



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Nahj al-Balaghah

Lesson 2

The First Sermon – Who Allah Is

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- **Doubt:** Some sermons in *Nahj al-Balaghah* are lengthy in a way that was not usual of that time. This indicates that it is not Imam Ali's (PBUH) words.

Answer: This is true about the pre-Islam era but after Islam, Muslims had started a new civilization and they had the thirst for knowledge. Also, at the time of Imam Ali's government, people needed to be taught.

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- One of the outstanding features of *Nahj al-Balaghah* is that Imam Ali (PBUH) spoke compassionately to people and treated them as humans and not objects who need only to follow orders.

- At the time when there was so much confusion in the ideological matters as there is now, Imam Ali (PBUH) had to enlighten people with the correct belief system. Therefore, the first sermon in *Nahj al-Balaghah* is a very important sermon.

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- **Topics discussed in the first sermon:**

- Knowing God and His attributes
- The creation of the universe and P. Adam (PBUH)
- The role of Prophets
- Hajj and its Philosophy



- The First Sermon:

«بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ؛ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَبْلُغُ مِدْحَتَهُ الْقَائِلُونَ»

«All praise is due to Allah; whose worth cannot be described by speakers.»

‘حمد’: praising for voluntary acts or status

‘مدح’: praising for voluntary or involuntary acts or status

«وَلَا يُحْصَى نِعَمَاتُهُ الْعَادُونَ»

“whose bounties cannot be counted by calculators.”

«الَّذِي لَا يُدْرِكُهُ بَعْدُ الْهَمَمُ وَلَا يَنَالُهُ غَوْصُ الْفِطْنِ»

“the one whom the height of intellectual efforts cannot apprehend and the diving of sharp brainpowers cannot reach.”

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- There is only one thing which is forbidden to think about and that is the essence of Allah. We are limited and we must not limit God by subjecting Him to our imagination.

- Some concepts are beyond intellect and some contradict it; and the essence of Allah is above mental capacity or beyond intellect.

For example: The essence of God or Him being above time is beyond intellect and trinity is contradictory to it.

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- Also, the fact that Allah exists can be understood by intellect (because there can't be an infinite chain of regression in the causes) but how He exists is beyond intellect. In fact, there is nothing contradictory to intellect in Islam.