissible to say that God, the Exalted, is a 'thing'?" He replied, "Yes, this takes Him out of two limits: the limit of negation and the limit of likening Him to something else." Ibn Babawayh, *Al-Tawhid*, P. 104.

⁷"And He has guided to Him through His signs; the intellects of those who reflect cannot deny Him." *Al-Kafi*, Volume 1, P. 141.

⁸"The glances of eyes fall short of perceiving Him, and the imaginations of creatures are unable to reach His description."

Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 141. "Whatever you distinguish with your imaginations in its most subtle meanings is a created entity, fabricated like you, and it returns to you." *Bihar al-Anwar*, Volume 66, P. 293.

⁹From Abu Ja'far (Imam al-Baqir, peace be upon him): "God is separate from His creation, and His creation is separate from Him."

Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 82.

ignorant.¹⁰ Any form of knowledge that exists in creatures has no relation to Him. We separate God from the extreme of negation, which is ignorance, and from the extreme of likening Him to the knowledge of creatures. God is "powerful," meaning He is not powerless,¹¹ but any form of power that I conceive of or that exists in creatures, even in the Seal of the Prophets, has no similarity to God. In summary, monotheism is our responsibility; it means that we are required not to attribute the qualities found in creation to God.

The issue of monotheism is not about proving God's existence. After God has introduced Himself, and we have recognized Him and accepted Him with our innate nature and conscience, the matter of monotheism arises, which is about how we should speak, think, and reason about the Exalted Truth. The concise and comprehensive statement is that the role of reason in all divine matters is to transcend the two extremes. When we say "God does as He wills," a rational person says this. We ask this rational person, "What does 'He does as He wills' mean?" They reply, "It means there is nothing that God cannot do."

Some philosophers speak about essences and fixed entities, and when we ask why it is so, they say, "It is in its nature, and God only grants it existence. Fire's nature is to burn, and as long as there is fire, it cannot be without burning," and so on. But we say no, everything you consider as the

¹⁰"And similarly, when you say 'knowledgeable,' you have only negated ignorance with that word and made ignorance something other than Him." Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 116. "God is called 'knowledgeable' because He is not ignorant of anything."

Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 120.

¹¹"So when you say 'God is powerful,' you are declaring that nothing incapacitates Him. With this word, you have negated incapacity and made incapacity something other than Him." Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 116.

inherent nature of things, God has given to them. God is not incapable of anything. On the surface, and according to the causal system that you believe in, a hundred-year-old man or an eighty-year-old woman does not have a child. Yet, God tells Prophet Zakariya (peace be upon him), "I have answered your prayer and will give you a child, even though you are in old age."¹² He says to the water, "Stand still,"¹³ to the fire, "Be cool,"¹⁴ and He does whatever He wills.¹⁵ "He does what He wills"¹⁶ means that there is nothing that God is incapable of doing. Therefore, when discussing God's power, we negate any incapacity on His part to do anything. However, when it comes to explaining God's power and its nature, we have nothing to say.

For example, when we apply a concept to something, we must first have a clear understanding of the concept. For instance, we look and say that this carpet is rectangular. We already have the concept of a rectangle, with all the characteristics of a rectangle. Now we see this carpet, carefully observe it, and compare it with the characteristics of a rectangle, and eventually conclude that this carpet is rectangular. When we want to make a judgment about something, we compare two subjects and then make a judgment. For example, we say that Zaid is a just person. We have a definition of justice—what justice is, who is just, what the attribute of injustice is, whether Zaid is

¹²"He said, 'My Lord, how will I have a boy when I have reached old age and my wife is barren?' He said, 'Thus does Allah do what He wills.'" Surah Aal-Imran, Verse 40.

¹³"So We inspired Moses, 'Strike the sea with your staff.' And it parted, and each portion was like a great towering mountain."

Surah Ash-Shu'ara, Verse 63.

¹⁴"We said, 'O fire, be coolness and safety upon Abraham.'" Surah Al-Anbiya, Verse 69.

¹⁵"Indeed, Allah does what He wills." Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 14.

¹⁶Surah Aal-Imran, Verse 40; Surah Al-Hajj, Verse 18.

free from injustice, whether he persists in sin, and so on. When we see these qualities in him and evaluate his actions and behaviour, we affirm that he is a just person. When we want to attribute a truth or a characteristic to someone or something, we must first know that characteristic and also know the subject to which we are attributing it, meaning we must have a comprehensive understanding of both. Then, we compare them and make a judgment. Now, who has seen God's knowledge to compare it with the knowledge we speak of? No one!

Our recognition of God is one of awe and wonder; we are in a state of reverent bewilderment (walah) towards Him, and He is the One worthy of worship (ilah)¹⁷ who has introduced Himself to us. Even though He remains hidden from our direct perception, we cannot deny His existence.¹⁸ On the other hand, we do not have an actual vision of Him that we can point to.¹⁹ When it comes to His attributes, characteristics, actions (the acts of God), His religion, and whether or not He possesses certain qualities, whatever we think about, we are all helpless and in a state of awe. It is necessary for Him to

¹⁷"Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: 'Allah is the object of worship, the One whom creation worships and turns to for help. Allah is the concealed from the sight of the eyes and hidden from the grasp of imaginations and thoughts.'"Tawhid, p. 89.

¹⁸"He did not expose the intellects to the determination of His attributes nor did He hide them from the essential knowledge of Him. He is the One whom the signs of existence testify to."

Source: Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 49; "O One who is veiled by the radiance of His light from the sight of His creation."Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 91, p. 402.

¹⁹"O Allah, I ask You by Your Name, Bismillah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, O Lord of Glory and Honor, O Living, O Sustainer, there is no deity except You, O You who does not know what You are, nor how You are, nor where You are, nor in what place You are except Yourself."Source: Kaf'ami, al-Misbah, p. 260, Supplication of Mashloul.

introduce Himself to us and describe His characteristics. When He has described His characteristics, He has commanded us to use these descriptions within the limits of avoiding both extremes—neither likening Him to creation (tashbih) nor negating His attributes (ta'til). This is exactly what the narration states.²⁰ When you say that God is powerful, you negate any incapacity, but you cannot attribute the concept of power as understood by human intellect to God and apply it to Him.²¹

In summary, the essence of monotheism (tawhid) is that our words, beliefs, and conceptions about God should align with what He has conveyed, and this is our duty. In this regard, the Imams—peace be upon them—who are the pillars of monotheism,²² have taught us how to speak about God and what to believe so that we do not exceed the limits of His divinity, do not show disrespect towards Him, and do not deny His greatness. However, when it comes to recognition of God, the Imams(peace be upon them), like the rest of creation, are also in a position where God must introduce Himself. The

²⁰"Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) was asked: 'Is it permissible to say that Allah is a thing?' He replied: 'Yes, it removes Him from the two extremes: the extreme of negation (ta'til) and the extreme of likening (tashbih).'" Ibn Babawayh, Tawhid, p. 104.

²¹"When you say that Allah is capable (qadir), you are informing that nothing is beyond His ability, thus negating incapacity and making incapacity something other than Him."Al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 116.

²²"Ali ibn al-Husayn (peace be upon him) said: '... We are the doors to Allah, the straight path, the repository of His knowledge, the interpreters of His revelation, the pillars of His monotheism, and the place of His secret.'"Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 24, p. 12.

Imams are teachers of monotheism,²³ and they teach us how to think and believe in a way that is free from any distortions.

The Role of Reason in Knowing God

What is the role of reason in the recognition of God and understanding of Him? In the domain of divine recognition, it is said that reason supports the existence of the Creator;²⁴ that is, reason, with its inherent clarity, sees that everything in the world bears the mark of being created. Clearly, when a person looks at themselves, they see their own created nature.²⁵ They realize they are being upheld. They cannot stand on their own for even a moment. If they are happy, they cannot maintain that happiness. If they are sad, they cannot remove that sadness. If they are knowledgeable, they cannot retain that knowledge without effort. If they are strong, they cannot preserve that strength. If they are weak, they cannot rid themselves of that weakness.²⁶ Everything they experience is a result of being

²³Buraid al-Ijli said: I heard Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) say: 'By us, Allah is worshipped, by us, Allah is known, and by us, Allah is unified (tawhid).' "Al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 145.

²⁴"God is inferred through His creation and is known through reason." (Tawhid, p. 34)

²⁵In a long hadith, Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said: "The first thing, its origin, strength, and foundation, which nothing benefits from except through it, is reason. God has made it an ornament for His creation and a light for them. Through reason, servants recognize their Creator, acknowledge that they are created beings, and understand that He is their Sustainer and they are the ones being sustained. They also recognize that He is eternal while they are perishable. They infer from their reason the creation they observe—such as the heavens, the earth, the sun, the moon, the night, and the day—and realize that there is a Creator and Sustainer who has always existed and will continue to exist." (Al-Kafi, Vol. 1, p. 28)

²⁶Muhammad ibn Abdullah al-Khurasani, a servant of Imam al-Ridha (peace be upon him), said: "A man from the materialists came to Abu al-Hasan (peace be upon

created, which means constant change and dependence. Various Hadiths discuss the nature of being created in different ways. Everything we see is subject to increase and decrease. Our strength can fluctuate, illness can arise, and weakness can occur.

In very clear existential terms, when reason considers the nature of creation in the entire universe, it perceives the continuous process of being created. Everything we observe shows us that it is created, meaning it is constantly changing and not self-sustaining. We then ask: Could all this creation be without a Creator?

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ. وَإِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ. وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ.
وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ (88:17-21)

"Do they not reflect on the camels, how they are created? And on the sky, how it is raised? And on the mountains, how they are erected? And on the earth, how it is spread out?". With all these different creations and their vast diversity, how can there be no Creator? Recently, algorithms have been discovered that show two people cannot draw exactly the same straight line. This diversity—what is it? Is it without a Creator? No, it cannot be without a Creator. Reason says it cannot be without a Creator; but what is the nature of this Creator?

him) while there were some people with him. The man asked, 'What is the proof of God's existence?' Abu al-Hasan (peace be upon him) replied, 'When I looked at my own body and saw that it could neither increase nor decrease in width or length, and that it was protected from harm while benefiting from various advantages, I knew that this structure must have a builder. I acknowledged this with what I observed of the rotating of the celestial sphere by His power, the creation of clouds, the circulation of winds, the courses of the sun, the moon, the stars, and other wondrous and clear signs. I knew that there is a creator and originator of all this.'" (Al-Kafi, Vol. 1, p. 79)

Reason says that the Creator cannot be like the created. However, since I have not seen, do not see, and do not know anything except the created, I cannot speak about the Creator. Rather, the Creator must introduce Himself; otherwise, I have no way of knowing. Understanding the Creator means going to God and saying: *اللهم عرّفني نفسك* "O Allah, make Yourself known to me."²⁷

Proving the existence of the Creator is different from recognizing the Creator. For example, I say: This building must have had a builder, an architect, or an engineer. And that builder must be familiar with things like light, sound, temperature, and so on. But who is that builder? What are his characteristics? I do not know the builder, although I know that there was a creator.²⁸ Reason proves the existence of the Creator. Therefore, when a prophet comes and says that I am inviting you to God, if reason did not prove the existence of the Creator, the prophet could not make this invitation. The person addressed would say: Which God? Who is God? If the prophet said: The same God who has made Himself known to you, the person could respond: He has not introduced Himself to me! So, I will not believe. But the prophet says: How can you say He has not introduced Himself? The signs of createdness are within you. Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said to Ibn Abi al-Awja': How can you say that God has not introduced Himself to you? With all these constant changes that you observe within yourself—these changes

²⁷Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said to Zurara: "If you live to see this time, then pray with this supplication: 'O Allah, make Yourself known to me, for if you do not make Yourself known to me, I will not know Your Prophet.'" Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 337

²⁸"Do you not see that when you look at a well-built structure, you know that it must have a builder, even though you did not see the builder or witness him? He asked, 'What is He (God)?' The reply was: 'Something unlike other things.'" Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 80

from fear to hope, from hope to fear, from knowledge to ignorance, from ignorance to knowledge, from satisfaction to anger, from anger to satisfaction, from health to illness, from illness to health, from weakness to strength, from strength to weakness, and so on—Ibn Abi al-Awja' said to his friend: Ja'far ibn Muhammad spoke to me about so many examples like these that it was as if God was about to appear between us.²⁹

So, in the realm of reason, it is clear that I and other creatures are creations, and this necessarily means that there must be a Creator who is not like the creations. If the Creator were similar to the creations, then He would also bear the mark of being created and thus would not be the Creator. We said that because these things have these effects, they are marked as

²⁹"I took advantage of this moment and asked him: 'What prevented Him (God), if the matter is as they say, from appearing to His creation and calling them to His worship so that there would be no disagreement between any two of them? Why did He conceal Himself from them and send messengers to them? If He had directly interacted with them, would it not have been easier for them to believe in Him?' He replied to me: 'Woe unto you! How has He concealed Himself from you when He has shown you His power within yourself? Your emergence after you were nothing, your growth after childhood, your strength after weakness, your weakness after strength, your sickness after health, your health after sickness, your satisfaction after anger, your anger after satisfaction, your sadness after joy, your joy after sadness, your love after hatred, your hatred after love, your determination after patience, your patience after determination, your desire after aversion, your aversion after desire, your hope after fear, your fear after hope, your hope after despair, your despair after hope, and the thoughts that come to your mind that were never imagined, and the things you forget that were once firmly believed. He continued enumerating His power within me, which I could not deny, until I thought that He was about to appear between me and him...' "Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 76

creations. If what you speak of is similar to these, then it is also created; therefore, the Creator cannot have any resemblance to the creations.³⁰

The saying إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَلُّو مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَ خَلَقَهُ جَلُّو مِنْهُ "Indeed, Allah is separate from His creation, and His creation is separate from Him"³¹ is a narration from Imam al-Ridha (peace be upon him) delivered in a sermon on monotheism in the presence of Ma'mun. In this sermon, the Imam explains that changes and such are evidence of being created,³² and if the Creator were similar to the creation, then He too would be created.³³ But we are seeking the Creator. Reason tells us that the Creator exists, but "exists" here does not mean in the same way that I or another being exists. If His existence were similar to that of a creature, then He too would be created, because my existence is also the existence of a created being. Therefore, reason only establishes the existence of the Creator in the discussion of the recognition of God,³⁴ but it does not play a role in the recognition of the Creator Himself. In

³⁰The impossibility of Him being similar to their essences and the impossibility of being confined to a place, and the separation of the Creator from the creation, and the one who defines from the defined, and the Lord from the one who is ruled."Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 139

³¹Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 82

³²"No one who imagines Him truly intends Him. Everything known by itself is created."Tawhid, P. 34

³³"And how can the one who creates things be the one who does not refrain from creating? If so, the sign of being created would exist in Him, and He would turn into something to be indicated after He had been the one who was indicated. There is no evidence in an illogical statement, nor is there an answer in a question about it."Tawhid, p. 38

³⁴The first act of worshipping God is to know Him, and the foundation of knowing Him is to unify Him, and the essence of unifying Him is to negate attributes from Him. Exalted is He from being defined by attributes, for reason testifies that everyone whom attributes define is created, and reason testifies that He, Exalted is His

the discussion of monotheism, once God has introduced Himself, reason takes on a role through the guidance of the Prophets and Imams. Thus, recognition is the work of God, and monotheism is our duty. The Prophets, Imams, and divine scriptures have come to stimulate the concept of monotheism in our reason.³⁵

The issue of monotheism, like recognition and other perfections, ranges from zero to infinity. It is not the case that all believers in monotheism benefit equally from this light.

Recognition is the work of God, and neither reason nor the rational being has any access to it; it is solely and exclusively the work of God. But reason argues that if there is a God, that God is not recognizable by reason. Reason itself states that if there is to be a God who is the Creator, that Creator is unlike the creations and cannot be known through reason because reason is also a creation of that Creator³⁶ and cannot encompass the Creator.

majesty, is a Creator, not a creation. So, by the works of God, He is recognized, and through reason, His knowledge is confirmed. Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 4, P. 253," specifically from the "Sermon on Tawhid of Imam al-Ridha (peace be upon him)

³⁵"Thus, He sent to them His messengers, and sent forth to them His prophets to demand from them the fulfilment of the covenant of His nature and to remind them of His forgotten blessings and to establish proof against them through conveying (His message), and to stir up for them the buried treasures of intellect." Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 1

³⁶The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Indeed, Allah created the intellect from a stored and concealed light, and then He said: 'By My glory and majesty, I have not created a creation more beloved, more obedient, more exalted, more noble, or more honoured than you. Through you, I am worshipped, and through you, I am known, and through you, I am sought, and through you, I am feared, and through you, I am respected. Through you is reward and through you is punishment.'" Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, Volume 1, P. 82; "Indeed, Allah, the Glorious and Majestic, created the first of the spiritual beings from the right side of His throne from

The fact that God is beyond being comprehended by reason is a judgment of reason; however, the fact that I am a creation and this world is also a creation and that creation requires a Creator—this is what reason proves. Many verses also support this idea.³⁷

In the discussion of monotheism, we find that the Prophets teach us how to speak so that we do not fall into error or mistake.³⁸ God is beyond the scope of our reason and thought, beyond the lens of our intellectual microscope, and reason does not encompass Him. Therefore, we have been taught how to invoke Him so that it is done with the proper respect and correctness.

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His light, then He said to it: 'Turn back,' and it turned back. Then He said to it: 'Turn forward,' and it turned forward. Then Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, said: 'I have created you as a great creation.'"Al-Kafi, Volume 1, P. 20

³⁷"O mankind, remember the favor of Allah upon you. Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? There is no deity except Him, so how are you deluded?"Surah Fatir, Verse 3; Similarly Surah Naml, Verses 60-62, Surah Luqman, Verse 32, Surah Zukhruf, Verse 87, Surah Waqia, Verses 63-74, Surah Yasin, Verses 33-35

³⁸"Even the angels, despite their closeness to the Throne of His majesty, their deep longing for Him, their reverence for His exalted majesty, and their closeness to the unseen of His dominion, could not comprehend anything of His command except what He taught them. And they, being from the realm of holy sovereignty, are such that they, in their knowledge of Him, are as He created them to be. As they said, 'Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us; indeed, You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.'"Tawhid, P. 48

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