**NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH**

*Sura Al-Hashr/Ayat 22:*

**

God is He save Whom there is no deity: the Knower of the unseen (all that lies beyond sense-perception), and the witnessed (the sensed realm). He is the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate.(1)

*Sura Al-Hashr/Ayat 23:*

**

God is He save Whom there is no deity: the Sovereign, the All-Holy and All-Pure, the Supreme Author of peace and salvation, and the Supreme Author of safety and security Who bestows faith and removes all doubt, the All-Watchful Guardian, the All-Glorious with irresistible might, the All-Compelling of supreme majesty, the One Who has exclusive right to all greatness. All-Glorified is God in that He is absolutely exalted above what they associate with Him.(2)

*Sura Al-Hashr/Ayat 24:*

**

He is God, the Creator, the All-Holy Maker (Who creates without any defects), the All-Fashioning. To Him belong the All-Beautiful Names.9 Whatever is in the heavens and on the earth glorifies Him (declaring Him to be absolutely above having any defects). He is the All-Glorious with irresistible might, the All-Wise.10

**HADITH**

Abu Hurayrah narrates: There are ninety-nine names of Allah, whoever commits them to memory would go to Paradise. Verily, Allah is odd [Allah is one and it is an odd number] and He loves odd numbers.

**NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH**

THE FIRST POINT (5)

The Divine Name of Most Holy

[This Point concerns one aspect of the Divine Name of Most Holy. It is appropriate that it should form an addendum to the Addendum of the Thirtieth Word.]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

And the earth We have spread wide; and how well have We ordered it.1

One manifestation of the Divine Name of Most Holy, which is one meaning of the above verse, and is a Greatest Name or one of the six lights contained in the Greatest Name, became clear to me in the month of Sha’ban in Eskishehir Prison. It demonstrated with complete clarity both the Divine existence and Divine Unity.

The universe is a vast, constantly working factory and the globe of the earth a hostel and guest-house which is continually filled and emptied. Generally, factories, hostels and guest-houses which are thus used become much dirtied and soiled with filth, debris and rubbish, and putrid matter accumulates in all parts of them. Unless they are kept with care and cleaned and swept, they cannot be occupied; human beings are overwhelmed by the dirt. The factory of the universe and guest-house of the earth, however, are totally pure, clean and spotless, and completely unsoiled, untainted and fresh; there is nothing unnecessary, nothing without benefit, not a random piece of dirt to be found. Even if there is apparently, it is quickly thrown into a transformation machine and cleaned.

This means that the One Who looks after this factory does so very well. And its Owner is such that He sweeps and cleans and orders the vast factory and extensive palace as though they were small rooms. In relation to the size of the huge factory, there is no dirt or rubbish remaining from its filth and debris. Indeed, considering its size, its cleanness and tidiness are remarkable.

If someone does not wash himself and clean his small room for a month, they will become extremely dirty and soiled. That is to say, the cleanliness, purity, and luminosity in this palace of the world arise from a continuous, wise, and diligent cleaning. If it was not for this cleaning, sweeping and careful tending, in one year all the hundred thousand animal species would have been choked on the face of the earth.

Also, the debris of the globes in space and the heavens, which manifest life and death, and of satellites and stars, would have smashed not only our heads and those of the other animals, but also the head of the earth itself and of our world. They would have rained down on our heads rocks the size of mountains and driven us away from our homeland in this world. However, for a long time past, if as a warning a few meteorites have fallen as a result of destruction and reconstruction in those lofty worlds, they have not broken any heads.

Furthermore, the corpses of a hundred thousand animal species and the debris of two hundred thousand plant species each year on the face of the earth resulting from the alternation and struggles of life and death would have so utterly filthied the land and the sea that conscious creatures, rather than loving and delighting in the face of the earth, would have felt disgust and aversion at such ugliness and fled to death and non-existence.

Just as a bird cleans its wings with ease and a scribe his pages, so also are the wings of the aircraft of the earth and the birds of the heavenly bodies and the pages of the book of the universe cleaned and made beautiful. And so much so that those who do not consider the infinite beauty of the Hereafter and think with belief become lovers of this cleanliness and beauty of the world, they worship it.

That is to say, this palace of the world and factory of the universe display a greatest manifestation of the Divine Name of Most Holy whereby it is not only the carniverous cleaners of the seas and the eagles of the land which obey the commands proceeding from that sacred cleansing, but also its cleansing officials which gather up corpses, like worms and ants. Like the red and white blood-corpuscles flowing in the body obey those sacred commands and do the cleaning in the body’s cells, so does breathing purify and clean the blood.

And as eyelids obey the command to clean the eye and flies to brush their wings, so the extensive atmosphere and the clouds obey it. The air blows upon the pieces of dust and soil settled on the surface and face of the earth and cleans it. The sponges of the clouds sprinkle water on the garden of the earth and becalm the dust and soil. Then, in order not to dirty the sky, the air quickly collects the earth’s rubbish and withdraws and hides itself with perfect orderliness. It displays the beautiful face and eye of the skies as swept and polished, all sparkling and shining.

And as the stars, elements, minerals, and plants obey the command to clean, all particles and atoms also obey it: they pay attention to cleanliness within the astonishing upheavals of change and transformation. They never congregate anywhere unnecessarily and get in the way. And if they do become soiled, they are quickly cleaned. They are impelled by a hand of wisdom to acquire the cleanest, neatest, and most shining states and the most beautiful, pure and subtle forms.

Thus, this single act, that is, making clean, which is a single truth, is a greatest manifestation of a Greatest Name, the Name of Most Holy, which shows itself in the maximum sphere, that is, throughout the universe. Like the sun, it shows directly to eyes that are far-seeing and broad-sighted the Divine existence and Unity together with the Most Beautiful Divine Names.

It has been established with decisive proofs in many parts of the Risale-iNur that since the act of ordering and order, which are a manifestation of the Names of Sapient and All-Wise; and the act of weighing and balance, which are a manifestation of the Names of Justice and All-Just; and the act of adorning and munificence, which are a manifestation of the Names of Beauteous and All-Generous; and the act of sustaining and bestowal, which are a manifestation of the Names of Sustainer and Most Compassionate are each a single truth and a single act, they demonstrate the necessary existence and Unity of a Single Being. In exactly the same way, the act of purifying and making clean, which is a manifestation and display of the Name of Most Holy, demonstrates like the sun both the existence of the Necessarily Existent One, and like daylight, His Unity.

And as the wise acts of ordering, balancing, adorning and making clean mentioned above point to a Single Maker by reason of their unity of kind in the maximum sphere, so do most of the Beautiful Names, indeed, the thousand and one Names, each have such a greatest manifestation in the maximum sphere. And the act proceeding from that manifestation points to the Single Unique One with clarity and decisiveness in relation to its extensiveness.

The self-evident truths and single acts which illuminate the face of the universe and make it smile like the universal wisdom which causes all things to conform to its law and order, the comprehensive munificence which adorns all things and causes them to smile, the all-embracing mercy that makes all things pleased and happy, the universal providing of sustenance which nurtures and gives pleasure to all things, and the life and giving of life which connects each thing with all things and makes each thing benefit from, and to some extent own, all things-these self-evident truths and single acts point to a single All-Wise, All-Generous, and All-Compassionate One, a single Sustainer, a single Ever-Living Giver of Life as plainly as light points to the sun.

If those hundreds of extensive acts, each one of which is a clear proof of God’s Unity, are not attributed to the Single Unique One, each necessarily becomes impossible in hundreds of respects. For example, let alone the self-evident truths and single evidences, like wisdom, providence, mercy, sustaining and giving of life, if only the act of making clean is not attributed to the Creator of the universe, then the following becomes necessary in the unbelieving way of the people of misguidance:

Either all the creatures connected to cleansing from particles and flies to the elements and the stars would have to have the ability to know and consider the adorning, balancing, and cleansing of the vast universe and would act accordingly, or each would have to possess the sacred attributes of the Creator of the world, or each would have to be present at a consultative meeting the size of the universe in order to regulate the equilibrium of the adorning and cleansing of the universe and its incomings and outgoings, and innumerable particles, flies, and stars would have to be the members of the meeting; and so on. Hundreds of superstitious, nonsensical and sophistical impossibilities like these would have to occur so that the universal, comprehensive, and exalted adorning, purifying and cleasing that is to be seen and observed everywhere could exist. As for this, it is not impossible once, but one hundred thousand times over.

If daylight and the imaginary miniature suns represented in all shining objects on the earth are not attributed to the sun and they are not said to be the manifestation of the sun’s reflection, it is necessary for the actual sun to be present in all fragments of glass, drops of water and snow-flakes glistening on the face of the earth, and even in all particles of air, so that the universal light could exist.

Thus, wisdom also is a light; all-embracing mercy is a light; adorning, balancing, ordering, and cleansing are each an encompassing light: they are all the rays of the Pre-Eternal Sun. So, see how misguidance and unbelief have entered a bog from which there is no way out! See just how idiotic is the ignorance of misguidance! Say: "Praise be to God for the religion of Islam and complete and perfect belief!"

For sure, this exalted, universal cleansing which keeps the palace of the universe clean is the manifestation and requirement of the Divine Name of Most Holy. And just as the glorification of all creatures looks to the Name of Most Holy, so also does the Name of Most Holy require the cleanliness of all of them.

2It is because of this sacred connection of cleanliness that the Hadith, "Cleanliness is a part of belief"

3deems it to be a light of belief. And the verse,

Indeed, God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean

4 shows that cleanliness is a means of attracting God’s love.

Dhikr (Recitation **ofGod**'s **Names**) (6)

Literally meaning mentioning, remembrance, and recollection, in the speech **of** the Sufis dhikr denotes regular recitation **of** one or some **ofGod**'s **Names** in the same recitation session. Some spiritual or Sufi orders prefer to recite: Allah (the proper Name **of** the Divine Being); others recite: There is no **god** but **God**, the declaration **of** Divine Unity; and others recite one or a few **of** the other **Names** according to the choice **of** the order's master.

Like thankfulness, such recitation is a duty **of**servanthood to be performed both verbally and actively, and also with one's heart and other faculties **of** conscience. Verbal recitation ranges from mentioning **God** Almighty with all His Beautiful **Names** and sacred Attributes; praising, exalting, and glorifying Him; proclaiming one's helplessness and destitution before Him in prayer and supplication; reciting and following His Book (the Qur'an); and voicing His signs in nature and the seal special to Him on each thing and event.

Recitation by the faculties **of** conscience, primarily the heart, consists **of** reflecting on the proofs **of** His Existence and Unity, and His **Names** and Attributes radiating in the book **of** creation (the universe); meditating on His orders and prohibitions, His promises and threats, and the reward and punishment issuing from His Lordship to design or order our lives; and trying to penetrate the mysteries behind the veil **of** visible existence by studying creation and following certain spiritual disciplines. In addition, one repeatedly observes the heavenly beauties manifested as a result **of** such instances **of** penetration; and thinks that whatever exists in the universe pulses with messages from the high empyrean world, manifesting the meaning **of** the invisible world and functioning as a window upon the Truth **of** Truths.

Those who feel this constant pulsing existence, hear the invisible world speaking eloquently, and observe the manifestations **of** Grace and Majesty through those windows are so enraptured with such unimaginable spiritual pleasure that one hour spent with such pleasure is equal to hundreds **of** years spent without it. As a result, they advance along their way to eternity lost in Divine gifts and spiritual delight. When the one reciting feels the light **of** His Glorified Face surrounding all existence, he or she is rewarded with the sight **of** indescribable scenes and, becoming aware **of** all other beings reciting **God**'s **Names** in its own tongue, begins to mention Him with many **of** His **Names**.

Reciting **God**'s **Names** sometimes causes the reciter to enter a trance-like state in which one's self is lost. Those who enter this entranced state or ecstatic contemplation utter such phrases as: There is no existent save He, There is nothing seen save He, and There is no **god** but **God**. There are others who, meaning and keeping in mind all Divine **Names** according to the inclusiveness **of** their consciousness, pronounce only save **God** and continue to declare His Unity. These seconds spent in this atmosphere **of** nearness to **God** and His company, the seconds **of** light and radiance, are much happier and more rewarding with respect to eternal life (in the Hereafter) than years spent with no light. This is what is referred to in a saying attributed to the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings: I have a time with my **God** when neither any angel nearest to **God** nor any Prophet sent as Messenger can compete with me. [1]

Active or bodily recitation consists in practicing religion with utmost care, enthusiastically performing all obligations, and consciously refraining from all prohibitions. Verbal profundity and awareness largely depend on active recitation, which also means knocking on the door **of** Divinity, searching for admittance, proclaiming one's helplessness and destitution, and taking refuge in Divine Power and Wealth.

One who regularly and intensively mentions **God** or recites one or some **of** His **Names** is taken under His protection and supported by Him, as if having made a contract with Him. The verse: Remember and mention Me, and I will remember and mention you (2:152) expresses this degree **of** recitation, by which one's innate destitution becomes the source **of** wealth, and helplessness the source **of** power. This verse also means that one's regular remembrance and worship **ofGod** will result in His bestowal **of** favors and bounties.

Invoking and calling upon Him bring forth His favors. One who remembers Him even while going about his or her daily affairs and preoccupations will find all obstacles removed in both this world and the next. His company will always be felt, and He will befriend one left alone and in need **of** friendship. If one remembers and mentions Him during times **of** ease and comfort, His Mercy will reach one during times **of** trouble and pain. Those who struggle in His way to spread His Name will be saved from humiliation in both this world and the Hereafter. Such sincere endeavors will be rewarded with special favors and ranks that one cannot now imagine.

The desire to mention Him and recite His **Names** will be rewarded with Divine help, so that such activities can continue and guidance can be increased. The continuation **of** the second part **of** the above verse (2:152), that is: Give thanks to Me and do not show ingratitude to Me, suggests a virtuous circle in which a believer passes from recitation to thankfulness, and from thankfulness to recitation.

Recitation is the essence **of** all types or acts **of** worship, and the origin **of** this essence is the Qur'an. Then come the luminous, celebrated words **of** the Prophet, to whom the Islamic Shari'a was sent. All recitation, whether audible or silent, attracts and embodies the manifestations **of** the light **ofGod**'s Glorified "Face." It also denotes proclaiming **God** to all human beings and jinn, and spreading His Name throughout the world in order to show one's thankfulness for His manifest and hidden favors. When there is almost no one left to proclaim His Name, existence will be meaningless. According to the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, the universe's total destruction will take place when there exist almost no people to proclaim His Name. [2]

Recitation, irrespective **of** its style, is the safest and soundest way leading to **God**. Without it, it is difficult to reach **God**. When the traveler remembers Him in his or her conscience and puts this remembrance into words with his or her tongue and other faculties, an inexhaustible source **of** support and (spiritual) provision is tapped.

Recitation signifies a journey toward Him. When one starts to mention Him or recites His **Names** both verbally and through feelings and actions, as well as in one's heart as a chorus, one enters a mysterious lift ascending to the realm where spirits fly. Through the slightly opened doors **of** the heavens, indescribable scenes are beheld.

There is not a specific time for reciting **God**'s **Names**. Although the five prescribed daily prayers, the chief act **of** worship, are performed at the five appointed times and cannot be performed at certain times (e.g., during sunrise and sunset, and when the Sun is at zenith at noon), a believer can mention **God** and recite His **Names** whenever he or she wishes: They mention **God** standing, sitting, and lying down (3:190). There is no restriction **of** time or manner on reciting **God**'s **Names**.

It is hard to find in the Qur'an, the Sunna, and the books **of** the early righteous scholars anything more strongly recommended than the recitation **God**'s **Names**. From daily prayers to holy struggle in His way, it is like the soul or blood **of** all worship. The profundity **of** recitation is proportional to the depth **of** feeling for **God**. Sufis call this "peace **of** heart" or" witnessing."

Some mention **God** Almighty and reach Him in their hearts by a mysterious way; others know Him by their conscience and feel His constant company by means **of** the point **of** reliance upon Him and seeking His help in their inner worlds. Since they remember Him uninterruptedly, always mention Him with their heart and conscience, always feel Him in their being, and live fully aware **of** His constant Presence, they regard mentioning Him (verbally) as heedlessness and ignorance **of** Him. One who has reached this degree **of**dhikr says: **God** knows that I do not remember Him to mention Him just now. How should I remember and mention Him now, seeing that I have never forgotten Him?

[1] Al-'Ajluni, Kashf al-Khafa', 2:173.

[2] Muslim, "Iman," 234.

References

**(1) 59:22/The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal**

**(2)59:23/The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal**

**(3)59:24/The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal**

**(4) Sahih Muslim, No. 4835**

**(5)The Risale-iNur Collection/The Flashes/The Thirtieth Flash.**

**(6)byFethullahGülen on 17 September 2001. Posted in** [**Key Concepts in the Practice of Sufism-1**](http://fgulen.ru/en/fethullah-gulens-works/sufism/key-concepts-in-the-practice-of-sufism-1)