

created them, granted them everything that they need and bestowed great blessings upon them; if they were deprived of those blessings they would not be able to survive, for whatever blessings they enjoy come from Him.

He sustains His creation in two ways, general and specific.

In general terms, this refers to His creation of all creatures, His granting of provision to them and His guiding them to that which is in their best interests, which enables them to survive in this world.

In specific terms, it refers to His cherishing of His close friends, by means of instilling faith in their hearts, guiding them to it, perfecting it for them and warding off from them distractions and obstacles that come between them and faith. In real terms, this means guiding them to everything that is good and protecting them from everything that is bad. Perhaps it is for this reason that most of the supplications of the Prophets used the word Lord (*Rabb*),<sup>3</sup> since all their requests and needs came under His special cherishing.

The phrase «the Lord of the worlds» indicates that He alone has the power to create, and He alone controls His creation, bestows blessings and is completely independent of means, whilst all of creation is dependent upon Him in all respects.

«Master of the Day of Judgement» The Master (*Mâlik*) is the one who possesses the attributes of sovereignty, one of the implications of which is that He enjoins and forbids, rewards and punishes, and controls His subjects in all ways. This sovereignty is connected to the Day of Judgement, which is the Day of Resurrection, the day on which people will be judged on the basis of their deeds, both good and bad. On that day, His perfect sovereignty, justice and wisdom

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<sup>3</sup> Wherever possible, Arabic terms have been translated into English. In cases where we have chosen to retain the Arabic, the transliterated word or phrase is shown in italics the first time it appears in the text. The term is also defined in the glossary found at the end of this book. (Editor)