

Islamic Ideology - Names of Allâh 1996 : Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer)

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creations, and Peace and blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad, the faithful and the honest.

Oh, Allah, we know nothing but what You teach us. You are the All-Knowing, the Wise. Oh Allah, teach us what is good for us, and benefit us from what You taught us, and increase our knowledge. Show us the righteous things as righteous and help us to do them, and show us the bad things as bad and help us to keep away from them.

O Allah our Lord, lead us out from the depths of darkness and illusion, unto the lights of erudition and knowledge, and from the muddy shallows of lusts unto the heavens of Your Vicinity.

Before starting with a new Divine Name of Allah's, namely "Al-Qahhar" (the Irresistible Subduer), it is necessary to stop at an unchangeable fact about man, explicitly that he has been granted by Allah, Most Gracious, a cognitive power substantiated by his senses, mind, and heart. The senses feel, the mind thinks and the heart feels. The five senses are something common among mankind and other living creatures. For, example, there are animals that see, hear, and perceive outer environment by some senses that Allah, All-Mighty, has bestowed upon them. But man, alone, has been granted an intellect, which is called "mind" by some people, and to which Allah, All-Mighty, refers:

“And follow not (i.e. do not say, do or witness) that of which you have no knowledge. Verily, man is held responsible for his hearing, sight and heart.”

[XVI; 36]

In this Quranic Verse the word "heart" means "the mind", i.e. man is held responsible for his sight, hearing and thoughts. In other words, Allah, Most Gracious, has granted man a heart (i.e. a mind) whereby he conceives things. To this effect, Allah, Glory to Him, says

“Have they not traveled through the land with hearts whereby they understand, ears whereby they hear?! Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but rather, it is the hearts, which are in the breasts, that grow blind.”

[XXII; 46]

Sense Perception is to perceive light with your own eyes, hear sound with your ears, smell with your nose or feel heat with your skin. This is sense perception.

But a young child may sometimes put his hand on a snake that feels smooth and looks nice although it is very dangerous. If he were older and knew what a snake is, he would have another different attitude towards it. In other words, a young child may quite often see a snake and touch it with his hand, but he does not know its reality.

Therefore, there is a great difference between sense perception and mental perception. Mental conception takes place by way of the mind. You may read an article about dangers of smoking but you still smoke. In other words mental conception is not enough to make you abstain from doing things. But in some cases mental conception reaches a certain degree that makes the mind understand the reality of something and drives us to keep away from it.

The accurate difference between understanding and mental conception is that if there is something detrimental and, therefore, you keep away from it, this means that you understand its reality. You may conceive something but do not have a certain definite attitude towards it. But if you understand its reality, you must necessarily have a certain attitude towards it. In other words, there is always a practical attitude with understanding and mental conception with thinking; and mental conception makes knowledge.

Sometimes man is driven by his desires and not by his knowledge. In other words, most people know what is lawful and what is unlawful, for, as Allah's Messenger, (PBUH), says

“Lawful things are evident and so are unlawful things.”

They know that by both their minds and pure original human nature. They also know that by the admonition they receive through religious preaching. But why do they still do unlawful things?! Simply because they do not understand their danger.

The senses feel and perceive, the mind conceives and the heart understands. The important thing is the heart. When you take a definite practical attitude towards something, this means that you have understood its reality. To this effect, Allah, Most Gracious, says

“And as to those who believed but did not emigrate, you owe no duty of protection to them until they emigrate; but if they seek your help in religion, it is your duty to help them, except against a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance; and Allah sees well all that which you do.”

[VIII; 72]

He, All-Mighty, also says

“But if they answer you not, then know that they only follow their own desires; and who is more astray than one who follows one's own desires without guidance from Allah?! Verily, Allah guides not the people who are transgressors.”

[XXVIII; 50]

Both of the above Verses make clear that true believers understood certain obligations and had definite attitudes towards them.

A person is not described as understanding unless his mental conceptions are translated into actions, attitudes, and behavior. And the thing that saves man, on the Day of Judgment, is not his knowledge but rather his behavior, attitudes, commitment, straightforwardness, obedience, devotion and adherence to Allah's Commands.

Once again, we reiterate that we perceive by our senses, conceive by our minds, and understand by our hearts. The senses, the mind and the heart constitute cognitive power in man. And if we neglect the cognitive aspect in man, he becomes a mere brute animal. In other words, without knowledge man is a mere animal, for knowledge enhances intellectual power and makes the mind more mature. Also, knowledge is the means whereby we achieve paramount and noble ends.

The second fact that I hope you understand is that in Islam knowledge is not an end in itself but rather a

means to an end. To this effect, Allah's Messenger, (PBUH), says,

“Learn whatever you desire (to learn), for you shall never be rewarded unless you work by that which you learn.” He, (PBUH), also says, “Knowledge is disastrous to those who acquire it unless they work by it.”

In the light of the above two introductory parts, it can be said that man has a cognitive power manifested by the senses, the mind and the heart; and in Islam knowledge is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end, namely application of Allah's Religion of Islamic Monotheism.

The third fact is that in man there is an emotional aspect, an intellectual aspect, and a material physical aspect. The material physical aspect is common among both human beings and animals: Human beings eat, and so do animals; and human beings get tired and sleep, and so do animals. Moreover, a lot of animals excel human beings in some of these physical qualities.

We have already mentioned that Allah's Beautiful Divine Names do not differ in regards to their levels. A doctor may sometimes have certain knowledge according to which he treats a patient. But later on, he may acquire more knowledge and experience that make his treatment more effective. In other words, the more knowledge a doctor acquires, the better treatment he gives to his patients. Such change and improvement can be applied to human beings, but with Allah's Beautiful Divine Names, things are completely different. There is no difference between Allah's Beautiful Divine Names. Then, how does an ordinary neutral (non-emphatic) Name such as “Al-Qahir” occur in the Quranic Verse

“And He (Allah) is Al-Qahir (the Irresistible Sunder) over His slaves, and He sends guardians (Angels) over you, until when death approaches one of you, Our Messengers (Angel of death and his assistants) take his soul, and they never neglect their duty.”

[VI; 61]

while an emphatic form of the same Name, “Al-Qahhar”, occur in another Verse

“The Day when they will (all) come out, nothing of them will be hidden from Allah. Whose is the Kingdom today?! It belongs to Allah, Alone, the One, Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer).”

[XL; 16]

How can we reconcile the non-emphatic Name “Al-Qahir” with the emphatic one “Al-Qahhar”, taking into consideration that Allah's Beautiful Divine Names do not differ as regards their significance?! This seems problematic.

Previously, while we were explaining Allah's Name “Al-Ghaffar”, I said that if someone eats food, he is called in Arabic “Akil” (i.e. someone eating food), but he is not called “Akoul” (i.e. someone who eats too much or too often) unless he eats a lot or too often. Emphasis is placed either on number or quality.

When Allah's Beautiful Divine Names come in the emphatic form, they mean repetition and not difference in quality, because the level of Allah's Names is always the same. In this context, the well-known scholar and Imam, Al-Ghazali, said: “It is not possible to have better than that which has been” He means to say, “I can not

have anything better than that which He (Allah) has given me.”

Allah, All-Mighty, is Wise in creating both an ant and a galaxy. He is Wise to the same degree in creating both the tiniest and the most gigantic creatures. He is All-Knowing. His Wisdom and Knowledge are both Infinite and Absolute. If His Names change, this is because of the change of the creatures not because of the change of the Creator. If a Divine Name occurs in the emphatic form, this is only for emphasizing repetition and not change of quality, for Allah's Qualities are Absolute and Unchangeable.

Sometimes a person fights an enemy and defeats him, but he might not be able to defeat a second or third enemy. But when we say that our Lord, Allah, is the One, the Irresistible Subduer, this means that all creatures are constantly subdued by His Infinite Divine Power and dominated thereby.

“Whose is the Kingdom today?! It belongs to Allah, Alone, the One, Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer).” “And He (Allah) is Al-Qahir (the Irresistible Subduer) over His slaves”

And Allah, All-Mighty, also says

“And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of them know not.”

[XI; 21]

Yes, indeed! Allah has full power over His Affairs. To this purport does go the story of the holy Prophet Joseph, (PBUH).

Another story in which Allah's Beautiful Divine Name “Al-Qahhar” is clearly manifested is that of the holy Prophet Moses, (PBUH), with Pharaoh, who wanted to slaughter all the male infants of the children of Israel in order to prevent fulfillment of a dream that he saw, namely that a male infant from among the children of Israel would destroy his kingdom. Allah, the Irresistible Subduer, defeated him by making him bring up, in his own palace, the same infant who would destroy his kingdom. In fact, all of Allah's Divine Acts stem from, and manifest, all of His Beautiful Divine Names and Attributes. This is why the Quranic Verses that speak about Allah's Divine Self include the personal pronoun “Ana” (“I” in English), while those that speak about His Divine Acts include the personal pronoun “Nahnou” (“we” in English):

“Verily, it is We Who give life and cause to die; and to Us is the Final Return.”

[L; 43]

“Verily, it is We Who have sent down the Quran to you by stages.”

[LXXVI;23]

and

“Verily, I am Allah! There is no god but Me. So, worship Me and perform prayer for My remembrance.”

[XX; 14]

As clearly seen in the above Verses, when the first person singular pronoun “Ana” (I) is used, it refers to Allah's Divine Self; but when the first person plural pronoun “Nahnou” (We) is used, it refers to the fact that all of Allah's Beautiful Names are included in His Divine Acts. And when we say that Allah is Al-Hearing, All-Seeing, Kind, All-Powerful, All-Mighty, All-Wise, we do this only for academic study and analysis, for all of Allah's Divine Names and Attributes are included in one another. And sometimes, Allah, All-Mighty, gathers together all of His Divine Names in Collective Names, as in His Words

“Blessed is the Name of your Lord (Allah), the Owner of Majesty and Honor.”

[LV; 78]

Majesty is a quality that gives the sense of Divine Greatness; bestowing honor is another quality that gives the sense of Generosity and Bounty. In your daily life, you may deal with someone whom you glorify but do not love, and you may deal with someone whom you love but do not glorify. In your relationship with Allah, All-Mighty, the ideal thing is to combine both glorification and love towards Him. This is because our Lord, Glory to Him, is Most Merciful, Kind, Gentle, Friendly, Compassionate, Generous, All-Pardoning and All-Forgiving as much as He is Majestic, Great, Sublime, Supreme, Powerful, Mighty, Exalted, Irresistible, Omnipotent, and Self-Existent. In other words, some of Allah's Divine Names and Attributes have to do with His Divine Majesty and some have to do with His Divine Honor, which are both found in a couple of Verses:

“And the Face of your Lord (Allah) full of Majesty and Honor will remain forever.”

[LV; 27]

and

“Blessed is the Name of your Lord (Allah), full of Majesty and Honor.”

[ibid; 78]

In both Names, Majesty and Honor, all of Allah's Beautiful Divine Names and Attributes are included and manifested.

Sometimes, in the question of straightforwardness, the Lord, Glory to Him, mentions only two of His Divine Names. For example, Allah, Most Gracious, says

“It is Allah Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof. His Command descends between them (the heavens and the earth), so that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah encompasses all things in (His) Knowledge.”

[LXV; 12]

In the above Verse Allah, Praised and Exalted, mentions only two of His Divine Names and Attributes, explicitly, His Divine Knowledge and Power. This is because you will never obey His Divine Commands unless you firmly believe that both His Divine Knowledge and Power encompass you. In such an issue as straightforwardness you need to believe in Allah's two Attributes: Knowledge and Power. In order to be straightforward and magnify the Lord, you also have to believe that He is full of Majesty and Honor.

As mentioned above, Allah's Beautiful Divine Name “Al-Qahhar” (the Irresistible Subduer) comes in a non-emphatic form such as “Al-Qahir”, as in the Quranic Verse

“And He (Allah) is Al-Qahir (the Irresistible Subduer) over His slaves, and He sends guardians (Angels) over you, until when death approaches one of you, Our Messengers (Angel of death and his assistants) take his soul, and they never neglect their duty.”

[VI; 61]

and in an emphatic form, “Al-Qahhar”, as in another Verse

“The Day when they will (all) come out, nothing of them will be hidden from Allah. Whose is the Kingdom today?! It belongs to Allah, Alone, he One, Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer).”

[XL; 16]

There is a very delicate Quranic Verse in which Allah, All-Mighty, says,

“The Path of Allah, to Whom does belong all that which is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. Verily, all matters, in the end, go to Allah (for decision).”

It might be surprising!! These are Allah's Divine Words!! But why does Allah say

“Verily, all matters, in the end, go to Allah (for decision).”

Where are all matters now?! Aren't they with Allah?! In whose hand are they now?! Allah's Words in the above Verse may seemingly mean that all matters, before and now, in the past and present are not in Allah's Hand, but they will be in His Hand in the end. In fact, most people are heedless of the truth, for they wrongly think that matters are in the hands of other humans, that such and such decision is in the hand of such and such person. They, quite often, say, “If so and so desires to grant you honor, he can raise you up to the utmost; but if he gets angry with you, he makes you lowest of the low.” This is mere polytheism! This is mere illusion! On the Day of Resurrection, all mankind will definitely get to know that the Kingdom and Dominion do belong, everywhere and at all times, to Allah, the One, the Omnipotent, the Irresistible Subduer. But now, in the present world, only true believers and knowledgeable holy scholars know such an indisputable truth, which all mankind will get to know in the Hereafter.

Allah, All-Mighty, says

“And He (Allah) is Al-Qahir (the Irresistible Subduer) over His slaves, and He is The All-Wise, the All-Aware.”

[VI; 18]

and

“The Day when they will (all) come out, nothing of them will be hidden from Allah. Whose is the Kingdom today?! It belongs to Allah, Alone, He One, Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer).”

[XL; 16]

This Name also comes implicitly, as in Allah's Words

“And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of mankind know not.”

This means that His decision is the Dominant Irresistible one. To this effect, A Divine Hadith goes

“O My slave! I have created, for you, the heavens and the earth; and I have not been tired out by their creation. Can I be tired out by a piece of bread that I bestow upon you every now and then?! O My slave! I have (ordained) for you an obligation; and you have provision (to receive) from Me. Even if you disobey Me concerning My Obligation (that I have ordained for you), I do not deprive you of your provision (that you receive from Me). By My Might and Majesty! If you are not contented with that which I allot for you, I shall set on you this present world, in which you shall be made to run as wild animals run in the wilderness. Then, you shall get from it (the present world) nothing except that which I have already decreed for you; and I shall not care; and you shall (then) be disgraced by Me...”

In another Divine Hadith, Allah, All-Mighty, says

“O My slave! You will, and I will. If you surrender to Me in what I will, I suffice you in what you will. But if you do not surrender to Me in what I will, I tire you out in what you will, and then, nothing shall be except what I will.”

The above Divine Hadith makes clear Allah's Beautiful Divine Name “Al-Qahhar” (the Irresistible Subduer): Allah's Decision is Irresistible. Things may seem to turn and turn, but Allah's Decision dominates despite all things.

Some people who read some books that speak about the evil plots of the Jews say, "Such a plan is Jewish." But Jews are mere human beings. They plan and plot, for they are the most evil treacherous of all mankind. Nevertheless, what they do is not theirs; it is Allah's. If you think that they are the doers and that what goes on in the world is out of their plans and plots, you are grievously mistaken. You should believe that Allah's Divine Plan contains their human plan, for Allah, All-Mighty, Most Gracious, may exploit their evil plots for admonishing and deterring some of His slaves. To this effect, Allah, the Irresistible Subduer, says

"And thus do We set the wrong-doers on one another because of that of which they have earned."

[VI; 129]

If you say, "So and so does what he does.", you unknowingly fall easy prey to polytheism. The right thing to say is:

"Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of mankind know not."

You should the Divine Hadith:

"You will, and I will. If you surrender to Me in what I will, I suffice you in what you will. But if you do not surrender to Me in what I will, I tire you out in what you will, and then, nothing shall be except what I will."

Linguistically speaking, "Al-Qahr" means subduing, oppressing or overcoming, as in Allah's Divine Command:

"Therefore, do not oppress an orphan!"

[XCIII; 9]

By the way, there are always Divine Names and Attributes, which, if given to a human being, they bear a negative connotation and denote dispraise, but if they are attributed to Allah, All-Mighty, they denote Divine Perfection.

Let's have the following parable: Someone is in need of financial help and, therefore, he goes to two people, one is very rich and has a lot of money, while the other is poor and has nothing. If the poor person says, "I shall give you the money.", this would be imperfect of him and would mean that he is a mere liar. If, however, he says, "I'm sorry! I am poor. I have nothing to give you.", this would be truthful and perfect on his part. In other words, perfection for the poor person is to be truthful and not to claim what he cannot do or does not own. As for the rich person, if he says, "I am poor! I have nothing to give you!", while he is rich and can help the man, it would be imperfect of him. Therefore, "Al-Mutakabbir" (the Sublime, the Supreme) is one of Allah's Beautiful Divine Names and Attributes; and it denotes praise and glorification of Allah, All-Mighty: if anyone takes refuge with Him, He will certainly grant him all that he asks for. The same word "Mutakabbir" denotes imperfection and dispraise to the poor person in the above-mentioned parable, who did not have anything to give to the man, or the rich person, who, due to his being niggardly, did not give the man any money. In this context, Allah, "Al-Mutakabbir" (the Sublime, the Supreme), says

"And He (Allah) found you poor, and so He enriched you. Therefore, do not oppress an orphan, nor repulse a beggar. And proclaim the Grace of your Lord."

[XCIII; 8-11]

Allah's Name "Al-Qahhar" is the emphatic word for His Name "Al-Qahir"; and it has a quantitative rather than qualitative emphasis, since qualitative emphasis does not befit Allah's Divine Perfection.

It may be known to you, dear reader, that Allah's Divine Names are of three types: Those that describe Allah's Divine Self, those that describe His Divine Attributes, and those that describe His Divine Acts. In this

context, scholars said that Allah is “Al-Qahir” in the sense that He is Able to prevent anyone else from doing anything against His Divine Will and Desire, i.e. His Divine Will is Irresistible. That is why it has been rightly said, “You will and I will, but Allah, Alone, does what He wills.”, and “Whatever Allah wills is, and whatever Allah wills not is not.” Moreover, Allah’s Name “Al-Qahhar” is strongly connected with Islamic Monotheism; and mankind can never learn anything better than Monotheism.

If we say, “Allah’s Name “Al-Qahhar” denotes Divine Ability in a certain form.”, it is one of the Names that have to do with Allah’s Divine Self. But if we say that it is a Divine Act that prevents others from doing what they desire, then, it is one of the Names that have to do with Allah’s Divine Acts.

Some scholars say that Allah’s Name “Al-Qahhar” (the Irresistible Subduer) means that He, All-Mighty, subdues non-existence, which is anything except Allah, All-Mighty. In other words, All things, except Allah, were non-existing, and it is Allah Who brought them all into existence. Furthermore, the existence of all things does not continue without Allah’s Divine Will and Power. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says

“Verily! Allah grasps the heavens and the earth lest they should move away from their places; and if they were to move away from their places, there is none that could grasp them after Him. Truly, He is Ever Most Forbearing, Oft-and-All-Forgiving.”

[XXXV; 41]

In the above Verse the heavens and the earth refer to the whole universe, with its planets, stars and galaxies, which are all in constant motion, without which it would be one single mass of matter. This is because the power of gravitational pull that exists between all of the heavenly objects causes them to attract one another in positive proportion with their masses. By His Infinite Divine Wisdom Allah, All-Mighty, has put such gravitational pull, which is invisible to the human eye, between all the heavenly objects in order to keep them moving; otherwise the whole universe would become an immense mass of matter. This is because the bigger heavenly object would attract the smaller one, and so on and so forth. Centrifugal force, which is the outcome of motion and is equal to the power of gravitational pull, keeps all of the heavenly objects in constant motion and prevents them from becoming one solid block of matter.

The earth has been moving round the sun for millions of years; nevertheless, it has never been attracted to it. Once again, we repeat Allah’s Words mentioned above,

“Verily! Allah grasps the heavens and the earth lest they should move away from their places; and if they were to move away from their places, there is none that could grasp them after Him. Truly, He is Ever Most Forbearing, Oft-and-All-Forgiving.”

[XXXV; 41]

The words

“lest they should move away from their places”

mean that the One Who compelled the heavenly objects and kept them in orbit is Allah, All-Mighty. Thus, Allah, All-Mighty, is the One Who subdued non-existence and brought it into existence. All things that He created had been originally non-existing. Therefore, the origin of all things, except Allah, is non-existence and shall perish in the end. Also, all things that are preceded by non-existence and shall be made to perish are incidental and not self-existent, but Allah, Glory to Him, is Self-Existent. He has neither a beginning nor an end. He is the First with no beginning and the Last with no end.

The Lord, Allah, All-Mighty, is Al-Qahhar (the Subduer) of non-existence in the sense that by His Irresistible Divine Power and Will He, Glory to Him, brought all things into existence after they had been non-existing. They are made to maintain their existence only by His Divine Sustenance and Protection. At any moment, Allah is Able to cause any existing thing to perish and to become non-existing. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says

“Allah! There is no god but Him, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists.

Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him does belong whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth...”

[II; 255]

In other words, existence of all things is in Allah's Hand.

Therefore, one of the meanings of Allah's Beautiful Divine Name "Al-Qahhar" is that He, All-Mighty, subdued all things and brought them into existence by His Irresistible Divine Power. To this effect, Allah, Most Gracious, says

“He (Pharaoh) said: ‘Who, then, O Moses, is the Lord of both of you (Moses and Aaron)?’ He (Moses) said: ‘Our Lord is He (Allah), Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright.’”

[XX; 49,50]

Before they were brought into existence by Allah's Irresistible Will and Power, all existing things were non-existing. Therefore, non-existence is the original state of all things; and without Allah's Irresistible Will and Power they would have never been brought into existence. It is Allah's Word "Be!" and things are, and "Perish!" and things perish.

You, dear reader: Your existence and survival are both by Allah and under His Irresistible Divine Power and Will. Organs and systems of your body provide clear evidence of such fact: your brain, with its 140,000,000,000 cells, your perception and senses, your memory, your mental judgment, your imagination, your glands, ...etc. have been bestowed on you by the Lord, Allah, All-Mighty, Most Gracious, and they will be made to perish upon death.

Compare an active living person, who is in full power and energy, moving, thinking, judging, acting, seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, feeling, taking attitudes, running businesses, and building up human civilization, to a motionless dead body! The difference between a dead body and a living person full of energy and power is simply such Divine Grace from Allah, Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer), Who compels non-living matter to become a living human being that thinks, sees, hears, smells, moves, makes decisions, gets angry, gets delighted, ...etc. If a human being is weighed just a few moments before and after his death, it will be found out he loses nothing of his weight upon death. It is Allah's Divine Power that grants him his soul, which is the secret of his life. Should his soul be taken away from him, he would be a mere dead mass of matter.

Some scholars say that Allah, All-Mighty, is Al-Qahhar (The Irresistible Subduer) in the sense that He, Alone, is the One Who subdues non-existence and turns it into existence, and then He subdues existence by His Irresistible Divine Power and Will.

The sun, for example, is 500,000,000 years old and seems to be an endless source of energy for us on earth, whose resources are too tiny compared to the sun. The tank of a car has to be refilled with fuel after running for a certain number of kilometers, and so has a fuel tank of a building's heating system after a cold winter. All natural resources will certainly run out, even the sun, which seems to be an endless source of energy. Their existence and survival are both in Allah's Hand and under His Irresistible Divine Power and Will. It is Allah, All-Mighty, that brings things into existence and makes them survive for a pre-decreed term.

Another meaning of Allah's Beautiful Divine Name "Al-Qahhar" is that all the heavenly objects, some of which are many times bigger than both the earth and the sun, are held and kept in orbit by Allah's Irresistible Divine Power. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says

“Verily! Allah grasps the heavens and the earth lest they should move away from their places; and if they were to move away from their places, there is none that could grasp them after Him. Truly, He is Ever Most Forbearing, Oft-and-All-Forgiving.”

[XXXV; 41]

Some scholars say: In life, there are four basic elements: water, air, fire, and soil. Such elements are

non-congruent, but by His Irresistible Divine Power, Allah united them together in perfect harmony. Therefore, one of the meanings of Allah's Name "Al-Qahhar" is that He, Most Gracious, unites incongruent things together in perfect harmony. In other words, you can not make the sea burn, but Allah, All-Mighty, can. In this context, He swears:

"By the sea that will be set on fire!"

How can water, which is used to put out fire, be made to burn? Water is made up of Hydrogen and Oxygen. Hydrogen is one of the most burning elements, and Oxygen is one of the most burn-augmenting elements. When you roast meat, why do you use a fan? In order to provide more Oxygen to the burning charcoal to augment fire. In other words, when Hydrogen, which is a burning element, combines with Oxygen, which helps augment burning, they both make water, which is used to put out fire. By His Irresistible Divine Power, Allah, All-Mighty, is Able to make the ocean burn. Therefore, one of the meanings of Allah's Name "Al-Qahhar" is that He unites incongruent things together in perfect harmony. Water, air, fire, and soil are incongruent things, yet they are united in perfect harmony in creatures. This is the third meaning of Allah's Name "Al-Qahhar".

Another thing: the soul is a weightless luminary non-material thing, while the human body is a massy material thing. Between them both there is a kind of incongruity, nevertheless, Allah, All-Mighty, by His Irresistible Divine Power has made the soul dwell in the body.

An example: If you have a metal that you want to stick to another, you are told that it cannot be welded except by using a special kind of weld. Aluminum can not be welded by the weld that we use for iron, because both metals are incongruent. Allah, All-Mighty, made the soul non-material luminary weightless and heavenly just as He made the body massy, material and earthly. Nevertheless, He, All-Mighty, united them both together in man. In other words, man is made up of both a body and a soul. Sometimes, his soul brightens, which appears clearly on his face. But sometimes, his soul darkens, which also appears clearly on his face. This means that man is a creature made up of a heavenly element and an earthly one; and quite often he clings himself heavily to the earth. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says

"O you who believe! What is the matter with you?! When you are asked to march forth in the Cause of Allah, you cling heavily to the earth! Are you pleased with life of this world rather than the Hereafter?! Little is the enjoyment of the life of this world compared to the Hereafter."

[IX: 38]

In other words, you direct yourself towards the earth, you direct yourself towards the perishable pleasures and enjoyments of the present world.

The fourth meaning of Allah's Name "Al-Qahhar" (the Irresistible Subduer) is that sometimes He, All-Mighty, humiliates tyrants and oppressors by diseases and illnesses. Quite often, you see a great king who loves his wife, but he is made barren and, therefore, has to pay lots and lots of his wealth to have a baby, but all goes in vain. Another king suffers from an incurable disease of which he would not be cured even if he spent all his wealth.

Another meaning of Allah's Name "Al-Qahhar" is that He, All-Mighty, subdues all His slaves by death: Prophets, Messengers, the powerful, the weak, the rich, the poor, the healthy, the ill, kings, princes, common people, ...etc, all human beings are inevitably made to pass away by Allah, All-Mighty. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says

"You will certainly be made to pass away, and they (all mankind) will certainly be made to pass away."

Even the Angel of Death himself will be made to pass away by Allah, Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer). Allah's Messenger, (PBUH), also says

"Glorified is Allah! Verily, death has its own agonies."

Yes, indeed! Allah, Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer) does humiliate tyrants and oppressors sometimes by diseases and illnesses, sometimes by disasters and eventually by death.

The fifth meaning of Allah's Beautiful Name Al-Qahhar is that He subdues the human minds and prevents them from knowing the reality of His Holy Infinite Divine Self, which has neither a beginning nor an end. He, All-Mighty, prevents the human minds from encompassing the Glamour of His Divine Majesty. Beware of saying, "I realize how Great Allah is.", for this would mean that you encompass Him in knowledge just as you do when you hold a small thing and know its dimensions and weight. Your mind leads you to Allah, His Existence, His Infinite Divine Might and Power, but it can by no means get to know the reality of His Divine Self. In other words, no one can ever know Allah, except Allah, Himself. To this effect, Allah, All-Mighty, says

“And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little.”

[XVII; 85]

and

“And they encompass none of His Knowledge except that which He wills.”

[II; 255]

Yes, indeed! Your mind can lead you to Him and helps you to know about Him only as much as He wills to allow you. This is because man's mind is limited and can by no means know the reality of Allah's Infinite Holy Divine Self. Therefore, a wise person does not aspire to answer all the questions about Allah, All-Mighty; and such lack of knowledge on his part does not mean that he is ignorant.

Someone asked another about the sea: "How many liters does it make?". The latter looked at him saying, "That is very simple. It makes one million, seven hundred and sixty-six liters." This answer is mere ignorance because it gives numbers. If someone asks you, "How big is an ocean?" but you do not have any means or standards whereby you can measure the size of the ocean, if you give a certain definite number, this means that you are ignorant, but if you say, "I do not know.", this means you are knowledgeable. This is because in answer to such a question the words, "I do not know" reflect real knowledge, but the words, "I know" reflect mere ignorance. That is why it has been rightly said: "Claiming that one knows the reality of Allah's Divine Self is mere ignorance. But admitting that one does not know the reality of Allah's Divine Self is real knowledge." In other words, if you say, "I know. I have answers to all of the questions. I know everything about Allah.", this provides clear evidence that you know nothing, for no one can ever encompass in knowledge the reality of Allah's Divine Self.

The sixth meaning of Allah's Name Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer) is that He kept the knowledge of the secrets of a great many natural phenomena only for Himself. Therefore, whenever a certain natural phenomenon takes place, one should say, "Glorified and Praised is Allah! I do not know the wisdom behind such incident."

A country was visited by an earthquake that claimed the lives of 90,000 people. There is wisdom underlying such a natural phenomenon, because my mind is unable to understand the wisdom behind it. Every time I see a natural disaster taking place before me, I am not supposed to give a simple explanation of it. This is because my explanation might be naïve. If I say, "They have been afflicted by such a natural disaster because of their sins and misdeeds.", such an explanation is fairly acceptable, but sometimes, even true believers are inflicted with disasters as a kind of trial and spiritual enhancement. Therefore, the ideal thing to do in this concern is to admit that you do not know everything and that you do not know the secrets of such phenomenon. Another example, if you say that the AIDS is a kind of Divine Punishment for ethical deviation and illegal sexual relations. Such an explanation is fair enough, but there are other phenomena that are too hard to explain. For example, it is not easy to find an answer to the question: "Why is a certain nation or people poor?" However, it may be attributed to Allah's Divine Wisdom.

The seventh and all-embracing meaning of Allah's Divine Name Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer) is that He, All-Mighty, has subdued all His creatures to His Irresistible Divine Will. To this effect, He, All-Mighty, says

“And they encompass none of His Knowledge except that which He wills.”

[II; 255]

An example: You have a hundred electrical appliances at home; and you have a special switch to work them all. If you turn the switch off, all of the appliances stop working: the fridge, the washing machine, ...etc. All driving powers are in Allah's Hand, i.e. no human being could ever move one single inch or do one single thing except by Allah's Irresistible Divine Will and Leave. Therefore, Allah, All-Mighty, is Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer). Once again, we repeat Allah's Words,

“And they encompass none of His Knowledge except that which He wills.”

[II; 255]

In short, all things other than Allah, All-Mighty, are subdued by His Infinite Divine Power and Might and are in bad humble need to His Infinite Divine Provision and Sustenance.

However, there are other meanings of Allah's Beautiful Divine Name “Al-Qahhar”. For example, some scholars say: “Al-Qahir is He (Allah), Who subdued the selves of worshippers.” In interpretation of such meaning - and to Allah does belong the Supreme example - the following example can be put forward: A very beautiful young girl whose fiancé is up to his ears in love with her, so she has full power and command over him. The same thing applies to a powerful wealthy person who has full power and control over the poor and weak. That is why Allah, All-Mighty, says

“If only those who do wrong could see, when they will see the Torment, that all Power belongs to Allah and that Allah is Severe in punishment.”

[II; 165]

Allah, All-Mighty, is the Source of all kinds of power: if you turn to Him with love, obedience and devotion, He bestows on you far more happiness and peace than whatever happiness and peace human beings can ever give you. If you turn to Allah, Most Gracious, with love, obedience and devotion, He grants you much more happiness and contentment than that which the wealthiest people can ever feel. If you turn to Allah, Most Merciful, with love, obedience and devotion, you feel far more powerful than those who affiliate themselves with the most powerful of all mankind. That is why it has been rightly said: “If you desire to be the most powerful of all mankind, put your trust in Allah; if you desire to be the richest of all mankind, be more confident in what is in Allah's Hands than that which is in your own hands; and if you desire to be the noblest of all mankind, fear Allah and be dutiful to Him.”

Therefore, Al-Qahir is Allah, Who subdues, and has full command over, the selves of His worshippers so as to keep them committed and devoted to Him. In other words, those who turn to Allah, Most Gracious, are helped to get to know the real Truth and live in real happiness. That is why they keep showing faithful obedience and sincere devotion to Him. In other words, Allah, fascinates them with His Infinite Divine Beauty, Perfection and Compassion to an extent that makes them desire nothing of the perishable enjoyments and pleasures of the life of the present world.

**Their ultimate goal is not the Gardens of Aden
Nor the Beautiful virgin Houris or Tents of Paradise.
They seek to The Most Beloved (Allah): such is their Utmost Goal,
And such is the desire of the noblest and most honorable.**

A young man once fell in love with a young woman in Damascus. His parents were afraid that he would be fascinated by her, so they sent him to a distant foreign country to study at one of its universities. They gave him a lot of money, but he spent it all on phone-calls with his beloved girl in Damascus. In other words, his beloved girl fascinated him and subdued him by her beauty and love.

If you know Allah, Most Gracious, Most Beautiful, you will certainly be fascinated and subdued by His Infinite

Divine Beauty and Perfection. Therefore, Allah, All-Mighty, is Al-Qahir, Who fascinates His worshippers and keeps them devoted to Him and Who subdues the hearts of those who seek Him by His Infinite Divine Kindness.

A true believer who knows Allah, knows for sure that He, All-Mighty, is Al-Qahhar (the Irresistible Subduer). But when does this happen? When he knows the reality of his being a slave of Allah's. This is because it has been rightly said that he who knows himself knows his Lord; and he who knows his Lord knows himself. Such words as, "I shall do so and so." And "I shall give so and so." Are never used by a true believer, because they clash with his Lord's Name "Al-Qahhar" (the Irresistible Subduer).

Nevertheless, a true believer can be a "qahhar" (a subduer) in a special sense of the word, i.e. when he subdues his lusts and desires, which they are his worst enemies. If he so does, this means that he has full command over his own self. This is exactly the meaning of Allah's Words

"But as for him who fears standing before his Lord and restrained himself from impure evil desires and lusts, verily, Paradise will be his abode."

[LXXIX; 40]

A human being who follows his evil lusts, caprices and desires commits countless sins and misdeeds that displeases the Lord, Allah, All-Mighty. He backbites and slanders other fellow humans, he transgresses against the rights of others, and all his actions and movements are away from Allah's Divine Guidance and Religion. In other words, he follows his own evil desires and lusts and, hence, he fails to be "qahhar" over such desires and lusts, i.e. he fails to subdue his lusty desires and caprices but is rather subdued by them.

Therefore, as a true believer, you have to subdue your own lusts and desires, which are your worst enemies. If you so do, you achieve in yourself this great name "Al-Qahhar", whereby you know your Lord and attain, by showing adequate obedience and devotion to Him, His Divine Love, Compassion and Pleasure.

Translation : Khaled Al-Athmeh

Auditing :