

# Theology and Worship in Nahjul balagha - Session One

## Quote for Reflection

Ma'rifah (gnosis) is a kind of manifestation of Him upon the intellects which is different from conception or cognition by the mind.  
(Glimpses of the Nahjul Balagha, by Ayt Mutahhari)

# Agenda

- Verses from the Quran
- Introduction to Nahjul Balagha
- Understanding some terms
- The Divine Essence
- Examples from Nahjul Balagha

## From the Quran

أَللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ  
لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ قُلْ

Allah—there is no god except Him—is the Living One, the All-sustainer. Neither drowsiness befalls Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth.

(Sura Baqarah, no.2, verse 255)

# Understanding some terms

- Metaphysics – Beyond physics. Branch of Philosophy studying being, existence, reality.
- Empirical reasoning – Based on evidence through observation and experiment. The scientific method.
- Deductive reasoning – Logical reasoning from one or more premises to a conclusion.

## Belief in God – Empirical Reasoning

Premise 1: There is design in Nature

Premise 2: Design cannot come about without the agency of an intelligent and knowledgeable being.

Conclusion: Nature must have an intelligent and knowledgeable Designer

Belief in God – Deductive reasoning

## The Cosmological Argument

Premise 1 - Whatever exists has a cause.

Premise 2 - The universe began to exist

Conclusion - The universe has a cause that is self-existent

# The Divine Essence

- Infinite, Absolute, and self-sufficing
- Negation of every kind of multiplicity and divisibility
- Refutation of separability of Divine Attributes from Divine Essence

## Examples from Nahjul Balagha

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. (Khutba #1)



Praise be to Allah Who is not enriched by the refusal to give away and stinginess, and Who is not impoverished by munificence and generosity, although everyone who gives away loses (to that extent) except He, and everyone who withholds is blamed for his niggardliness but He.

Time does not change over Him, so as to admit of any change of condition about Him. He is not in any place so as to allow Him movement (from one place to another). (Khutba #91)

Praise be to Allah Who exists from before the coming into existence of the seat, the throne, the sky, the earth, the jinn or human being. He cannot be perceived by imagination nor measured by understanding. He who begs from Him does not divert Him (from others), nor does giving away cause Him diminution. He does not see by means of an eye, nor can He be confined to a place. He cannot be said to have companions. He does not create with (the help of) limbs. He cannot be perceived by senses. He cannot be compared with people. (Khutba #182)



# Homework

Read Khutba #186 from Nahjul Balagha

## Further Reading

<http://www.islamicinsights.com/religion/islam-and-metaphysics.html>

<https://www.al-islam.org/god-and-his-attributes-sayyid-mujtaba-musawi-lari/lesson-3-god-and-empirical-logic>