

# Theology and Worship in Nahjul balagha - Session Three

## Quote for Reflection

The dividing line between monotheism and polytheism is the relationship between Allah on the one hand and man and the world on the other. This relationship is that of "from Him" and "to Him"

Ayatullah Murtadha Mutahhari  
in 'Man and Universe'

# Agenda

- Verses from the Quran
- Understanding Tawhid
- Deducing Tawhid
- Examples from Nahjul Balagha

## From the Quran

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۖ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ  
حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

His throne extends over the heavens and the earth,  
and the preservation of them both does not tire  
Him, and He is the Most High, the Great.  
(Sura Baqarah, no.2, verse 255)

# Tawhid – The Fundamental concept

*Tawḥīd* or the Oneness of God is one of the most important dimensions of the propagation and teaching of the Prophets of God. Every Prophet preached the same message;

إِعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ

*Worship Allah! You have no other god besides Him*

*Sura A'raaf, 7:59*



# Understanding Tawhid

- Tawhid al Dhaati – God has a unique Essence and nothing is similar to Him
- Tawhid al Sifaati – God's attributes are not separate from His Essence
- Tawhid al Af'ali – He is not in need of anyone while all are in need of Him
- Tawhid al 'Ibadi – Only God is worthy of worship

# Shirk – the opposite of Tawhid

Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with him; but he forgives anything else, to whom he pleases; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed

Sura Nisaa, 4:48

# Unity of Allah - Ontological

- Numerical – Possibility of Recurrence. Can be one or more.
- Ontological – Recurrence is impossible. Only One without a second, or more.

# Deducing God's Unity

- 1) Necessary Existence – If there is more than one God, each would be limited and dependent.
- 2) Two gods would mean two different controllers. ‘If there were in the heavens and the earth other gods besides Allah, both would have been in disorder’ (Sura Anbiya, 21:22)



# Examples from Nahjul Balagha

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. Thus, whoever attaches attributes to Allah recognizes His like, and whoever recognizes His like regards Him as two, and whoever regards Him as two recognizes parts for Him, and whoever recognizes parts for Him has mistaken Him. (Khutba #1)

They are wrong who liken You to their idols, and dress You with the apparel of the creatures by their imagination, attribute to You parts of body by their own thinking and consider You after the creatures of various types, through the working of their intelligence. I stand witness that whoever equated You with anything out of Your creation took a match for You, and whoever takes a match for You is an unbeliever, according to what is stated in Your unambiguous verses and indicated by the evidence of Your clear arguments. (Khutba #91)

If you tread on the paths of your imagination and reach its extremity it will not lead you anywhere except that the Originator of the ant is the same as He who is the Originator of the date-palm, because everything has (the same) delicacy and detail, and every living being has little difference. In His creation, the big, the delicate, the heavy, the light, the strong, the weak are all equal. (Khutba #185)



Know O my child, if there had been a partner with your Lord, his messengers too should have come to you and you would have seen signs of his authority and power and have known his deeds and qualities. But He is only One God as He has described Himself. No one can dispute with Him in His authority. He is from ever and will be for ever. He is before all things without any beginning. He will remain after all things without any end. He is far too great to have His divinity proved by the encompassing heart or eye. (Letter no.31)