

The Superiority of Islam in the Doctrine of Divine Unity

The above are the three stages which the lovers of the Truth in the various religions of the world pass through. When they begin their travel on the way of spiritual perfection they take these stages to be their final goal. Islam, however, does not limit itself to these stages but delineates a goal for its followers which is even higher and which surpasses the goal formulated in the text of any other religion.

For, it does not stop at negating all limitations from God and considering Him as infinite and transcendent over all qualification, but it goes so far as to negate from Him this very quality of Infinity (since every quality [even that of Infinity] cannot help but "qualify" and so limit that to which it is attributed.)

Hence the Divine Essence is considered as transcending all names and designations and even as transcending this very description. The sixth Shi'ite Imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq, according to a tradition which is quoted by al-Kulayni in the book *Usul-al-kafi*, has deduced this stage from the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

"Say (unto mankind): Cry unto Allah, or cry unto the Beneficent, unto whichever ye cry (it is the same) . His are the most beautiful names." (Qur'an 17: 110) .

However, since further elucidation of this doctrine would mean that we must enter a philosophical discussion which is not in keeping with the nature of the present article, for the present we must leave this aside.

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