

Notes On The Concept Of Warner (*Khāṭir*) In Basrian Mu'tazilite Theology

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Abstract

In Basrian Mu'tazila, the concept of warner (*khāṭir*) is principally considered as an element that imposes obligation on man. Warner instils fear within the obliged believer and prompts him to contemplate about the existence of God. Basrian Mu'tazila brings along two essential approaches on the content of warner: According to first approach, led by Abū 'Alī al-Jubbāī, warner is a kind of conviction (*itiqād*) or assumption (*ẓann*). As for second approach, defended by Abū Hāshim al-Jubbāī, warner is speech (*kalām*). Besides, the Mu'tazilites discuss the prerequisites to enable goodness (*husn*) of warner. Accordingly, warner should comprise fear so as to make one abandon reflection (*nazar*), it should express why reflection is obligatory (*wājib*), include the imperativeness of other obligatory issues because of reflection, and express such imperative knowledge within a certain order. Besides, Mu'tazilites argue whether a contrary warner, in other words, a warner which abolishes the obligation of reflection that takes one to knowing of God (*marifat Allāh*), is possible. Some views put forth theoretical possibility of such warner, even though it is widely considered impossible in practice.

Basra Mutezilesi'nde *Hâtir* Kavramı Üzerine Notlar

Öz

Basra Mutezilesi'nde *hâtir* kavramı özellikle insanın mükellef kılınmasını sağlayan bir unsur olarak düşünülmüştür. *Hâtir* mükellefte korku oluşturarak onu Allah'ın varlığı hakkında düşünmeye sevk eder. Basra Mutezilesi'nde *hâtir*ın mahiyeti üzerinde iki temel görüş ortaya çıkmıştır: İlki Ebû Ali el-Cübbâî'nin savunduğu *hâtir*ın itikat yahut zan olduğu yönündeki görüş, ikincisi ise Ebû Hâşim el-Cübbâî'nin savunduğu *hâtir*ın kelâm olduğu yönündeki görüştür. Mutezililer bunun yanında *hâtir*ın hasen olabilmesi için taşıması gerekli şartları da tartışmışlardır. Buna göre *hâtir*; *nazar*ın terk edilmesine yönelik korku içermeli, *nazar*ın niçin vacip olduğunu ifade etmeli, *nazar* sebebiyle vacip olan diğer hususların da vücûbiyetini içermeli ve vacip kıldığı bilgileri belirli bir sıra içerisinde ifade etmelidir. Ayrıca Mutezililer zıt bir *hâtir*ın, yani marifetullaha götüren *nazar*ın vücûbiyetini kaldıracak bir *hâtir*ın mümkün olup olmadığını da tartışmışlardır. Teorik olarak bunu mümkün olduğu yönündeki görüşler bulunsa da, pratikte bunun mümkün olmadığını belirtmişlerdir.

Key Words: Basrian Mu'tazila, Reflection (*Nazar*), Warner (*Khāṭir*), Abū 'Alī al-Jubbāī, Abū Hāshim al-Jubbāī

Anahtar Kelimeler: Basra Mutezilesi, Akıl Yürütme (*Nazar*), *Hâtir*, Ebû Ali El-Cübbâî, Ebû Hâşim El-Cübbâî

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According to Mu'tazili thought, the first-ever obligation of a believer is reflection (*nazar*) which takes one to acquaintance with existence of God.¹ Actually, the process towards imperativeness of reflection is as follows: It is illicit that God prepares for man the conditions that enable the call to faith and then does not render him obliged. Indeed, it would be futile to prepare such conditions if God were not to obligate man.² For sure, obligation of man means the responsibility of him to know, above all, His existence and unity. Such knowledge can be possible only through reflection; thereupon, the person is obliged to reflect on the mentioned facts. Nevertheless, at this point, we can wonder about the element that indicates to the obliged the imperativeness of reflection or that makes him know the imperativeness of reflection. According to Mu'tazilites, the reason is fear of abandoning reflection. In other words, when a believer abandons reflection, he fears suffering any loss because of such abandonment and opts for reflection because of this fear. Warner, then, is the element that creates this fear in a person.³ Consequently, Mu'tazilites have included the concept of warner (*khātir*)⁴ into their system along with reflection so as to reinforce the structure that enables the believer to attain knowledge of God. Accordingly, warner causes fear in the believer that he may suffer some harm if he does not reflect upon existence and unity of God; this fear pushes the obliged to reflection about existence and unity of God,⁵ whereupon reflection becomes obligatory

¹ Mānkdim Shashdīw Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī, *Taliq alā Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamsa* (under the title of *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamsa* with the attribution to Qāḍī al-Quḍāt 'Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadānī ed. 'Abd al-Karīm 'Uthmān; Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 1965), 39: 4-6.

² Ibn Mattawayh, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad, *Kitāb al-Majmū' fi al-Muḥīṭ bi-al-taklīf*, III (ed. Jan Peters; Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1999), 244: 2-3.

³ Ibn al-Malāhimī, Rukn al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad al-Khuwārazmī, *Kitāb al-Fā'iq fi uṣūl al-dīn* (eds. Wilferd Madelung – Martin McDermott; Tehran: Iranian Institute of Philosophy – Institute of Islamic Studies Free University of Berlin, 2007), 378: 17-379: 9.

⁴ On the concept of warner (*khātir*), also see J. R. T. M. Peters, *God's Created Speech: A Study in the Speculative Theology of the Mu'tazilī Qāḍī l-Quḍāt Abū l-Ḥasan 'Abd al-Jabbār bn Aḥmad al-Hamadānī* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 63-65; A. Kevin Reinhart, *Before Revelation: The Boundaries of Muslim Moral Thought* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), 156-157. This concept is occasionally mentioned together with the concept of *dā'ī* which expresses the same function. For example, see Qāḍī al-Quḍāt 'Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadānī, *al-Mughnī fi abwāb al-tawḥīd wa al-adl*, XII: *al-Nazar wa al-ma'arīf* (ed. Ibrāhīm Madkūr; Cairo: al-Mu'assasa al-Miṣriyya al-āmma li-al-talīf wa al-tarjama wa al-ṭibā'a wa al-nashr, n.d.), 386: 2; 387: 6 (Referred hereafter as "Mughnī").

⁵ See *Mughnī*, XII, 386: 19-387: 6.

on the believer. As a result, warner becomes a compulsory element so as to hold the person liable for the call;⁶ moreover, it constitutes the basis of entire liability.⁷

Thanks to this mission within Mu'tazilī system, warner concept has a critical function within the theology; accordingly, it has been subject to various discussions. Content of warner is the most debated issue of them all.

There are two main views about content of warner in Basrian Mu'tazila. According to the first approach, led by Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī, warner is assumption or conviction; in other words, it is a cognitive fact that occurs in the heart of a person.⁸ If warner is assumption and conviction, then it is an act of the heart; nevertheless, there is ambiguity about the author of warner. In other words, the author of warner, which is an act of heart, may be either God or the believer himself.⁹

⁶ See *Mughnī*, XII, 389: 12-14. "A reasonable person knows the fear that occurs when he leaves reflection, the path to reflection and knowledge attainable through reflection only when he is provided with *dā'ī* or something equivalent (=warner). Therefore, a call on him is necessary only when *dā'ī* (or warner) is available."

⁷ Please remember that warner is a concept that complies with systematic of Mu'tazila which grounds the origin of obligation (*taklīf*) on rational basis. Indeed, according to Ibn Mattawayh, an approach of warner that intimidates person and prompts him to reflection is applicable in the eyes of those who accept the person can be held responsible via rational information without hearing. On the contrary, according to those for whom human reason cannot be independent from divine revelation, the believer does not require existence of warner. In such a case, the liability is based on heard information; therefore, it is the prophet who will prompt the believer to reflection. See Ibn Mattawayh, *al-Majmū'*; III, 247: 9-12. However, please bear in mind that at this stage, the believer should fear suffering any harm so that a call can begin on him. According to defenders of an obligation based on revelation, this fear is established by means of the prophet etc.; as for supporters of a rational call such as Mu'tazila, warner is the origin of mentioned fear.

⁸ See *Mughnī*, XII, 401: 3-5. For comparison see al-Askarī, Abū Hilāl al-Ḥasan b. 'Abd Allāh, *Kitāb al-Furūq* (ed. Aḥmad S. al-Ḥimṣī; Tripoli: Gross Press, 1994), 82: 18-20; Ibn al-Malāḥimī, *Kitāb al-Fā'iq*, 379: 11-12. Also see Anonymous, *Sharh Kitāb al-Tadhkira fī aḥkām al-jawāhīr wa al-a'rāq* (facsimile ed. Sabine Schmidtke; Tehran: Iranian Institute of Philosophy - Institute of Islamic Studies Free University of Berlin, 2006), 124/62b: 39. In this book, the same information is cited from *Kitāb al-Khāṭir* by Abū 'Alī.

⁹ According to Bahshamī sources, at least, both of these criticisms are probable. For example see al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā 'Alam al-Hudā 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mūsawī, *al-Dhakhīra fī ilm al-kalām* (ed. al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Ḥusaynī; Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1411), 174: 7-8.

On the other hand, the second approach asserted by Abū Hāshim al-Jubbāī and accepted by Basrian school is that warner is a speech heard by the believer. Warner is a speech expressed by God or His angels at His behest; it is impermissible that warner can be anything other than speech.¹⁰ Unlike the first perspective, the identity of author in this approach of “warner as speech” is clear: God. God creates the warner as speech either directly or by means of His angels.

The second group, who claim warner is speech, bring forth this argument since they liken warner to facts in daily life. Indeed, according to Abū Hāshim, warner corresponds to calling and addressing of someone by another in daily life in terms of function. For example, intimidation (*takhwīf*)¹¹ of someone that makes him avoid from a deed is similar to warner. If warner were not speech, none of the foregoing could replace it.¹² However, even though warner is speech, it is not a clear speech that can be heard by everyone but one with a kind of secrecy. Indeed, a word can be called “warner” only if it bears a kind of secrecy.¹³ Besides, Abū Hāshim and his followers try to prove that warner can be nothing but speech, by trying to demonstrate that there can be no author of warner if it were assumption or conviction. For example, if warner were conviction, it cannot be realised by man. As a matter of fact, a being which is rendered capable by another, or which is created, cannot establish conviction.¹⁴ On the other hand, such

¹⁰ See *Mughnī*, XII, 402: 21-403: 2. Also see Anonymous, *Sharh Kitāb al-Tadhkira*, 124/62b: 37-38; al-Askarī, *Kitāb al-Furūq*, 83: 1-3. It is indicated that Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī agrees Abū Hāshim in this regard; Ibn al-Malāhimī, *Kitāb al-Fāiq*, 379: 13-14. Herein, descriptions such as “secret speech like whisper” and “like soliloquy” are given; Naşir al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, Abū Ja’far Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, *Talkhīş al-Muḥaşşal* (ed. ‘Abd Allāh Nūrānī; Tehran: Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University Tehran Branch, 1980), 170: 23-171: 1 (as “*khawāṭir*”); al-Baghdādī, Abū Maṣṣūr ‘Abd al-Qāhir b. Ṭāhir, *Uşul al-dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ilmīyya, 1981), 27: 19-28: 3.

¹¹ For example, one says another: “Do not follow this path, there are predators”, and instils fear.

¹² See *Mughnī*, XII, 403: 2-4. Same approach is adopted by Ibn Mattawayh and later members of Bahshamiyya. See Ibn Mattawayh, *al-Majmū*; III, 250: 9-10.

¹³ Indeed, Ibn Mattawayh likens warner to whisper of Satan (*waswasa*). *Waswasa* by Satan is called whisper since it is so silent that it may be confused with thought (*fikr*). The common feature of warner and *waswasa* is they cannot be heard by others. Therefore, they are of same kind. The difference is that speech from God or angels towards good is called warner, while from Satan towards evil is called *waswasa*. See Ibn Mattawayh, *al-Majmū*; III, 248: 2-9.

¹⁴ Ibn Mattawayh, *al-Majmū*; III, 248: 15-17; al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *al-Dhakhīra*, 174: 8-9.

conviction cannot be created by God. Indeed, if warner, created by God, does not comply with what a person believes; in other words, if there is no harmony between faith of a person and such conviction created by God, then, the warner by God should be ignorance and hence evil (*qabīḥ*) as it does not suit the situation. Then again, if it is appropriate, then warner should be knowledge (*ilm*). That is, since God knows the faith in the heart of a person, He creates a warner in compliance with it, whereupon warner becomes knowledge. However, if warner is knowledge, that is, any compliance between its content and faith of a person contradicts with its actual content. Indeed, a person, who is intimidated from something, cannot conclude that the situation is definitely as pointed out by warner. On the contrary, he may consider that something may be as is indicated by warner but also different. In brief, warner does not express exactitude, unlike knowledge.¹⁵

For sure, the attitude of Bahshamiyya school about content of warner is also put forth by Abū ‘Alī, albeit from a slightly different perspective. Abū ‘Alī also tries to prove that warner cannot be speech. For this purpose, his most striking evidence¹⁶ is that God should be speaking to every person in case warner is considered as speech. However, it is clear that God speaks only to some prophets.¹⁷ Hearing the speech of God is only intrinsic to some prophets; therefore, if we say warner is speech, this would mean that some prophets did not have such privilege and even that all men were equal to them in this regard.¹⁸ Nevertheless, according to Abu Hāshim, that warner is speech does not necessarily require that God speaks to every man like He does to Moses. Indeed, God has spoken to nobody except Moses, and spoke to him in a special manner.¹⁹ Abū Hāshim does not indicate what makes God’s speaking to Moses special, but al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā explains it: God spoke to Moses in an explicit (*jahrī*) way. That is, the words with which God addressed Moses were audible for everyone. Warner, however, is a hidden (*khafī*) speech only the addressee can hear.²⁰

The most interesting evidence by Abū ‘Alī to defend warner cannot be speech is the following: If warner were speech, there should be a small organ

¹⁵ Ibn Mattawayh, *al-Majmū’*; III, 248: 17-249: 2; al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *al-Dhakhīra*, 174: 9-13.

¹⁶ For evidence by Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbāī on why warner cannot be speech and replies by Bahshamiyya, see *Mughnī*, XII, 401: 1-413: 11. Also see Orhan Şener Koloğlu, *Cübbâtiler’in Kelâm Sistemi* (Istanbul: İSAM Yayınları, 2011), 170-177.

¹⁷ Here is meant Moses, who is known as “one to whom God talks” (*kalīm Allāh*) in religious literature. Moses differs from other prophets for having directly heard divine revelation without mediation of angels.

¹⁸ *Mughnī*, XII, 401: 5-6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, XII, 403: 6-11.

²⁰ al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *al-Dhakhīra*, 175: 17-20.

like mouth or uvula within human ear. Nonetheless, there is no such organ within human ear.²¹ Indeed, this argument is consistent with the view of Abū ‘Alī that speech needs a special organ in order to exist.²² Therefore, it is impossible to talk about existence of speech in a place where there is no special that ensures its occurrence. On the other hand, such objection is void according to those who claim the speech does not require any organ to exist. For example, Bahshamiyya principally accepts that speech does not require a special structure. According to them, speech requires a special structure/organ only if it is the act of man, since man cannot produce speech without it.²³ God, however, does not need these in order to create speech.²⁴ Then, as warner is an act of God, there is no need for a special structure/organ within human ear for formation of warner.²⁵ On the other hand, Bahshamiyya accepts probability of such a structure since warner may also be the act of angels. After all, the bottom line is existence of a specific organ that ensures emergence of speech. This structure may be big enough to be noticed from outside, or too subtle (*laṭīf*) enough not to be noticed.²⁶

Another controversial point among Mu‘talizites about warner is the prerequisites for it can be good (*ḥasan*). The conditions, in the absence of which warner is considered evil, are listed by al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār as below:

1. Warner should express the aspect (*wajh*) which renders good the necessity (*ijāb*) of reflection and knowing of God.
2. Warner should include imperativeness of other information that is required because of the information it renders obligatory for the believer.
3. Warner should include fear of abandoning reflection and knowing of God.
4. Warner should be available so as to express its requirements in a certain order (*tartīb*).

The foregoing conditions are indispensable prerequisites for warner, and no other condition is valid.²⁷

²¹ *Mughnī*, XII, 402: 7-10.

²² According to Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbāī, speech inevitably requires a specific organ/structure in order to be present. Moreover, this necessity is regardless of the author of speaker. In other words, this condition must be fulfilled regardless of whether speech is our or God’s act. See *Mughnī*, VII, 31: 4-6; Ibn al-Malāḥimī, *Kitāb al-Fā’iq*, 192: 16-17.

²³ *Mughnī*, VII, 40. 18-20.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, VII, 41. 1-5.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, XII, 412: 1-5.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, XII, 412: 5-10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, XII, 414: 3-9.

According to first condition, warner has to express by means of what reflection and knowing of God is rendered obligatory. In other words, since warner comes from God, divine wisdom should be available on the ground of an aspect it requires. This aspect/cause distinguishes it from evil act. Warner should express, to not to be evil, the cause behind imperativeness of reflection and knowing of God.²⁸

On the other hand, it is impossible that God renders obligatory something which does not require obligation. Likewise, He does not render obligatory any act because of an aspect that does not require its imperativeness or for which the act is obligatory. Indeed, any of the foregoing would be equivalent to rendering obligatory the evil or other non-obligatory deeds.²⁹

The foregoing arguments are based on principal moral approach by Mu'tazila that can be summarised as "*wājib* is obligatory for an aspect (*wajh*)," "there is an aspect that makes *wājib* obligatory." Pursuant to this approach, warner should indicate the reason behind the imperativeness of reflection and knowing of God.

Mu'tazilite masters Abū 'Alī and Abū Hāshim provide explanations on obligatory nature of warner by means of several examples. As their examples reveal, warner comes to the related person by expressing certain things. According to Abū 'Alī and Abū Hāshim, the message given by the warner to believer also includes the reason why it is obligatory for him. Abū 'Alī asserts that warner becomes available to the person by saying the following: "Because of changes in your condition (as you are a being subject to change), you are a person in need of the prudent (*mudabbir*) and the creator (*ṣāni*). Then, reflect about getting to know Him. If you don't know/get acquainted with Him, you can never be sure that His benevolence on you will not perish." Or even, the warner may say: "If you don't know Him, you cannot thank His benedictions; this is why you should know Him." Warner may even say: "If you don't know Him, you cannot make sure you will be subject to no harm."³⁰

Pursuant to foregoing examples, Abū 'Alī considers the depletion of benedictions, lack of thanksgiving for benedictions and harms on person as the reasons for warner's being obligatory.

Al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, however, opposes to these views of Abū 'Alī. First of all, al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār indicates that it won't be good if God renders something, which is not effective on imperativeness of reflection and His acquaintance, as the reason behind their imperativeness.³¹ Then, he criticises

²⁸ *Ibid.*, XII, 428: 10-12.

²⁹ *Mughnī*, XII, 428: 13-15.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, XII, 429: 20-430: 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, XII, 430: 7-8.

the options asserted by Abū 'Alī,³² arguing they have no effect on obligation of reflection and knowing of God. According to al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, it is Abū Hāshim who defends the accurate opinions on the issue.

According to Abū Hāshim, the warner speaks to the believer as follows: "Think in order to know that there is a creator who created you, a director who directs you, and that you will deserve merit when you fulfil obligations prescribed by Him and you will be punished when you do evil. If you don't know this creator while you know merit and punishment, you will be closer to the latter since you have a desire towards it. Once you know the creator, you will avoid the evil, because you know that when you commit the evil, you will deserve blame (*dhamm*) in addition to the feeling of sorrow and insufficiency. Then, you can never be sure whether you deserve greater punishment because of committing evil." Therefore, according to Abū Hāshim, when warner attracts attention on this, it does attract attention on the aspect that obliges reflection and knowing of God.³³

Abū Hāshim thus considers the fear of religious punishment/harm as the obligatory aspect of warner. There is slight similarity between Abū Hāshim and Abū 'Alī in this regard. Indeed, citing the foregoing reasons from Abū

³² Al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār criticises the arguments of Abū 'Alī as follows: Reflection and knowing of God cannot be obligatory for being an extension of benedictions. Indeed, God emphasises his superiority over his objects by maintaining his benediction. In a sense, He bestows such grace at no charge. Therefore, it is illicit that God threatens with ending benediction one who abandons reflection and acquaintance. Such threat would be equivalent to cruelty. Likewise, it is impossible that reflection and knowing of God are obligatory only for thanking for benediction. Refraining from a detailed explanation, al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār adds there should be no motive for imperativeness of reflection and knowing of God other than thanking His grace.

Al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār makes a distinction when it comes to the approach which relate obligation of reflection and acquaintance with the harm on the believer upon their abandonment. In case it is about ethereal punishment, this is already accepted. Indeed, one who leaves his obligations for the inappropriate can never make sure he will be subject to no harm. Nevertheless, the same does not apply for any other worldly harm. Indeed, worldly punishments are not deserved through such faults; therefore, it is not appropriate that a warner is sent for them. See *Mughnī*, XII, 430: 11-431: 17.

Through the foregoing explanations, al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār leaves the door open only for the possibility of harm on the person, which should be an ethereal harm, among the reasons asserted by Abū 'Alī. As a matter of fact, there is a similarity between the view of Abū Hāshim and the view defined as accurate by al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār.

³³ *Mughnī*, XII, 431: 17-432: 3.

‘Alī, al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār reports that Abū ‘Alī sometimes expresses also the points indicated by Abū Hāshim.³⁴ Besides, while criticising Abū ‘Alī, he leaves the door open for possibility that the danger for damage on somebody can occur only when it is restricted to religious damage. All the foregoing data bring along one conclusion: Warner is obligatory because it triggers the fear of suffering religious damages within the person; this view, originally asserted by Abū Hāshim, is also admitted by al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār. Nevertheless, in addition to his other (unaccepted) opinions, Abū ‘Alī points out to this view as well, and thus, he finds a middle ground with Abū Hāshim to some extent.

The second prerequisite for warner is to include the imperatives of other information that is obligatory because of information rendered obligatory by warner for the person. This argument seems confusing in the beginning; nevertheless, al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār explains it as follows: When warner makes any information obligatory for someone, it should provide this person with other information that is a benediction towards the initial information. For example, when warner obliges someone to know the existence and unity of God, then it should provide the information that good behaviour will lead to reward and commitment of evil will cause punishment. Indeed, these two types of information (knowledge on reward for good and punishment for evil) are gratification for the original information. When the obliged (*mukallaf*) knows he will obtain reward for good and punishment for evil, he will be closer to commit good and avoid committing evil. In other words, knowledge on reward and punishment, on conditions of deserving them and on the fact that God will make them happen is attainable only after one knows the existence, unity, fairness, and sovereignty of God and that He will never commit guilt. If a person does not know, for example, that God is sovereign, he thinks it is possible that God may hold him responsible but does not bestow any reward, that God may hold him responsible but will rank obedient with rebellious, or even that He will reward the rebellious and punish the obedient.³⁵ Therefore, we should know that God is sovereign in order to make sure that God renders someone liable only to bestow benediction on him and ascribes obligation for its abandonment leads to harm. Since the existence of these two kinds of gracious information is possible only through existence and realisation of the original information, such original information should also be obligatory for the person. Indeed, the acts that complement the obligatory act of a believer are obligatory just as that act itself.³⁶

³⁴ *Ibid.*, XII, 430: 3-4.

³⁵ *Mughnī*, XII, 415; 17 and 18; “*يُثَبِّت*” will be cited instead of “*يُثَبِّت*” in both lines.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, XII, 415: 7-416: 3.

At this point, al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār grounds on the concept of grace (*lutf*). As subsequent knowledge is influential on formation the original knowledge, such subsequent knowledge also becomes necessary to exist and obligatory for the person. View of al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār can be concretised via following example: Warner becomes actual so as to express a person that he should know the existence of God. Well then, how does a person attain such information (or if he will, what is the quickest way to attain it)? If a person knows he will be rewarded when he fulfils such knowledge and otherwise he will undergo punishment, he will, evidently, strive to attain such knowledge or at least, displays utmost effort in order to reach it. In this regard, the subsequent knowledge becomes a grace for the person in order to make him reach the original information. Accordingly, warner should inform to believer the imperativeness of this information.

Consequently, al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār asserts that since warner is a grace towards original information, it should occur in such manner to make subsequent information obligatory as well.³⁷

The third condition of warner is that it should include fear of abandoning reflection and knowing of God. Indeed, the believer should reflect and get acquainted with God thanks to this fear. If it hadn't been for this fear, the reflection and knowing of God would not be obligatory on him.³⁸ As indicated above, this condition is the essential feature of warner.

Fourth condition of warner is that it is probable within a certain order. In other words, it should express what a person should do and relevant evidence in a certain order. For example, the obliged believer should first of all reflect on and get to know existence and unity of God, then think about His fairness etc.; therefore, all these issues should be expressed via warner in a regular order. According to al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār, warner should explain all reflections that a person should carry out at each stage and in each situation. It is inappropriate that warner entails initial reflections but not the subsequent; in such case, warner will not have informed the person what to reflect on or what comes first and what comes later.³⁹

Al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār asserts the prerequisite above; nevertheless, relevant chapters from *al-Mughnī* show that Abū ‘Alī and Abū Hāshim could not reach a definite conclusion about the question. In the eyes of Abū Hāshim, warner does not have to express the evidence, on which the believer should reflect, in a certain order.⁴⁰ Indeed, a person with a reasonable mind can attain the knowledge of Creator by reflecting on his deeds, knowing the

³⁷ Also see *ibid.*, XII, 419: 11-12; “The obligation in this issue is as follows: Whenever God tasks a deed, He should also ascribe the grace about such deed.”

³⁸ *Ibid.*, XII, 432: 14-16.

³⁹ *Mughnī*, XII, 433: 18-21.

⁴⁰ al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *al-Dhakhira*, 177: 3-6.

causality between them and their author, and also knowing that objects and accidents are created (*muḥdath*) concepts with an author. Through such reflection, the person knows he needn't reflect on, for example, mathematics in order to understand that he was created by a Creator. In brief, warner should not be available in subjects which a person can know through experience.⁴¹

Thus, Abū Hāshim claims that warner does not necessarily inform the person about all necessary evidence and that a person may attain them with his own reason. Al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, however, relates that Abū Hāshim occasionally defends the other argument, namely, that man needs warner to express what he should reflect at each stage.⁴²

On the contrary, Abū 'Alī often puts forth the argument which is accepted by al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār. That is, warner should express in a certain order the evidence on which the person is to reflect.⁴³ Abū 'Alī, however, also occasionally repeats the view adopted by Abū Hāshim.⁴⁴

A final question about warner is the possibility of an opposite warner.⁴⁵ Can a warner be abated because of an opposite warner? More precisely, if,

⁴¹ *Mughnī*, XII, 434: 1-6.

⁴² *Ibid.*, XII, 434: 7-8.

⁴³ al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *al-Dhakhīra*, 177: 3.

⁴⁴ *Mughnī*, XII, 434: 8-9. In another passage within 12th volume of *Mughnī*, the views of Abū 'Alī and Abū Hāshim are clearly expressed. According to Abū 'Alī, warner has to attract attention of the person to each evidence, while there is no such necessity in the eyes of Abū Hāshim since the person remains relieved of these thanks to his reason and customs (general provisions/rules applicable in nature). See *Mughnī*, XII, 266: 7-10.

Accordingly, al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār approves the view of Abū 'Alī in this regard. However, according to al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, Abū Hāshim may be right in cases where evidence is clear. Nevertheless, this may not be the case on every occasion. Indeed, there is unclear evidence which cannot be easily distinguished from others. A reasonable person may confuse such evidence. See *Mughnī*, XII, 266: 12-15.

⁴⁵ Al-Nazzām explicitly gives place to two contradictory approaches about warner. According to al-Nazzām, there are two warners within man; one encourages good and the other promotes evil. However, these two concepts of warner are processed within the context of human deeds. Hence, Wolfson and Abu Rida analyse the concept within the context of freedom of acts and free choice. See Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam* (Cambridge, MA – London: Harvard University Press, 1976), 628 cont.; Muḥammad 'Abd al-Hādī Abū Rida, *Min shuyūkh al-Muṭazila Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Nazzām wa āra'uh al-kalāmiyya al-falsafiyya* (Cairo: Dār al-Nadīm, 1989), 171-173. In this regard, the concept of two warners – despite similarities regarding origin of meaning – are more comprehensive than

for example, knowing of God is obligatory upon occurrence of the warner that points out to it, this obligatory should become null because of a second warner that occurs in an opposite manner to the first:⁴⁶ Warner prompts the person to reflection and to get acquainted with God. In this regard, the imperativeness of reflection and acquaintance is based on this warner. It is followed by a second warner that tells the person to abandon reflection. Well then, if the initial warner exhibits the imperativeness of reflection and acquaintance, then the second warner should abolish it.

The controversial point is whether the second warner can actually occur. For sure, the possibility of availability of such a second warner to the person may bring along severe contradictions with regard to Mu'tazilite system;⁴⁷ nevertheless, it is, at least theoretically, accepted by Abū 'Alī and al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār. However, theoretical acceptance of such possibility does not mean it can be practically realised.⁴⁸

the concept of warner mentioned within the scope of reflection by Basrian Mu'tazila since Abū 'Alī, and they include all human acts. Evidently, this does not mean that the concept of warner, used by al-Nazzām, is not mentioned by Abū 'Alī, Abū Hāshim, and al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār. Instead, warner concept, discussed by al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, is an element that exclusively prompts someone to know God and no further field is mentioned. In this regard, arguments by al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār on warner are restricted with the issue of reflection and knowing of God. Besides, extension of warner to two opposite directions by al-Nazzām points out to a different question. As is shown below, a second opposite warner is refused by Abū 'Alī, Abū Hāshim, and al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, albeit at different levels.

⁴⁶ See *Mughnī*, XII, 439: 4-5.

⁴⁷ For example, imperativeness of reflection and acquaintance imposed by warner is a grace for believer. In this respect, it is a grace that makes the person to get to know God and draws him closer to deserve reward. The opposite warner, however, means abolition of such grace.

⁴⁸ Indeed, al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār makes a distinction at this point. In case the necessity of reflection exclusively depends on the word expressed by warner, then another warner may contradict it. However, if the necessity of reflection depends on fear that occurs upon noticing by the person of the signs at the moment of warner, it cannot contradict any other warner. See *Mughnī*, XII, 439: 11-14.

Al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār tries to lay stress on the following: If warner merely consists of the speech expressed to the person, then another speech, which expresses an opposite judgment, may be present as well. For example, as a warner is realised by saying "you will be subject to harm if you abandon reflection", another warner may occur by saying "you won't be harmed if you abandon reflection." These two warners are words that signify a judgment to the person. If warner is considered as speech only on the basis of judgment it expresses, then they may contradict. However, if there is a prerequisite that when this warner

As a matter of fact, Abū ‘Alī refuses such a possibility. In his eyes, the first warner calls person to reflection that will take him to eliminate doubts and to understanding of events, while the second warner calls him to imitation and acceptance without thinking. Therefore, this second warner should not be accepted.⁴⁹ Abū ‘Alī explains the situation with the following example: When a person, advancing on a path, is told there is a predator on his way in order to intimidate him, he should proceed only after duly questioning this information. Later on, when somebody sways him to carry out the act, saying “do whatever you see/know/feel without questioning”, he should question and find about his act and refuse the second instruction. Likewise, take a person involved in trade. Somebody tells him “to find out what ensures highest earning among commercial means and to consult the more experienced about this,” whereas another person tells him “to trade without thinking and questioning”. Then, a reasonable man has to refuse the second recommendation. The same applies for mentioned two types of warner.⁵⁰

Thus, Abū ‘Alī thinks on the expressions by two opposite warners and claims that the second warner, which calls one to abandon reflection, will be

becomes available, it instils fear in the wake of some signs in the person, then such warner cannot contradict another. In other words, when warner happens telling the person “you will be harmed if you abandon reflection”, the person fears abandoning reflection because of prior knowledge about punishment imposed on the one who abandons obligation and commits the fault (*al-amārāt al-zāhira*). A warner, which occurs in this manner, cannot contradict another. In this regard, al-Qādī ‘Abd al-Jabbār asserts that a warner is valid if it does instil fear in the person in connection with previously known signs; in other words, he considers such fear as a criterion and – in a sense – proof of validity of warner. Second warner will be automatically invalid since it cannot express any of the above.

In brief, it is improbable that the second warner occurs by ordering to abandon reflection in line with the knowledge already in human reason. Rational evidence (*shāhid al-aql*) shows the opposite. When second warner occurs in a manner that contradicts the knowledge in reason, it is deprived of symptoms and no more has the quality to instil fear. This is why the capacity to instil fear is peculiar to the first warner that lays stress on necessity of reflection, whereupon the necessity/obligation of reflection becomes conclusive. Second warner refutes rational evidence, while the first warner verifies the knowledge within reason. This is why the occurrence of second warner is considered null and void. Indeed, first warner becomes unreliable when it has no effect on something it requires. See *Mughnī*, XII, 440: 12-17.

⁴⁹ *Mughnī*, XII, 441: 14-17.

⁵⁰ *Mughnī*, XII, 441: 17-442: 3.

refused. Consequently, a second warner, in practice, cannot contradict the initial warner.⁵¹

On the other hand, Abū Hāshim clearly rules out such a warner. According to Abū Hāshim, if the existence of such a warner is admitted, the believer will have doubts about whether his Lord is dissolute or whether his reflection on His existence and unity will pave way for his own destruction and punishment.⁵² Abū Hāshim lays stress on the fact that abandonment of reflection and knowing of God eventually causes punishment of a person. The second warner, on the other hand, preaches the person to abandon reflection. In other words, it causes his punishment. As warner comes from God, any acceptance of existence of such converse warner would mean God intends to punish the believer. However, since such an argument is impossible, the second warner, which contradicts the first, is not accepted. In this respect, Abū Hāshim seems to defend impossibility of such a warner not only practically, but also, at least to some extent, theoretically.

⁵¹ Besides, Abū 'Alī puts forth the following assertion: When the second warner intimidates the person from opting for reflection, even though the person is afraid of reflection, he does not actually fear from abandoning reflection. In other words, even if the second warner affects the person in such manner to prevent him from tending towards reflection, the fear of abandoning reflection, instilled by the initial warner, remains intact in him. Therefore, the second warner cannot undo the impact of first warner. The thing to do is to contemplate about them. After all, it is known that the path to knowledge is reflection and not its abandonment or forbearance. See *Mughni*, XII, 442: 3-7.

⁵² See *Mughni*, XII, 439: 4-7.

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