

## The Ninety Nine Attributes of Allah

In the Holy Qura'n, we read the following verses:  
Allah:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ [٢٠:٨]

*Allah-- there is no god but He; His are the very best names. (20:8)*

قُلْ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ ۖ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۗ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا بِصَلَاتِكُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا [١٧:١٠٦]

*Say: Call upon Allah or call upon, the Beneficent Allah; whichever you call upon, He has the best names; and do not utter your prayer with a very raised voice nor be silent with regard to it, and seek a way between these. (17:110)*

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا ۖ وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ ۗ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ [٧:١٨٠]

*And Allah's are the best names, therefore call on Him thereby, and leave alone those who violate the sanctity of His names; they shall be recompensed for what they did. (7:180)*

In order to familiarize ourselves with Allah's Attributes, we have to consult the Holy Qura'n, traditions, or even common-sense.

On page 220 of his *Book of Unity (of Allah)*, Shaikh Muhammed ibn `Ali ibn Babawayh al-Qummi al-Saduq quotes Imam Ja`fer al-Sadiq quoting his forefathers quoting the Messenger of Allah saying,

*"There are ninety-nine Attributes, one hundred minus one, of Allah; whoever counts them will enter Paradise."*

He is also quoted saying that

*"Whoever learns these Attributes by heart and comprehends their meanings (and acts upon it) will enter Paradise".*

One should be familiar with the meanings and implications of these names, not just with their count.

"A tradition says,

*"Derive your manners from the Attributes of Allah."*

Allah has willed to show His servant His Attributes which collectively describe Him without His Name being a separate part thereof, even though He is not identical to them in essence.

On page 112, Vol. 1, the renown scholar al-Kulaini al-Razi cites Hisham ibn al-Hakam saying that when he once asked Imam Ja`fer al-Sadiq about Allah's Attributes and their derivation, as well as the derivation of the word "Allah," the Imam said to him,

*"O Hisham! The proper noun `Allah' is derived from `ilah;' the Creator requires the existence of creation [to testify to His being its Creator]. This is a noun, not an adjective. Anyone who worships a name without worshipping what the name stands for is actually committing kufi, apostasy; in reality, he does not worship anything at all. One who worships the name and the meaning is also committing kufi, for he will be worshipping two. Only one who worships the meaning without the name is in line with the concept of Tawhid (Unity of God). Have you understood all of this, O Hisham?"*

He answered him in the affirmative, requesting him to provide more explanations, whereupon the Imam said,

*"There are ninety-nine Attributes of Allah. Had each Attribute been the same as it describes, each one of them would have been a god by itself. But 'Allah' is the meaning one deduces once he becomes familiar with all these Attributes. They all, O Hisham, in their collective sense, is not the same as He Himself. Bread is something you eat. Water is something you drink. A garment is something you put on. And fire is something that burns. Do you understand all of this, O Hisham, fully enough so that you would promote it and fight the enemies of Allah for its sake?!"*

Hisham answered him in the affirmative, whereupon the Imam added,

*"May Allah grant you thereby benefits, and may He keep your feet firm thereupon, O Hisham!"*

Imam al-Sadiq has said,

*O son of Adam! If a bird were to eat your heart, it would not have felt satisfied. If the hole of a needle were put before your vision, it would have covered it up. How dare you, using these two, expect to know by them the domain of the heavens and the earth?! Had you been truthful, you would have looked at this sun: it is one object among many of Allah's creations. Had your eyes been able to see all of it, then, and only then, would you have really been truthful. Allah, the Exalted and the Great, says,*

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ [٥٣:٤٢]

*"And to your Lord is the [end] goal" (53:42).*

So, when speech reaches the subject of Allah, it is then that you should hold your tongue...

## **EXPLANATION AND DERIVATION OF THE WORD "ALLAH"**

Views vary in this regard. One says it is derived from one who *ilah* (as a verb) another when the latter seeks refuge with him during the time of fear or calamity, and he would grant him refuge and a safe haven; so, the word would become *ilah* (as a noun) of people, just as one may be their *imam* when he leads them in congregational prayers or becomes their undisputed leader, or just as a robe becomes a *rid'* when it is worn, or *lihaf* when used as a covering. Since it is an adjective for someone who is great, "There is nothing like unto Him" (Qura'n, 42:11), people desired to glorify Him by giving the word the prefix *al*, thus it became *Al-ilah*. But they found the *hamza* in the beginning and also in its midst, where it is quite heavily stressed, heavy on the tongue, so they eliminated it and it became just as it is revealed in the Holy Qura'n, that is, "Allah." This viewpoint is supported by al-Harith ibn Asad al-Muhasibi and a group of scholars, and there are dissenters.

### **Derivation of the Word "Allah"**

Some say that the word "Allah" is derived from the verb *walaha* (past tense), *yawlahu* (present tense), from the root noun *walah*. The *waw* was replaced with a *hamza*, just as the case with *wisad* and *isad*, *wisha* and *isha*, *wikaf* and *ikaf*. *Walah* is extreme love. Prophet Yahya (John the Baptist) used to be unhappy most of the time whereas Jesus used to be mostly cheerful and always wearing a smile on his face. They both sought the judgment of the Almighty in their regard, whereupon Allah inspired them, "The nearest of you to Me is the one who thinks best of Me." And surely Allah knows best.

The Almighty is Endless regarding His essence, perpetuity, eternity, Attributes, qualities and blessings. His creation, on the other hand, is described as reaching the end of their life terms, being limited in their characteristics, thoughts, and spheres. The one who is disabled cannot reach the Endless One. No wonder, then, that the minds are forever overcome by the lights of His Independence, and the reasons are too feeble to realize the brightness of His Greatness. He is as He describes Himself when He says in 6:18 and 6:61,

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ [٦:١٨]

*And He is the Supreme, above His servants; and He is the Wise, the Aware. (6:18)*

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ ۖ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمْ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّقْتَهُ ۖ رُسُلُنَا لَهُمْ لَا يَفْرَطُونَ [٦:٦١]

*And He is the Supreme, above His servants, and He sends keepers over you; until when death comes to one of you, Our messengers cause him to die, and they are not remiss. (6:61)*

The Creator is the One Who is adored, and He is worthy of it; hence, He is called *ilah*. He has made it clear for us that He is the One who bestows His blessings upon those whom He creates in sundry ways. Adoring is the ultimate form of glorifying. Reason testifies that the ultimate end of glorification suits only the One Who is the source of benevolence and bliss. It is to this fact that the Almighty refers when He says,

كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ تُمَيِّتُهُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ [٢:٢٨]

*How do you deny Allah and you were dead and He gave you life? Again He will cause you to die and again bring you to life, and then you shall be brought back to Him.*

Nobody knows Allah as He deserves to be known except Allah Himself. In sermon 186 in *Nahjul Balagha*, Imam `Ali says the following:

One who assigns conditions to Him does not believe in His Oneness, nor does one who likens Him to anything grasp the reality about Him. One who illustrates an example for Him does not worship Him. One who points at Him and imagines Him does not know the meaning of His Lordship. Anything known by it is a created thing, and everything that exists by virtue of other things is the effect thereof. He does things but not with the help of instruments. He assigns measures but not with the faculty of thinking. He is rich but not by acquirement. Time does not keep company with Him, nor does He seek help from any means. His Being precedes time. His Existence precedes non-existence, and His eternity precedes beginning. By creating the senses, it is known that He does not have the same. By comparing antitheses, it is known that He has no antithesis, and by striking similarities between things, it is known that there is nothing similar to Him. He has made light the contrary of darkness, brightness the opposite of dimness, dryness the opposite of moisture, and heat the opposite of coolness. He causes harmony among opposites. He fuses together diverse things; He brings closer what is remote and distances what is joined together. He is not confined to limits, nor computed by figures. Matters are attracted to one another, and parts point out to what is similar to them; the word "since" disproves their eternity, and possibility disproves their perpetuity, while certain means keep them distant from perfection. Through them does the Creator manifest Himself to the intellect, and by them is He veiled from vision. Stillness and motion do not apply to Him; how can anything that He causes to have any effect on Him, and how can anything which He has created revert in its effect unto Him? Or how can anything have an impact upon Him while He Himself brought it to being? Had it not been so, He would have become subject to diversity, His Being would have become divisible (into parts), and His reality would have been prevented from being Eternal. Had He had a front, He would have had a rear! He would have needed to be completed had there been any shortage in Him. In that case, characteristics of His creatures would have appeared in Him, and He would have become a sign (leading to other objects) instead of the latter leading to Him. Through the might of His effectiveness is He distanced above being affected by things. Neither change nor extinction affects Him. He has not begotten anyone lest He should be said as having been Himself born. He has not been begotten lest He should have been confined to limits. He is too sublime to have sons, too pure to take women. Imagination cannot reach Him to assess Him. Comprehension cannot conceive Him and fancy a shape for Him. Senses do not perceive Him to probe Him. Hands cannot touch Him to feel Him. He does not change into any condition. He does not pass from one stage to another. Nights and days do not age Him. Light and darkness do not alter Him. It cannot be said that He has a limb or extremity, an end or expiration, nor do things control Him to raise or lower Him, nor does anything support Him to bend Him or keep Him erect. He is neither inside things nor outside them. He conveys news, but not with the tongue or voice. He listens, but not with ear holes or organs of hearing. He speaks but does not utter words. He remembers but does not memorize. He determines but not by exercising His mind. He loves and approves without sentiments. He hates and feels angry without any painstaking. When He intends to create a thing, He says to it "Be" and it is, but not through a voice that strikes (the ears). His speech is a manifestation of what He has created. His peer never existed before, nor is He regarded as old; otherwise, He would have become a second god. It cannot be said that He came into being after He had not been in existence because in that case the effects of creation would have been reflected on Him, and there would have remained no difference between them and Him, and He would have no distinction over them. Thus, the Creator and the created

would have become equal, and the Initiator and the initiated would have been on the same level. He created creation without any model made by someone else, and He did not secure the assistance of any among His creation for creating. He created the earth and controlled it without having to hold it, retained it without having to support it, making it stand without poles, raising it without pillars, protecting it against bending or curving, defending it against crumbling or fragmenting. He fixed mountains on it like pegs, solidified its rocks, caused its streams to flow and expanded its valleys. Whatever He made did not suffer any flaw, and whatever He strengthened did not permit any weakness. He manifests Himself over the earth through His authority and greatness. He is aware of what there is inside it through His knowledge and understanding. He has power over everything on earth by virtue of His sublimity and dignity. Nothing on earth that He asks defies Him, nor does it oppose Him to overpower Him. He is not in need of anyone to feed Him. All things bow down to Him and are humble before His greatness. They cannot flee away from His authority to someone else in order to escape His benefit or harm. There is no parallel for Him who may match Him, and none is like Him to equal Him. He will destroy the earth after its existence, till all that exists on it will become non-existent. But the extinction of the world after its creation is no stranger than its formation and invention the first time. How could it be? Even if all the beings on earth, be they birds or beasts, cattle or pasture herds, of different origins and species, clever or not so clever nations, all jointly combine efforts to create even a mosquito, they will not be able to bring it into being nor understand the means to its creation. Their wits are bewildered and they are aimlessly wandering. Their powers fall short and they fail, returning disappointed and worn out, realizing that they are defeated, admitting their inability to produce it. They will also realize that they are too weak (even) to destroy it. Surely, after the extinction of the world, Allah the Glorified will remain alone with nothing else besides Him. He will be, after its extinction, as He was before then: without time or place, a moment or a period. Age and time will not then exist, and years and hours will disappear. There will be nothing except Allah, the One, and the Omnipotent. To Him is the return of all matters. The initial creation of all matters was never within the power of the latter, and the prevention of their own extinction was never within their reach. Had they had the power to prevent such extinction, they would have existed forever. When He created any part of this world, its making did not cause Him any difficulty, and the creation of anything which He created and formed did not exhaust Him. He did not create it to enhance His authority, nor did He do so for fear of any loss or harm, nor to seek help against an overwhelming foe, nor to guard against any avenging opponent, nor for the extension of His domain, nor for boasting of it before a partner, nor because of His feeling of loneliness and desire to seek company. Then, after its creation, He will destroy it not because of any worry that overcomes Him neither in maintaining and administering it, nor for any pleasure that will accrue to Him, nor for the cumbersomeness of anything over Him. The prolongation of its existence does not wear Him out to induce Him to its quick destruction. But Allah, the Glorified One, has maintained it with His kindness, kept it intact with His command, and perfected it with His might. Then, after its destruction, He will bring it back to being again not for any need of His own for it, nor to seek the assistance of anything in it, nor to change the condition of loneliness to that of company, nor from ignorance to knowledge, nor from want and need to independence and plentitude, nor from disgrace and lowliness to honor and prestige.

In another sermon, wherein he discusses the beginning of the creation of the heavens and the earth, the Imam says,

Praise is due to Allah Whose worth cannot be described by orators, Whose bounties cannot be counted by those who compute, the obedience to Whom cannot be satisfied by those who strive to do so, Whom the height of intellectual endeavor cannot appreciate, and the depths of understanding cannot reach, for Whose description no limit can ever be set, nor praise satisfies, nor time suffices, and no duration is fixed. He brought forth creation through His might, dispersed the winds as an act of His mercy, and He firmed the earth with the mountains. The foremost in religious obligation is to acknowledge Him, the perfection of acknowledging Him is to achieve His Pleasure, the perfection of achieving His Pleasure is to believe in His Oneness, the perfection of believing in His Oneness is to regard Him as the Pure, and the perfection of His purity is not to attach adjectives to Him because every adjective is an indication that it is different from that to which it is best named, and everything to which something is best named is different from the Best Name itself. Thus, whoever attaches adjectives to Allah recognizes a peer like Him, and whoever recognizes His peer regards two gods; and whoever regards Him as One of two associate-partners with Him, and whoever associates partners with Him errs in His regard and does Him injustice, and whoever errs in His regard points out at Him, and whoever points out at Him admits limitations for Him, and whoever admits limitations for Him numbers Him. Whoever wonders where He is maintains that He is confined to a place, and whoever wonders above what He is maintains that He is not above something else. He is a Being but not through phenomenon of coming into being. He exists but not from non-existence. He is with everything but not in physical proximity. He is different from everything but not in any physical way. He acts but without connotations of movement or means. He sees yet none among His creation can see Him. He is one and only, so there is none with whom He keeps company or whom He misses when absent.

## THE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH

Now let us discuss His Attributes in more details:

### 1. "Allah"

The proper noun "Allah" solely belongs to The Almighty God, the Truth. Anything succeeding it is regarded as an adjective describing it, while it remains a noun indicative of the True God. It combines all His Attributes, and it needs no introduction from others, whereas the other Attributes attain recognition when added thereto. "Allah" is not given to anyone other than Him, nor should it ever be used for anyone besides Him.

"Allah" is the ever-Existent; the One Who causes existence, Who maintains existence, Who creates everything that exists. Whatever He creates shall perish; He never will: "... say: `Allah! then leave them sporting in their vain discourses" (Qura'n, 6:91).

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي [٢٠:١٤]

*Surely I am Allah, there is no god but I, therefore serve Me and keep up prayer for My remembrance: (20:14)*

### 2. "Al-Rahman"

إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا [١٩:٩٣]

*There is no one in the heavens and the earth but will come to the Beneficent Allah as a servant. (19:93)*

"Al-Rahman al-Rahim" are two of the Attributes of Allah which remind people of His mercy, of the fact that His act of affecting goodness and rewards reach whomsoever He pleases, thus warding off evil from them. "Al-Rahman" and "al-Rahim" are two concurrent Attributes of His each conveying more meanings of mercy than the other.

"Al-Rahman" is an Attribute specifically relevant to Allah; none besides Him can be called or referred to as such, whereas "al-rahim" can be applied to people: One may be described as "rahim," merciful or kind, but a human cannot be "rahman".

In the Holy Qura'n, we read:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ [١:١]

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.*

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى [٢٠:٥]

*The Beneficent Allah is firm in power. (20:5)*

It is an Attribute demonstrating that mercy can be possible only through Him. It means "the One Who grants mercy beyond which there is no other mercy at all and the like of which does not at all exist."

Though derived from mercy, "al-Rahman" is both a noun and an adjective. Neither contradicts the other.

It is commonly known that mercy means: one's desire or power of will to bring goodness to one who is much less than him in status.

وَاللَّهُمَّ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۖ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ [٢:١٦٣]

*And your Allah is one Allah! There is no god but He; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.*

*He who repeats this Name 100 times after each Fard (Obligatory) Prayer will have good memory, a keen awareness, & be free of a heavy heart.*

### 3. "Al-Rahim"

نَبِّئْ عِبَادِي أَنِّي أَنَا الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ [١٥:٤٩]

*Inform My servants that I am the Forgiving, the Merciful, (15:49)*

"Al-Rahim" is derived from "rahmah," mercy or compassion. "Rahmah" implies the salvation of those who receive it from harm and loss, and their being blessed with guidance, forgiveness and sound conviction. *Al-Rahim*, i.e. the One Who grants *rahmah*, is a superlative. It is the highest derivative form of *rahmah*. Allah has said, "He it is Who sends His blessings on you, and (so do) His angels, so that He may bring you out of utter darkness into the light, and He is Merciful to the believers" (Qura'n, 33:43).

*Al-Rahim* is the One Who bestows countless blessings. Some say that this word is derived from "Rahim," and we have already come to know that the root word for it is "rahmah," that is, favors from Allah and blessings; surely His blessings cannot be counted, nor can they ever be exhausted.

The Messenger of Allah has said, "One who has no compassion towards people is deprived from Allah's Compassion." He has also said, "One who does not respect the seniors among us, nor shows compassion towards our young, nor safeguards the rights of the scholars among us, is surely none of us." Compassion among the servants of Allah is a sure path to achieving the mercy of Allah. The Messenger of Allah has said, "Be merciful unto those on earth so that those in the heavens may be merciful unto you."

*He who repeats this Name 100 times after each Fajr (Morning) Prayer will find everyone to be friendly towards him.*

### 4. "Al-Malik"

فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ [٢٣:١١٦]

*So exalted be Allah, the True King; no god is there but He, the Lord of the honorable dominion. (23:116)*

"Al-Malik" conveys the meaning of "One Who is free, by virtue of His Own merits and characteristics; from depending on anything in existence, while everything in existence depends on Him." Nothing in existence can do without Him, whereas everything that exists derives its existence from Him or because of Him. Everything/everyone is His.

*Al-Malik* occurs in:

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ [١:٤]

Master of the Day of Judgment. (1:4)

Another method of recitation: *Melik*, King of the Day of Judgment. *Al-Maleek* exists in this verse:

فِي مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ [٥٤:٥٥]

*In the seat of honor with a most Powerful King. (54:55)*

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكِ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُنْزِلُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ ۗ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ [٣:٢٦]

*Say: O Allah, Master of the Kingdom! Thou givest the kingdom to whomsoever Thou pleasest and takest away the kingdom from whomsoever Thou pleasest, and Thou exaltest whom Thou pleasest and abasest whom Thou pleasest in Thine hand is the good; surely, Thou hast power over all things. (3:26)*

"Al-Malakoot" exists in:

فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ [٣٦:٨٣]

Therefore glory be to Him in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things, and to Him you shall be brought back. (36:83)

The Almighty has described Himself as being "Malikul-Mulk," the Owner of everything, of the whole domain, saying, "Say: O Allah, Master of the Kingdom!" (Qura'n, 3:26), and "Master of the Day of Judgment" (Qura'n, 1:4), which is one of the first verses of the Holy Qura'n.

A land's owner is its "malik," one legally bound to obey the king, the "malik," with regard to land-related laws issued by the latter, whereas the opposite is not possible.

Among the Attributes of Allah Almighty, the word "al-Malik" has occurred independently, whereas the word "Malik" is always added to something else, such as "Maliki yawmid-Deen," Master of the Day of Judgment; therefore, the first Attribute has to be more revered.

**He who repeats this Name will be respected by others.**

## 5. "Al-Quddoos"

﴿يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ﴾ [٦٢:١]

*Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth declares the glory of Allah, the King, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise. (62:1)*

"Al-Quddoos" means: the One Whose characteristics cannot be conceived by the senses, or can He be conceived by imagination, nor can He be realized by any mind or reason or judged by any intellect. Linguistically, it is derived from "quds," purity or cleanness. "Al-bayt al-muqaddas" means the Purified House, the one in which people purify themselves from the filth of sins. Paradise is also called the place of *quds* because it is free from the ills of the life of this world. Archangel Gabriel is called in Islam "*al-ruh al-quds*," the Holy Spirit, because he is free from any fault in delivering divine inspiration to the messengers of Allah. Allah has described Himself as

﴿هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۗ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾ [٥٩:٢٣]

*He is Allah, besides Whom there is no god; the King, the Holy, the Giver of peace, the Granter of security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of every greatness Glory be to Allah from what they set up (with Him). (59:23)*

He has also said, "Whatever in the heavens and in the earth declares the glory of Allah, the King, the Holy" (62:1).

*Al-Qudds* is the One Who is above need and Whose Attributes are above being deficient. He is the One Who purifies the souls against sinning, Who takes the wicked by their forelocks, Who is above being limited to space or time.

The Messenger of Allah once sent one of his companions to teach Islam to a group of new converts and to lead them in congregational prayers. That companion used not to recite any chapter of the Holy Qura'n (besides, of course, the Fatiha) other than Surat al-Tawhid (or al-Ikhlâs), so those believers went back once to the Prophet and told him about it. The Prophet said to them, "Go back and ask him why he does so." Upon asking him, the companion answered them by saying, "... because it contains the Attribute of *al-Rahman*, and this is why I love to recite it so often!" When they told the Prophet this answer, he said to them, "Go back and tell him that the Praised and Glorified One loves him too."

Ibn `Abbas spent a night once with his cousin the Messenger of Allah. When the Messenger of Allah woke up and stood up on his bed, he raised his head towards the heavens and thrice repeated the following statement: "*Subhanal Malik al-Qudds!*" (Glory to the King, the Holy!) Then he recited the last verses of Surat Ali-'Imran starting with the verse: "Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth..., etc."

**The hearts of those who repeat this Name 100 times daily will be free from anxiety.**

## 6. "Al-Salam"

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۗ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ [٥٩:٢٣]

*He is Allah, besides Whom there is no god; the King, the Holy, the Giver of peace, the Granter of security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of every greatness Glory be to Allah from what they set up (with Him). (59:23)*

"Al-Salam" means: the One Who is free from defect and shortcoming, Whose qualities are above deficiency, Whose deeds are free from evil. Since He is as such, there can be neither peace nor security in existence without Him.

"Salam" means peace. Allah Almighty has said, "... and Allah invites to the abode of peace" (Qura'n, 10:25), meaning Paradise: anyone who abides therein will have been saved from agony and perdition. Allah has said, "And if he is one of those on the right hand, then peace to you from those on the right hand" (Qura'n, 56:90-91), that is, rest assured that they are enjoying peace and tranquility. "Salam!" is a greeting; if a Muslim tells another Muslim "As-Salamu Alaikum!" he will have assured him of safety and security, granting him immunity against his evil or ill intentions. Allah Almighty praises Yahya, John the Baptist, by saying, "And peace be on him on the day he was born..." (Qura'n, 19:15).

The most precarious situations to which human beings are exposed are three: The time of birth, the time of death, and the time of resurrection. So Allah honored Yahya in all these three situations, granting him peace, safety and security against their woes. He saved him from the perils of all these three situations and granted him security against fear.

Muslims are repeatedly enjoined by the Holy Qura'n to disseminate peace and to be receptive to those who offer it:

O you who believe! Enter into peace one and all... (2:208) And if they incline to peace, do incline to it too and trust in Allah. (8:61) And the servants of *al-Rahman* are the ones who walk on earth humbly, and when the ignorant ones address them, they say: *Salam* (Peace)! (25:63) And when those who believe in Our Signs come to you, say: Peace be on you! Your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself... (6:54) So turn away from them and say, Peace! For they shall soon come to know. (43:89)

Allah's *Salam* is His speech. Likewise, the Messenger of Islam used to quite often enjoin the believers to disseminate the greeting of peace among them. There are numerous traditions testifying to this fact; among them are the following:

*Assalamu minal Islam*: The greeting of peace is an integral part of the creed of Islam.

*Afshu al Salama taslamu*: Disseminate the greeting of peace among you so you may achieve peace and security.

Whoever upholds three things will have combined in him the meaning of conviction: 1) fairness to his own self, 2) disseminating of the greeting of peace to everyone, and 3) spending wisely out of what he saves.

*Afshu al Salama baynakum*: Disseminate the greeting of peace among you.

In one of his supplications, the Messenger of Allah used to say, "Lord! Make us harbingers of peace to Your friends!" The Holy Qura'n tells us that the name of Paradise is "Dar al Salam," the abode of peace; He, Glory and Exaltation to Him, says, "They shall have the abode of peace with their Lord, and He is their guardian because of what they did" (Qura'n, 6:127). Allah will make the greeting of the believers, when they meet Him, "Peace!" He says, "Their salutation on the Day they meet Him shall be: *Salam!* (Peace!)" (Qura'n, 33:44). Referring to the believers, He says the following in Surat al-Ra'd, "... the gardens of perpetual abode which they will enter along with those who do good deeds from among their parents and spouses and offspring, and the angels will enter upon them from every gate (saying): Peace be on you because you were constant! How excellent, then, is the issue of the abode!" (Qura'n, 13:23-24).

Thawban, servant of the Messenger of Allah, has said, "Whenever the Messenger of Allah finished his prayers, he would seek forgiveness of Allah thrice, saying, 'Lord! You are the Peace; from You is the Peace; Glory to You! Greatness and Honor are in You!'"

*He who repeats this Name 160 times to a sick person will help him regain health.*

## 7. "Al-Mu'min"

Allah has described Himself as *al-Mu'min*: "... the One Who gives peace, Who grants security" (Qura'n, 59:23).

"*Al-Mu'min*" means: the One to Whom peace and security are rendered: He provides the means of their attainment, blocking all the avenues of fear. There is neither peace nor security in this life against the causes of disease and perdition, nor in the life hereafter against the torment and the Wrath, except that He provides the means to attain it.

"*Iman*," linguistically speaking, is an infinitive (to believe) derived from two verbs: *tasdeeq*, testimony for the truth of something or someone, as in 12:17: "... and you will not believe us though we are truthful" (Qura'n, 12:17), and *aman*, asylum or a peaceful haven as in 106:4: "... and gave them security against fear" (Qura'n, 106:4). Some linguists are of the view that the derivation of *iman* is from this second verb.

If we say that the Almighty grants His servants security against anything they dread, we must be understood in the light of the circumstances of the life in this world and in the hereafter. As regarding the life in this world, the removal of the cause of fear is not reasonably accepted except when a precarious situation has actually taken place. Fear cannot be removed when the possibility of loss of life is present, and nobody can remove such a possibility except Allah. Nobody can bring about peace and security other than He. A blind person is apprehensive of perishing on account of his inability to see the area from which death may overtake him. Sound vision grants him security against being annihilated. One whose arm is amputated fears the situation when he cannot defend himself except through the use of his arm. His healthy arm, then, is the cause of his feeling of security. The same can be said about all our senses and bodily parts. The One Who created all these parts is the same One Who has removed from man the causes of fear by granting him such parts. The One Who has created delicious food for man as well as good medicines and taught him how to make useful tools, thus sparing himself a lot of trouble, is surely the same One Who grants him security against all such dangers. The Messenger of Allah has said, "Anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day should bring security to his neighbor against his own misdeeds."

*He who recites this Name will be secure from harm.*

## 8. "Al-Muhaimin"

In 59:23, we read: "He is Allah besides Whom there is no other god, the King, the Holy, the One Who grants peace, the One Who grants security, the Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the One Who possesses greatness; Glory to Allah from whatever they set up (with Him)."

When applied to the Almighty, "*al-Muhaimin*" means that He is the One Who oversees His servants' actions, Who provides them with sustenance, and decrees their life-spans. He does so through His knowledge, control, and protection. Anyone who oversees something is its guardian; so he has full power over it. These Attributes can never be present in their absolute meaning except in Allah.

This Attribute describes in 10:61 the One Who testifies for or against His servants who enter into mutual transactions: "... We are witnesses over you when you enter into it." Allah is *al-Muhaimin*, the One Who witnesses all what His servants do, be it a speech or an action. The meaning of this verse incorporates the meaning of the word "*muhaimin*" thus: the One Who knows everything and from Whose knowledge nothing at all can escape, not even the weight of an atom in the earth or in the heavens.

- Al-Khalil ibn Ahmed al-Farahidi says that "*al-Mu'min*" means: the One Who ever watches, Who ever protects. It is common in Arabic to describe someone as "*muhaimin*" if he protects someone else or is his guardian.
- *Al-Mibrad* explains its meaning as: the One Who is most kind and compassionate. Arabs describe the bird that stretches its wings to protect its young as being "*muhaimin*" over them.
- Al-Hassan al-Basri says it means the Guardian Who testifies to one's truth. Applied to the Almighty, it may carry one of two meanings: His testimony by word, hence His testimony informing us about His messengers being truthful, and His empowering those messengers to produce miracles, thus testifying to their truthfulness.
- *Al-Muhaimin* is the One Who encompasses in His knowledge the management of the affairs of all His creation from the smallest atom to the largest planet in the cosmos.

*He who recites this Name with full attentiveness, their inner being will be luminous.*

## 9. "Al-`Aziz"

The Almighty has said, "O Moses! Surely I am Allah, the Omnipotent, the Wise" (Qura'n, 27:9).

The root word of this Attribute is `izz, might, power, strength, victory, elevation, non-submission. Its verb means: to strengthen or to support as in: "We sent them two [messengers] but they called them liars, so We strengthened them with a third," (Qura'n, 36:14) that is, supported them and their argument with a third messenger. Linguistically, its verb means: to overcome, to gain the upper hand, to subdue...

*Al-`Aziz* is the One Who Alone has all honor; He is never humiliated, nor is He ever wronged; neither imagination nor intellect can ever conceive Him. He is the One Who cannot be overcome or in any way harmed, the One Who has no peer nor a similitude, Who is very much needed, Who is victorious and is never vanquished, the Mighty, the Omnipotent Who can never be reached.

The Almighty has described Himself as *al-`Aziz*, narrating in His Book, the Holy Qura'n, an anecdote about Jesus pleading to Him thus "... if You forgive them, surely You are the Mighty, the Wise" (Qura'n, 5:118). He has also said, "And to Him belongs greatness in the heavens and in the earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise" (Qura'n, 45:37). He has proven that He has in Him all the Attributes of Greatness, saying, "To Allah belongs the might, and to His Prophet, and to the believers" (Qura'n, 63:8), and also, "Glory to your Lord, the Lord of Honor, above what they describe" (Qura'n, 37:180). While discussing Iblis, He quotes him saying, "... by Your Might I will surely make them live an evil life, all of them" (Qura'n, 38:82).

The Messenger of Allah used to say, "I seek refuge with Your Honor, for You are the One Who is the One and Only God Who never dies, while the jinns and men die."

*He who recites this Name will not be compelled to do anything against his wishes, and will not be exposed to violence, severity, or hardness.*