

فمن [في بعض النسخ: ومن] خطبة له (عليه السلام)

From one of his sermons

يذكر فيها ابتداءً خلق السماء والأرض، وخلق آدم (عليه الصلاة والسلام)

In this sermon he recalls the creation of Earth and Sky and the creation of Ādam (a.s.)

وفيه ذكر الحج وتحتوي على حمد الله وخلق العالم وخلق الملائكة واختيار الأنبياء ومبعث النبي والقرآن والأحكام الشرعية

And in it he mentions the Hajj; the sermon also contains praise of God, the creation of the world and the angels, the selection of the prophets (a.s.), the mission of the Prophet (s.a.w.w.), the Qur'ān, and the legal rulings.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَبْلُغُ مَدْحَتَهُ الْقَائِلُونَ، وَلَا يَحْصِي نِعْمَاءَهُ الْعَادُونَ، وَلَا يُؤَدِّي حَقَّهُ الْمُجْتَهِدُونَ، الَّذِي لَا يُدْرِكُهُ بَعْدُ الْهَمَمُ، وَلَا يَنَالُهُ غَوْصُ الْفِطْنِ، الَّذِي لَيْسَ لَصِفَتِهِ حَدٌّ مَحْدُودٌ، وَلَا نَعْتٌ مَوْجُودٌ، وَلَا وَقْتُ مَعْدُودٍ، وَلَا أَجَلٌ مَمْدُودٌ.

Praise is due to Allāh whose worth cannot be described by speakers, whose bounties cannot be counted by calculators and whose claim (to obedience) cannot be satisfied by those who attempt to do so, whom the height of intellectual courage cannot appreciate, and the divings of understanding cannot reach; He for whose description no limit has been laid down, no eulogy exists, no time is ordained and no duration is fixed.

فَطَرَ الْخَلَائِقَ بِقُدْرَتِهِ، وَنَشَرَ الرِّيحَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ، وَوَدَدَ بِالصُّخُورِ مِيدَانَ أَرْضِهِ.

He brought forth creation through His Omnipotence, dispersed winds through His Compassion, and made firm the shaking earth with rocks.

أَوَّلُ الدِّينِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ، وَكَمَالُ مَعْرِفَتِهِ التَّصَدِيقُ بِهِ، وَكَمَالُ التَّصَدِيقِ بِهِ تَوْحِيدُهُ، وَكَمَالُ تَوْحِيدِهِ الْإِخْلَاصُ لَهُ، وَكَمَالُ الْإِخْلَاصِ لَهُ نَفْيُ الصِّفَاتِ عَنْهُ، لِشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ صِفَةٍ أَنَّهَا غَيْرُ الْمُوصُوفِ، وَشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ مُوصُوفٍ أَنَّهُ غَيْرُ الصِّفَةِ.

The foremost in religion is the acknowledgement of Him, [1] the perfection of acknowledging Him is to testify Him, the perfection of testifying Him is to believe in His Oneness, the perfection of believing in His Oneness is to regard Him Pure, and the perfection of His purity is to deny Him attributes, because every attribute is a proof that it is different from that to which it is attributed and everything to which something is attributed is different from the attribute.

فَمَنْ وَصَفَ اللَّهَ سَبَّحَانَهُ فَقَدِ قَرَنَهُ، وَمَنْ قَرَنَهُ فَقَدِ ثَنَاهُ، وَمَنْ ثَنَاهُ فَقَدِ جَزَّاهُ، وَمَنْ جَزَّاهُ فَقَدِ جَهَلَهُ، وَمَنْ جَهَلَهُ فَقَدِ أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ فَقَدِ حَدَّهُ، وَمَنْ حَدَّهُ فَقَدِ عَدَّهُ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: «فِيمَ؟» فَقَدِ ضَمَّنَهُ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: «عَلَامٌ؟» فَقَدِ أَخْلَى مِنْهُ.

Thus whoever attaches attributes to Allāh recognises His like, and whoever recognises His like regards Him two; and whoever regards Him as two recognises parts for Him; and whoever recognises parts for Him mistook Him; and whoever mistook Him pointed at Him; and whoever pointed at Him admitted limitations for Him; and whoever admitted limitations for Him numbered Him. Whoever said: 'In what is He?', held that He is contained; and whoever said: 'On what is He?', held He is not on something else.

كَأَنَّ لِأَعْنِ حَدَثٍ، مَوْجُودٍ لِأَعْنِ عَدَمٍ، مَعَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُقَارَنَةٍ، وَغَيْرِ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمَزَايِلَةٍ، فَاعِلٌ لَا بِمَعْنَى الْحَرَكَاتِ وَالْأَلَةِ، بَصِيرٌ إِذْ لَا مَنظُورَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، مَتَّوْحِدٌ إِذْ لَا سَكَنَ يَسْتَأْنِسُ بِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَوْحِشُ لِفَقْدِهِ.

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 nearness. He is different from everything but not in physical separation. He acts but without connotation of movements and instruments. He sees even when there is none to be looked at from among His creation. He is only One, such that there is none with whom He may keep company or whom He may miss in his absence.

[خلق العالم:] أَنْشَأَ الْخَلْقَ إِنِّشَاءً، وَابْتَدَأَهُ ابْتِدَاءً، بِأَلَا رُويَةَ أَجَالِهَا، وَلَا تَجْرِبَةَ اسْتِفَادَتِهَا، وَلَا حَرَكَةَ أَحْدَثِهَا، وَلَا هِمَامَةَ نَفْسٍ اضْطِرَبَ فِيهَا. أَحَالَ الْأَشْيَاءَ لِأَوْقَاتِهَا، وَلَأَمَّ بَيْنَ مَخْتَلِفَاتِهَا، وَغَرَزَ غَرَائِزَهَا، وَأَلْزَمَهَا أَشْبَاحَهَا، عَالِمًا بِهَا قَبْلَ ابْتِدَائِهَا، مُحِيطًا بِحُدُودِهَا وَانْتِهَائِهَا، عَارِفًا بِقَرَائِنِهَا وَأَحْثَائِهَا.

[The Creation of the Universe:] He initiated creation most initially and commenced it originally, without undergoing reflection, without making use of any experiment, without innovating any movement, and without experiencing any aspiration of mind. He allotted all things their times, brought harmony and balance to disparate things, gave them their properties, and determined their features knowing them before creating them, realising fully their limits and confines and appreciating their propensities and intricacies.

ثُمَّ أَنْشَأَ سَبَّحَانَهُ فَتَقَّ الْأَجْوَاءَ، وَشَقَّ الْأَرْجَاءَ، وَسَكَّاتِكَ الْهَوَاءَ، فَاجْرِي فِيهَا مَاءً مُتَلَاظِمًا تَيَّارَهُ، مُتْرَاكِمًا زَخَّارَهُ، حَمَلَهُ عَلَى مِثْنِ الرِّيحِ الْعَا صِفَةٍ، وَالزَّرْعِ الْقَا صِفَةٍ، فَأَمْرَهَا بِرُدِّهِ، وَسَلَطَهَا عَلَى شَدِّهِ، وَقَرَنَهَا إِلَى حَدِّهِ، الْهَوَاءَ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا فَتَيْقُ، وَالْمَاءَ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا دَفَيْقُ.

When Almighty created the openings of atmosphere, expanse of firmament and strata of winds, He flowed into it water whose waves were stormy and whose

surges leapt one over the other. He loaded it on dashing wind and breaking typhoons, ordered them to shed it back (as rain), gave the wind control over the vigour of the rain, and acquainted it with its limitations. The wind blew under it while water flowed furiously over it.

ثُمَّ أَنْشَأَ سُبْحَانَهُ رِيحًا اعْتَقَمَ مَهْيَهَا، وَأَادَامَ مُرْدَهَا، وَأَعَصَفَ مَجْرَاهَا، وَأَبْعَدَ مَنْشَأَهَا، فَأَمَرَهَا بِتَصْفِيقِ الْمَاءِ الزَّخَّارِ، وَإِثَارَةِ مَوْجِ الْبِحَارِ، فَمَخَضَتْهُ مَخَضُ السَّقَاءِ، وَعَصَفَتْ بِهِ عَصْفَهَا بِالْفِضَاءِ، تَرَدُّدًا أَوْ لَهْلَهًا إِلَى [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: عَلِيٌّ] آخِرَهُ، وَسَاجِيهِ إِلَى [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: عَلِيٌّ] مَائِرَهُ، حَتَّى يَغْبِ عِبَابَهُ، وَيَرْمِي بِالزَّبَدِ رُكَامَهُ، فَرَفَعَهُ فِي هَوَاءٍ مَنفَتِقٍ، وَجَوٍّ مَنفَتِقٍ، فَسَبَّوْا مِنْهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ، جَعَلَ سَفَلَاهُنَّ مَوْجًا مَكْفُوفًا، وَعَلِيَاهُنَّ سَقْفًا مَحْفُوظًا، وَسَمَكًا مَرْفُوعًا، بِغَيْرِ عَمْدٍ يَدْعُمُهَا، وَلَا دِسَارٍ يَنْظُمُهَا.

Then Almighty created forth wind and made its movement sterile, perpetuated its position, intensified its motion and spread it far and wide. Then He ordered the wind to raise up deep waters and to intensify the waves of the oceans. So the wind churned it like the churning of curd and pushed it fiercely into the firmament throwing its front position on the rear and the stationary on the flowing till its level was raised and the surface was full of foam. Then Almighty raised the foam on to the open wind and vast firmament and made therefrom the seven skies and made the lower one as a stationary surge and the upper one as protective ceiling and a high edifice without any pole to support it or nail to hold it together.

ثُمَّ زَيَّنَهَا بِزِينَةِ الْكُوكَبِ، وَضِيَاءِ الثُّوَابِقِ، وَأَجْرَى فِيهَا سِرَاجًا مُسْتَطِيرًا، وَقَمْرًا مُنِيرًا: فِي فَلَكٍ دَائِرٍ، وَسَقْفٍ سَائِرٍ، وَرَقِيمٍ مَائِرٍ.

Then He decorated them with stars and the light of meteors and hung in it the shining sun and effulgent moon under the revolving sky, moving ceiling and rotating firmament.

[خَلَقَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ:] ثُمَّ فَتَقَ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَوَاتِ الْعُلَا، فَمَلَأَهُنَّ أَطْوَارًا مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِ: مِنْهُنَّ سَجُودٌ لَا يَرْكَعُونَ، وَرُكُوعٌ لَا يَنْتَصِبُونَ، وَصَافُونَ لَا يَتَزَايِلُونَ، وَمَسْبُحُونَ لَا يَسْأَمُونَ، لَا يَغْشَاهُمْ نَوْمُ الْعَيُونِ، وَلَا سَهُوُ الْعُقُولِ، وَلَا فِتْرَةُ الْأَبْدَانِ، وَلَا غَفْلَةُ النِّسْيَانِ.

[The Creation of the Angels:] Then He created the openings between high skies and filled them with all classes of His angels. Some of them are in prostration and do not kneel up. Others in kneeling position and do not stand up. Some of them are in array and do not leave their position. Others are extolling Allah and do not get tired. The sleep of the eye or the slip of wit, or languor of the body or the effect of forgetfulness does not effect them.

وَمِنْهُمْ أَمْنَاءٌ عَلِيٌّ وَجِيهٌ، وَالسُّنَّةُ إِلَى رُسُلِهِ، وَمِخْتَلِفُونَ بِقَضَائِهِ وَأَمْرِهِ. وَمِنْهُمْ الْحَفِظَةُ لِعِبَادِهِ، وَالسُّدْنَةُ لِأَبْوَابِ جَنَانِهِ. وَمِنْهُمْ الثَّابِتَةُ فِي الْأَرْضِينَ السُّفْلَى أَقْدَامُهُمْ، وَالْمَارِقَةُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ الْعُلْيَا أَعْنَاقُهُمْ، وَالْخَارِجَةُ مِنَ الْأَقْطَارِ أَرْكَانُهُمْ، وَالْمُنَاسِبَةُ لِقَوَائِمِ الْعَرْشِ أَكْتَافُهُمْ، نَاسِكَةٌ دُونَهُ أَبْصَارُهُمْ، مُتَلَفَعُونَ تَحْتَهُ بِأَجْنِحَتِهِمْ، مُضْرُوبَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَنْ دُونَهُمْ حِجَابُ الْعِزَّةِ، وَأَسْتَارُ الْقُدْرَةِ، لَا يَتَوَهَّمُونَ رِيحَهُمْ.

بِالصُّوْرِ، وَلَا يُجْرُونَ عَلَيْهِ صِفَاتِ الْمَصْنُوعِينَ، وَلَا يَحْدُونَهُ بِالْأَمَاكِنِ، وَلَا يُشِيرُونَ إِلَيْهِ بِالنَّظَائِرِ.

Among them are those who work as trusted bearers of His message, those who serve as speaking tongues for His prophets and those who carry to and fro His orders and injunctions. Among them are the protectors of His creatures and guards of the doors of the gardens of Paradise. Among them are those also whose steps are fixed on earth but their necks are protruding into the skies, their limbs are getting out on all sides, their shoulders are in accord with the columns of the Divine Throne, their eyes are downcast before it, they have spread down their wings under it and they have rendered between themselves and all else curtains of honour and screens of power. They do not think of their Creator through image, do not impute to Him attributes of the created, do not confine Him within abodes and do not point at Him through illustrations.

[صفة خلق آدم عليه السلام:] ثم جمع سبحانه من حزن الأرض وسهلها، وعذبها وسبخها، تربةً سنّها بالماء حتى خلصت، ولأطرافها بالبلدة حتى لزيت، فجبل منها صورة ذات أحناء ووصول، وأعضاء وفصول: أجمدها حتى استمسكت، وأصلدها حتى صلصت، لوقت معدود، وأمد معلوم [في بعض النسخ: وأجل معلوم].

[Description of the Creation of Ādam:] Allāh collected from hard, soft, sweet and sour earth, clay which He dripped in water till it got pure, and kneaded it with moisture till it became gluey. From it He carved an image with curves, joints, limbs and segments. He solidified it till it dried up for a fixed time and a known duration.

ثم نفخ فيها من روحه فمثلت إنساناً ذا أذهان يجليها، وفكر يتصرف بها، وجوارح يخدمها، وأدوات يقبلها، ومعرفة يفرق بها بين الحق والباطل، والأذواق والمشام، والألوان والأجناس، معجوناً بطينة الألوان المختلفة، والأشياء المؤتلفة، والأضداد المتعدية، والأخلاق المتباينة، من الحر والبرد، والبلدة والجمود [في بعض النسخ: ... والجمود والمساءة والسرور].

Then He blew into it out of His Spirit whereupon it took the pattern of a human being with mind that governs him, intelligence which he makes use of, limbs that serve him, organs that change his position, sagacity that differentiates between truth and untruth, tastes and smells, colours and species. He is a mixture of clays of different colours, cohesive materials, divergent contradictories and differing properties like heat, cold, softness and hardness, grief and joy.

وَأَسْتَأْذَى اللَّهُ سَبْحَانَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَدَبِعْتَهُ لَدَيْهِمْ، وَعَهْدَ وَصِيَّتِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ، فِي الْإِذْعَانِ بِالْجُودِ لَهُ، وَالْخَنُوعِ لِتَكْرِمَتِهِ، فَقَالَ سَبْحَانَهُ بِالْصِّدْقِ لَخِنْ هُوَ تَابِعُ بَارِئَةَ قَلْبِهِ زَنْعَتُو، قَوْمِ الشَّيْبَعِ تَبْلُغُونَ بِمَحَالِهِ تَرْتَعَاءُ، كَيْسَ لَيْلِي لِإِلَهِ الْوَدَجِ سَبْحَانَهُ فَأَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ النَّظْرَةَ اسْتِحْقَاقًا لِلْسَّخْطَةِ، وَاسْتِثْمَامًا لِلْبَلِيَّةِ، وَإِنْجَازًا لِلْعِدَّةِ، فَقَالَ ﴿فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ إِلَى﴾ يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ ﴿﴾

Then Allāh asked the angels to fulfil His promise with them and to accomplish the

pledge of His injunction to them by acknowledging Him through prostration to Him and submission to His honoured position. So Allāh said: 'Be prostrate towards Ādam and they prostrated except Iblīs (Satan).' (Qur'ān, 2:34; 7:11; 17:61; 18:50; 20:116) Self-importance withheld him and vice overcame him. So that he took pride in his own creation with fire and treated contemptuously the creation of clay. So Allāh allowed him time in order to let him fully deserve His wrath, and to complete (man's) test and to fulfil the promise (He had made to Satan). Thus, He said: 'Verily you have been allowed time till the known Day.' (Qur'ān, 15:37-38; 38:81)

ثُمَّ أَسْكَنَ سُبْحَانَهُ آدَمَ دَارًا أَرْغَدَ فِيهَا عَيْشُهُ، وَأَمِنَ فِيهَا مَجْلَدَتَهُ، وَحَذَرَ إِبْلِيسَ وَعَدَاوَتَهُ، فَاغْتَرَهُ عَدُوهُ نَفَاسَةً عَلَيْهِ بِدَارِ الْمَقَامِ، وَمِرَافِقَةَ الْأَبْرَارِ، فَبَاعَ الْيَقِينَ بِشَكِّهِ، وَالْعَزِيمَةَ بِوَهْنِهِ، وَاسْتَبَدَلَ بِالْجَذْلِ وَجَلًا، وَبِالْإغْتِرَارِ نَدَمًا.

Thereafter, Allāh inhabited Ādam (a.s.) in a house where He made his life pleasant and his stay safe, and He cautioned him of Iblīs and his enmity. Then his enemy (Iblīs) envied his abiding in Paradise and his contacts with the virtuous. So he changed his conviction into wavering and determination into weakness. He thus converted his happiness into fear and his prestige into shame.

ثُمَّ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لَهُ فِي تَوْبَتِهِ، وَلَقَاهُ كَلِمَةً رَحْمَتِهِ، وَوَعَدَهُ الْمُرَدَّ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ، فَأَهْبَطَهُ [فِي بَعْضِ النُّسخِ: وَأَهْبَطَهُ] إِلَى دَارِ الْبَلِيَّةِ، وَتَنَاسَلَ الذَّرِيَّةَ.

Then Allāh offered to Ādam (a.s.) the chance to repent, taught him words of His Mercy, promised him return to His Paradise and sent him down to the place of trial and procreation of progeny.

[إِخْتِيَارِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ:] وَإِصْطَفَى سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْ وَلَدِهِ أَنْبِيَاءَ أَخَذَ عَلَيْهِ الْوَحْيَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ، وَعَلَى تَبْلِيغِ الرِّسَالَةِ أَمَانَتَهُمْ، لَمَّا بَدَّلَ أَكْثَرَ خَلْقِهِ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ إِلَيْهِمْ، فَجَهَلُوا حَقَّهُ، وَاتَّخَذُوا الْأَنْدَادَ مَعَهُ، وَاجْتَالَتْهُمُ الشَّيَاطِينُ عَنْ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَاقْتَطَعَتْهُمُ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ.

[Allāh chooses His Prophets:] From his (Ādam's) progeny Allāh chose prophets and took their pledge for his revelation and for carrying His message as their trust. In course of time many people perverted Allāh's trust with them and ignored His position and took compeers along with Him. Satan turned them away from knowing Him and kept them aloof from His worship.

فَبَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولَهُ، وَوَاتَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْبِيَاءَهُ، لِيَسْتَأْذِنَهُمْ مِيثَاقَ فِطْرَتِهِ، وَيَذَكِّرَهُمْ مَنْسِي نِعْمَتِهِ، وَيَحْتَجُّوا عَلَيْهِمْ بِالتَّبْلِيغِ، وَيُشِيرُوا لَهُمْ دِفَائِنِ الْعُقُولِ، وَيُرَوِّعُهُمْ آيَاتِ الْمَقْدَرَةِ: مِنْ سَقْفِ فَوْقَهُمْ مَرْفُوعٍ، وَمِهَادٍ تَحْتَهُمْ مَوْضُوعٍ، وَمَعَايِشِ تَحْيِيهِمْ، وَأَجَالِ تَفْنِيهِمْ، وَأَوْ صَابَ تَهْرَمَهُمْ، وَأَحْدَاثٍ تَتَابَعُ عَلَيْهِمْ.

Then Allāh sent His Messengers and series of His prophets towards them to get

them to fulfil the pledges of His creation, to recall to them His bounties, to exhort them by preaching, to unveil before them the hidden virtues of wisdom and show them the signs of His Omnipotence namely the sky which is raised over them, the earth that is placed beneath them, means of living that sustain them, deaths that make them die, ailments that turn them old and incidents that successively betake them.

وَلَمْ يَخْلُقِ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ خَلْقَهُ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ مُرْسَلٍ، أَوْ كِتَابٍ مُنْزَلٍ، أَوْ حِجَّةٍ لَازِمَةٍ، أَوْ مَحْجَةٍ قَائِمَةٍ، رُسُلًا لَا تَقْصُرُ بِهِمْ قِلَّةُ عَدَدِهِمْ، وَلَا كَثْرَةُ الْمَكْذِبِينَ لَهُمْ: مِنْ سَابِقٍ سَمِيَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، أَوْ غَابِرٍ عَرَفَهُ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ.

Allāh never allowed His creation to remain without a Prophet deputised by Him, or a book sent down from Him or a binding argument or a standing plea. These Messengers were such that they did not feel little because of smallness of their number or of largeness of the number of their falsifiers. Among them was either a predecessor who would name the one to follow or the follower who had been introduced by the predecessor.

[مَبْعَثُ النَّبِيِّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ):] عَلَى ذَلِكَ نَسَلَتِ الْقُرُونُ، وَمَضَتِ الدُّهُورُ، وَسَلَفَتِ الْأَبَاءُ، وَخَلَفَتِ الْأَبْنَاؤُا. إِلَى أَنْ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) لِإِنْجَازِ عِدَّتِهِ وَتَمَامِ [فِي بَعْضِ النُّسخِ: وَإِتْمَامِ] نَبِيِّتِهِ، مَاخُوذًا عَلَى النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُ، مَشْهُورَةً سَمَاتِهِ، كَرِيمًا مِيلَادِهِ. وَأَهْلًا الْأَرْضِ يَوْمَئِذٍ مَلَلٌ مَتَفَرِّقَةٌ، وَأَهْوَاءٌ مُنْتَشِرَةٌ، وَطَرَائِقُ مُتَشَتَّتَةٌ، بَيْنَ مِثْبَهِ لِلَّهِ بِخَلْقِهِ، أَوْ مُلْحَدٍ فِي اسْمِهِ، أَوْ مُشِيرٍ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ، فَهَدَاهُمْ بِهِ مِنَ الضَّلَالَةِ، وَأَنْقَذَهُمْ بِمَكَانِهِ مِنَ الْجَهَالَةِ.

[The Prophethood of Muḥammad (ṣ):] In this way ages passed by and times rolled on, fathers passed away while sons took their places till Allāh deputised Muḥammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) as His Prophet, in fulfilment of His promise and in completion of His Prophethood. His pledge had been taken from the Prophets, his traits of character were well reputed and his birth was honourable. The people of the earth at this time were divided in different parties, their aims were separate and ways were diverse. They either likened Allāh with His creation or twisted His Names or turned to else than Him. Through Muḥammad (s.a.w.w.) Allāh guided them out of wrong and with his efforts took them out of ignorance.

ثُمَّ اخْتَارَ سُبْحَانَهُ لِمُحَمَّدٍ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) لِقَاءَهُ، وَرَضِيَ لَهُ مَا عِنْدَهُ، وَأَكْرَمَهُ عَنِ دَارِ الدُّنْيَا، وَرَغِبَ بِهِ عَنِ مَقَارَنَةِ [فِي بَعْضِ النُّسخِ: مَقَامِ] الْبَلْوَى، فَقَبَضَهُ إِلَيْهِ كَرِيمًا (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ).

Then Allāh chose for Muḥammad, peace be upon him and on his progeny, to meet Him, selected him for His own nearness, regarded him too dignified to remain in this world and decided to remove him from this place of trial. So He drew him towards Himself with honour. May Allāh shower His blessing on him, and his progeny.

وَخَلَّفَ فِيكُمْ مَا خَلَفَتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ فِي أُمَّمِهَا، إِذْ لَمْ يَتْرُكُوهُمْ هَمَلًا، بِغَيْرِ طَرِيقٍ وَاصِحٍّ، وَلَا عِلْمٍ قَائِمٍ.

But the Prophet left among you the same which other Prophets left among their peoples, because Prophets do not leave them untended (in dark) without a clear path and a standing ensign,

[القرآن وأحكامه الشرعية:] كِتَابُ رَبِّكُمْ فِيكُمْ مَبِينًا حَلَالَهُ وَحَرَامَهُ، وَفَرَائِضُهُ وَفَضَائِلُهُ، وَنَاسِخُهُ وَمَنْسُوخُهُ، وَرِخْصُهُ وَعِزَائِمُهُ، وَخَاصُّهُ وَعَامُّهُ، وَعَبْرُهُ وَأَمْثَالُهُ، وَمُرْسَلُهُ وَمَحْدُودُهُ، وَمَحْكَمُهُ وَمُتَشَابِهُهُ، مَفْسُورًا مَجْمَلًا [في بعض النسخ: جملة]، وَمَبِينًا غَوَامِضُهُ.

[The Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah:] Namely the Book of your Creator [2] clarifying its permission and prohibitions, its obligations and discretion, its repealing injunctions and the repealed ones, its permissible matters and compulsory ones, its particulars and the general ones, its lessons and illustrations, its long and the short ones, its clear and obscure ones, detailing its abbreviations and clarifying its obscurities.

بَيْنَ مَا خُوذَ مِيثَاقُ عِلْمِهِ، وَمَوْسَعٍ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ فِي جَهْلِهِ، وَبَيْنَ مَثْبُوتٍ فِي الْكِتَابِ فَرَضُهُ، وَمَعْلُومٍ فِي السُّنَّةِ نَسْخُهُ، وَوَاجِبٍ فِي السُّنَّةِ أَخْذُهُ، وَمُرْخِصٍ فِي الْكِتَابِ تَرْكُهُ، وَبَيْنَ وَاجِبٍ بِوَقْتِهِ، وَزَائِلٍ فِي مُسْتَقْبَلِهِ.

In it there are some verses whose knowledge is obligatory and others whose ignorance by the people is permissible. It also contains what appears to be obligatory according to the Book but its repeal is signified by the Prophet's action (sunnah) or that which appears compulsory according to the Prophet's action but the Book allows not following it. Or there are those which are obligatory in a given time but not so after that time.

وَمَبَايِنَ بَيْنَ مُحَارِمِهِ، مِنْ كَبِيرٍ أَوْ عَدَّ عَلَيْهِ نَبْرَانَهُ، أَوْ صَغِيرٍ أَرَّ صَدْلَهُ غُفْرَانَهُ، وَبَيْنَ مَقْبُولٍ فِي أَدْنَاهُ، وَمَوْسَعٍ [في بعض النسخ: موسع] فِي أَقْصَاهُ.

Its prohibitions also differ. Some are major regarding which there exists the threat of fire (Hell), and others are minor for which there are prospects of forgiveness. There are also those of which a small portion is also acceptable (to Allāh) but they are capable of being expanded.

مِنْهَا: [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: وَمِنْهَا:] [في ذكر الحج:] وَفَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَجَّ بَيْتِهِ الْحَرَامِ، الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ قِبْلَةً لِلْأَنَامِ، يَرِدُونَهُ وَرُودَ الْأَنْعَامِ، وَيَأْلَهُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَلَوْهَ الْحَمَامِ.

[In this very sermon he spoke about Hajj:] Allāh has made obligatory upon you the pilgrimage (Hajj) to His sacred House which is the turning point for the people who go to it as beasts or pigeons go towards spring water.

جَعَلَهُ [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: وَجَعَلَهُ] سُبْحَانَهُ عِلَامَةً لِتَوَاضُعِهِمْ لِعَظَمَتِهِ، وَإِذْعَانِهِمْ لِعِزَّتِهِ، وَإِخْتَارَ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ سَمَاعًا أَجَابُوا إِلَيْهِ دَعْوَتَهُ، وَصَدُّ قُوا كَلِمَتَهُ، وَوَقَفُوا مَوَاقِفَ أَنْبِيَائِهِ، وَتَشَبَّهُوا بِمَلَائِكَتِهِ الْمُطِيفِينَ بِعَرْشِهِ، يَحْرِزُونَ الْأَرْيَاحَ فِي مَتَجَرِّ عِبَادَتِهِ، وَيَتَبَادَرُونَ عِنْدَهُ مَوْعِدَ مَغْفِرَتِهِ.

Allāh the glorified made it a sign of their humility before His Greatness and their acknowledgement of His Dignity. He selected from among His creation those who on listening to His call responded to it and testified His word. They stood in the position of His Prophets and resembled His angels who surround the Divine Throne securing all the benefits of performing His worship and hastening towards His promised forgiveness.

جَعَلَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى لِلْإِسْلَامِ عِلْمًا، وَلِلْعَائِدِينَ حَرَمًا، فَرَضَ حُجَّتَهُ، وَأَوْجِبَ حَقَّهُ [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: فَرَضَ حَقَّهُ، وَأَوْجِبَ حُجَّتَهُ]، وَكَتَبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَفَادَتَهُ، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ ﴿وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حُجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا﴾ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٩٧﴾

Allāh the glorified made it (His sacred House) an emblem for Islam and an object of respect for those who turn to it. He made obligatory its pilgrimage and laid down its claim for which He held you responsible to discharge it. Thus, Allāh, the Glorified, said: “. . . And (purely) for Allāh, is incumbent upon mankind, the pilgrimage to the House, for those who can afford to journey thither. And whoever denieth then verily, Allāh is Self-sufficiently independent of the worlds.” (Qur’ān, 3:97).

Notes:

[1] “The foremost in religion (din) is His knowledge.” The literal meaning of din is obedience, and its popular sense is code, whether literal sense is taken or the popular one, in either case, if the mind is devoid of any conception of Divinity, there would be no question of obedience, nor of following any code; because when there is no aim there is no point in advancing towards it; where there is no object in view there is no sense in making efforts to achieve it. Nevertheless, when the nature and guiding faculty of man bring him in contact with a superior Authority and his taste for obedience and impulse of submission subjugates him before a Deity, he finds himself bound by certain limitations as against abject freedom of activity. These very limitations are din (Religion) whose point of commencement is knowledge of Allāh and acknowledgement of His Being.

After pointing out the essentials of Divine knowledge Amīr al-Mu’minīn has described its important constituents and conditions. He has held those stages of such knowledge which people generally regard as the point of highest approach to

be insufficient. He says that its first stage is that with the natural sense of search for the unknown and the guidance of conscience or on hearing from the followers of religions an image of the Unseen Being known as Allāh is formed in the mind. This image in fact is the forerunner of the obligation to thinking and reflection and to seeking His knowledge. But those who love idleness, or are under pressure of environment, do not undertake this search despite creation of such image and the image fails to get testified. In this case they remain deprived of Divine knowledge, and since their inaccess to the stage of testifying after the formation of image is by volition they deserve to be questioned about it. But one who is moved by the power of this image goes further and considers thinking and reflection necessary.

In this way one reaches the next stage in the attainment of Divine knowledge, namely to search for the Creator through diversification of creation and species of creatures, because every picture is a solid and inflexible guide to the existence of its painter and every effect to the action of its cause. When he casts his glance around himself he does not find a single thing which might have come into existence without the act of a maker so much so that he does not find the sign of a footstep without a walker nor a construction without a builder. How can he comprehend that this blue sky with the sun and the moon in its expanse and the earth with the exuberance of its grass and flowers could have come into existence without the action of a Creator. Therefore, after observing all that exists in the world and the regulated system of the entire creation no one can help concluding that there is a Creator for this world of diversities because existence cannot come out of non-existence, nor can existence sprout forth from nothingness. The Holy Qur'ān has pointed to this reasoning thus: “. . . What! about Allāh is there any doubt, the Originator of the heavens and the earth ? . . .” (14:10).

But this stage would also be insufficient if this testimony in favour of Allāh is tarnished by belief in the divinity of some other deity.

The third stage is that His existence should be acknowledged along with belief in Unity and Oneness. Without this the testimony to Allāh's existence cannot be complete because if more gods are believed in He would not be One whereas it is necessary that He should be One. The reason is that in case of more than one god the question would arise whether one of them created all this creation or all of them together. If one of them created it there should be some differential to distinguish him otherwise he would be accorded preferential position without reason, which is unacceptable to the mind. If all have created it collectively then the position has only two forms; either he cannot perform his functions without the assistance of others or

he is above the need for their assistance. The first case means his incapability and being in need of others while the other case means that they are several regular performers of a single act and the fallacy of both has already been shown. If we assume that all the gods performed the act of creation by dividing among themselves then, in this case all the creation will, not bear the same relationship towards the creator since each creature will bear relationship only to its own creator whereas every creature should have one and the same relationship to all creators. This is because all the creation should have one and the same relationship to all the creators as all the created in their capacity to accept effect and all the creators in their capacity to produce effect should be similar. In short there is no way but to acknowledge Him as One because in believing in numerous creators there remains no possibility of the existence of any other thing, and destruction proves implicit for the earth, the sky and everything in creation. Allāh the glorified has expressed this argument in the following words: “Had there been in (the heavens and the earth [other]) gods except Allāh, they both had been in disorder. . .” (Qur’ān, 21:22).

The fourth stage is that Allāh should be regarded free of all defects and deficiencies, and devoid of body, form, illustration, similarity, position of place or time, motion, stillness, incapability and ignorance because there can be no deficiency or defect in the perfect Being nor can anyone be deemed like Him because all these attributes bring down a being from the high position of the Creator to the low position of the created. That is why along with Unity, Allāh has held purity from deficiency of equal importance:

“Say: He (Allāh) is One (alone). Allāh, the needless. He begetteth not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him.” (Qur’ān, 112:1-4).

“Vision perceiveth Him not, and He perceiveth (all) vision; He is the Subtle, the All-aware.” (Qur’ān, 6:103).

“So coin ye not any similitudes to Allāh; verily Allāh knoweth (every thing) and ye know not.” (Qur’ān, 16:74).

“. . . Nothing whatsoever (is there) like the like of Him; and He (alone) is the All-hearing and the All-seeing.” (Qur’ān, 42:11)

The fifth stage of completing His Knowledge is that attributes should not be put in Him from outside lest there be duality in His Oneness, and deviating from its proper connotation Unity may fall in the labyrinth of one in three and three in one, because

His Being is not a combination of essence and form so that attribute may cling to Him like smell in the flowers or brightness in the stars. Rather, He is the fountain head of all attributes and needs no medium for manifestation of His perfect Attributes. If He is named Omniscient it is because the signs of his knowledge are manifest. If He is called Omnipotent it is because every particle points to His Omnipotence and Activity, and if to Him is attributed the power to listen or to see it is because the cohesion of the entire creation and its administration cannot be done without hearing or seeing but the existence of these attributes in Him cannot be held to be in the same way as in the creation namely that He should be capable to know only after He acquires knowledge or He should be powerful and strong only after energy runs into His limbs because taking attributes as separate from His Being would connote duality and where there is duality unity disappears. That is how Amīr al-Mu'minīn has rejected the idea of attributes being addition to His Being, presented Unity in its true significance, and did not allow Unity to be tainted with stains of multiplicity. This does not mean that adjectives cannot at all be attributed to Him, as this would be giving support to those who are groping in the dark abyss of negativism, although every nook and corner in the entire existence is brimming with His attributes and every particle of creation stands witness that He has knowledge, He is powerful, He hears, He sees. He nurtures under His care and allows growth under His mercy. The intention is that for Him nothing can be suggested to serve as an adjunct to Him, because His self includes attributes and His attributes connote His Self.

Let us learn this very theme in the words of al-Imām Abu 'Abd Allāh Ja'far ibn Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣādiq (p.b.u.h.) comparing it with the belief in Unity adopted by other religions and then appreciate who is the exponent of the true concept of Unity. The Imām says:

“Our Allāh the Glorified, the Magnificent has ever had knowledge as His Self even though there was nothing to know, sight as His Self even though there was nothing to know, sight as His Self even though there was nothing to behold, hearing as His Self even though there was nothing to hear, and Potence as His Self even though there was nothing to be under His Potence. When He created the things and the object of knowledge came into existence His knowledge became related to the known, hearing related to the heard, sight related to the seen, and potence related to its object.” (ash-Shaykh as-Ṣadūq, at-Tawḥīd, p. 139)

This is the belief over which the Imāms of the Prophet's family are unanimous, but the majority group has adopted a different course by creating the idea of

differentiation between His Self and Attributes. ash-Shahrastānī says on page 42 of his book Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Nihal:

According to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī, Allāh knows through (the attribute of) knowledge, is Powerful through activity, speaks through speech, hears through hearing and sees through sight.

If we regard attributes distinct from Self in this manner there would be two alternatives; either the attributes must have existed in Him from ever or they must have occurred later. In the first case we have to recognise as many eternal objects as the attributes which all will share with Him in being eternal, but “Allāh is above what the people deem Him to have equals.” (Qur’ān, 27:63). In the second case in addition to subjecting Him to the alternations it would also mean that before the acquiring of the attributes He was neither scient, nor powerful, nor hearer nor beholder and this runs counter to the basic tenet of Islam.

“... Allāh hath decreed trade lawful and hath forbidden interest. . .” (Qur’ān, 2:275)

“And when you have finished the prayer remember Allāh standing, and sitting, and reacting, and when ye are secure (from danger) establish prayer ...” (Qur’ān, 4:103)

“O ye men! eat of what is in the earth lawful and good and follow not the foot-steps of Satan; for verily he is an open enemy unto you.” (Qur’ān, 2:168)

“(And) say thou: I am only a man like you, it is revealed unto me that your god is but one God, therefore whosoever desireth to meet his Lord, let him do good deeds, and associate not any one in the worship of his Lord.” (Qur’ān, 18:110)

“What! enjoin ye upon the people righteousness and ye forget your own selves? Yet ye read the scripture? What: do ye not understand?” (Qur’ān, 2:44).

[2] About the Qur’ān, Amīr al-Mu’minīn (a.s.) says that

It contains description of the permitted and the forbidden acts such as “Allāh has allowed sale and purchase but prohibited usury.” (Qur’ān, 2:275)

It clarifies obligatory and optional acts such as “when you have finished the prayer (of fear) remember Allāh rising, sitting or lying and when you feel safe (from the

enemy) then say the prayers (as usual).” (Qur’ān, 4:103) Here prayer is obligatory while other forms of remembering (Allāh) are optional.

It has repealing and repealed verses such as about the period of seclusion after husband’s death “four months and ten days” (Qur’ān, 2:234) or the repealed one such as “till one year without going out” (Qur’ān, 2:240) which shows that this period of seclusion should be one year.

In particular places it permits the forbidden such as “whoever is compelled without being wilfully wrongful or transgressor, commits no sins.” (Qur’ān, 2:173)

It has positive injunctions such as “One should not add anyone with Allāh in worship.” (Qur’ān, 18:110)

It has particular and general injunctions.

Particular is the one where the word shows generality but the sense is limited such as “I have made you superior over worlds, O Banī Isrā’īl.” (Qur’ān, 2:122) Here the sense of “Worlds,” is confined to that particular time, although the word is general in its literal meaning.

The general injunction is one which is extensive in meaning such as “Allāh has knowledge of everything.” (Qur’ān, 24:35)

It has lessons and illustrations.

Lessons such as “So seized him Allāh, with the chastisement in the hereafter, and the life before (it). Verily in this there is a lesson unto him who feareth (Allāh).” (Qur’ān, 79:25-26)

“A kind word and pardon is better than charity that is followed by injury, and verily Allāh is Self-sufficient, the Most forbearing.” (Qur’ān, 2:263)

“And remember when We made a covenant with you and raised the ‘tur’ (the Mountain) above you (saying): Hold ye fast that which We have bestowed upon you with the strength (of determination) and remember that which is therein so that you may guard (yourself) against evil.” (Qur’ān, 2:63)

“So we made it a lesson for (those of) their own times and for those (of their

posterity) who came after them and an exhortation unto those who guard (themselves) against evil.” (Qur’ān, 2:66)

“He it is Who fashioneth you in the wombs (of your mothers) as He liketh; There is no god but He, the All-mighty, the All-wise.” (Qur’ān, 3:6)

“Obedience and a fair word; but when the affair is determined then if they be true to Allāh, it would certainly be better for them.” (Qur’ān, 47:21)

“O those who believe! It is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will; and do not straiten them in order that ye may take a part of what ye have given, unless they are guilty of manifest lewdness; but deal kindly with them, and if ye hate them, it may be that ye hate a thing while Allāh hath placed in it abundant good.” (Qur’ān, 4:19)

“Say thou (unto the people of the Book): Dispute ye with us about Allāh; whereas He is our Lord and your Lord, and for us are our deeds and for you are your deeds; to Him (alone) we are (exclusively) loyal?” (Qur’ān, 2:139)

And illustration as “The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh is like a grain which grows seven ears each one of which bears hundred grains.” (Qur’ān, 2:261)

It has unspecific and specific verses.

Unspecific is one which has no limitation on specification such as “Recall when Moses told his people ‘Allāh commands you to sacrifice a cow’.” (Qur’ān, 2:67)

Specific is one where denotation is limited such as Allāh says that “the cow should be such that it has neither been used for ploughing nor for irrigation fields.” (Qur’ān, 2:71)

There is clear and obscure in it.

Clear is that which has no intricacy such as “Verily Allāh has sway over everything.” (Qur’ān, 2:109)

While obscure is that whose meaning has complication such as “the Merciful (Allāh) occupies the throne,” (Qur’ān, 20:5) whose apparent meaning gives the

impression as if Allāh is bodily sitting on the Throne although the intention is to press His authority and control.

In it there are brief injunctions such as “establish prayer.” (Qur’ān, 2:83)

And those of deep meanings such as the verses about which says: “That the sense is not known except to Allāh and those immersed in knowledge.” (Qur’ān, 3:7)

Then Amīr al-Mu’minīn dilates upon this theme in a different style, he says that there are some things in it which are necessary to know, such as “So know that there is no god but Allāh” (Qur’ān, 47:19) and there are others which are not necessary to know such as “Alif-Lām-Mīm” (Qur’ān, 2:1) etc.

It has also injunctions which have been repealed by the Prophet’s action such as “As for your women who commit adultery get four male witnesses and if four witnesses do appear shut such women in the house till death ends their life.” (Qur’ān, 4:15) This punishment was current in early Islam but was later replaced by stoning in the case of married women.

In it there are some injunctions which repealed the Prophet’s action such as “Turn your face towards Masjid al-Ḥarām” (Qur’ān, 2:144) by which the injunction for facing Bayt al-Maqdis was repealed.

It also contains injunctions which are obligatory only at a particular time after which their obligation ends, such as “when the call for prayer is made on Friday then hasten towards remembrance of Allāh.” (Qur’ān, 62:9)

It has also indicated grades of prohibitions as the division of sins into light and serious ones

Light such as “Tell the believers to lower their eyes.” (Qur’ān, 24:30)

And serious ones such as “whoever kills a Believer wilfully his award is to remain in Hell forever.” (Qur’ān, 4:93)

It also contains injunctions where a little performance is enough but there is scope for further performance such as “Read the Qur’ān as much as you easily can.” (Qur’ān, 73:20)

“Verily your Lord, certainly is He the All-mighty, the All-merciful.” (Qur’ān, 26:9)

“Say thou (O Our Prophet Muḥammad) unto the believer men that they cast down their gaze and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; verily Allāh is All-aware of what (all) ye do.” (Qur’ān, 24:30)

“Not equal are those of the believers who sit (holding back) other than those hurt, and those who strive in the way of Allāh with their wealth and their selves (lives). Allāh hath raised the strivers with their wealth and selves (lives), in rank above those sitting (holding back); Unto all (in faith) Allāh hath promised good; but those who strive, He hath distinguished above those who sit (holding [by]) a great recompense.” (Qur’ān, 4:95)

“Verily, thy Lord knowest that thou standest up (in the Night Prayer) night two-third of the night, and (sometimes) half of it, and (sometimes) a third of it, and a group of those with thee; and Allāh measureth (well) the night and the day; Knoweth He that never can ye take (correct) account of it, so turneth He unto you (mercifully) so recite ye whatever be easy (in the prayers) to be read of the Qur’ān; Knoweth He that there may be among you sick, and others travelling in the earth seeking of the grace of Allāh, and others fighting in the way of Allāh, so recite ye as much as it can easily be done of it, and establish ye the (regular) prayers, and pay ye the (prescribed) poor-rate, and offer ye unto Allāh a goodly loan; and whatsoever of good ye send on before hand for yourselves, ye will (surely) find it with Allāh, that is the best and the greatest recompense; and seek ye the forgiveness of Allāh; Verily, Allāh is Oft-forgiving, the Most Merciful.” (Qur’ān, 73:20)