



O Allāh, You are the First

Explanation of a Hadīth on ascribing a place to Allāh

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“O Allāh, You are the first: there is nothing before You; and You are the last: there is nothing after You. You are the Manifest (al-Zāhir): there is nothing above You. You are the Hidden (al-Bātin): there is nothing below You.”¹

What was mentioned towards the end of the Hadīth is an indication of denying Allāh ﷻ has a place and denying the slave is alike to Allāh ﷻ, wherever he was, in proximity or remoteness. Allāh, the Exalted, is al-Dhāhir. Hence, it is valid to know about Him by proofs. Allah ﷻ is al-Bātin. Hence, it is invalid that He would be in a place.

Some of our companions used as a proof to refute the place to Allāh ﷻ the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: ‘You are al-Dhāhir and there is nothing above You, and You are al-Bātin and there is nothing underneath You.’ Therefore, if there is nothing above Him and nothing underneath Him, He is not in a place. ²



¹ Sahīh Muslim, *kitāb al-dhikr wal-du`a wal-tawba wal-istighfār, bāb mā yaqūlu `ind al-nawm wa-akhd al-madhja*, #7064

² Al-asmā'u wal-sifāt, page 400 (Kawtharī edition). Al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī (d. 425 H) explained that Allāh ﷻ is the Manifest because His existence is intuitively evident to us through everything we see in the creation, while He is the Hidden because we can not comprehend the nature of His existence. (*Mufradāt al-Qur`an*; Damascus, Dar al-Qalam; Beirut, Dar al-Shāmiyya, 1992, p.131)