

Methods and Varieties of Guidance According to Imām Māturīdī

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Abstract

Māturīdī, one of the prominent Kalām scholar, is mostly considered to have played a significant role in the construction of a sustainable religious approach today. This recognition originates from his joint reference to intellect and divine inspiration with regard to issues in Kalām in addition to his contributions to the Sunni way of thinking. His balanced use of the intellect and divine inspiration in his solutions for issues of Hidāyat increased his popularity. In the Muslim world, just as in any other community, perception of reality or guidance not as a process but as outright values of their community causes such problems as religious fanaticism and advocacy for sole truth. To solve such problems, a sound understanding of guidance in Muslim communities should be constructed in the light of scientific and social realities. In this respect, determining unique and comprehensive interpretations of Māturīdī of the issue will be of great help for establishing a peaceful religious understanding for the common future of humanity. In the center of Māturīdī's interpretations of guidance lies his approach to guidance with respect to its methods and varieties. Besides presenting the definitions of these methods and varieties, the current study analyzes Māturīdī's interpretations of how these methods and varieties interact.

Keywords

Kalām, Māturīdī, Hidāyat, Bayān, Luṭf

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İmām Mātūrīdī'de Hidayetin Yöntem ve Çeşitleri

Öz

Müslüman kelâmının başat karakterlerinden olan Mātūrīdī'nin günümüz açısından sürdürülebilir bir din anlayışın kurgulanmasında önemli bir kişilik olduğu kabul edilen bir gerçektir. Bu kabul, onun Sünnî düşünceye katkılarının yanısıra kelâmi konularda sergilediği akıl-vahiy birlikteliğinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Onun hidayet konusunda akıl-vahiy arasında kurduğu dengeli çözüm önerileri, Mātūrīdī'ye rağbeti artırmıştır. Her toplumda olduğu gibi Müslüman dünyasında da hakikat veya hidayet bir süreç değil, kendilerinde tamamlanmış bir değer olarak görülmesi, katı bir din anlayışı ve yegâne hakikat savunuculuğu gibi sıkıntılara neden olmaktadır. Bu sıkıntıların giderilmesi için Müslüman hidayet anlayışının bilimsel ve sosyal gerçekler ışığında sağlıklı bir şekilde kurgulanması gerekir. Bu bağlamda Mātūrīdī'nin konuya ilişkin özgün ve kuşatıcı yorumlarını tespit edebilmek, insanlığın ortak geleceği açısından barışçıl bir din algısının teşekkülünde yararlı olacaktır. Mātūrīdī'nin hidayet anlayışına ilişkin değerlendirmelerin merkezinde, onun yöntem ve çeşit açısından hidayete nasıl yaklaştığı durmaktadır. Çalışmada hem bu yöntem ve çeşitlerin neler olduğuna değinilmiş, hem de bunlar arasındaki karşılıklı etkileşimin nasıl sağlandığına ilişkin Mātūrīdī'nin yaklaşımları analiz edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Kelâm, Mātūrīdī, Hidayet, Beyân, Lütuf

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, no culture has the luxury to exist in its own world. In our time when humanity progresses towards common truths and values, the way of grasping the concept of guidance (hidāyat) from religious perspective bears significant importance. Ways of reaching guidance are various. Seeing the differences in approaches for reaching guidance not as a cultural richness but as a cause of conflict would cause a disruptive and meaningless debate between the civilizations and it would give harm to the journey of humanity to realize itself.

The thoughts of Abū Manşūr Muḥammad al-Mātūrīdī (d. 333/944) on guidance bear qualities that would contribute to such common humanitarian values as peace and tolerance especially needed today. He developed a universal method which forges a general consensus by evaluating the subject of guidance within the framework of rational and ethical principles.¹

There are significant differences between guidance approach of Islamic thought and other salvation theories. In Islamic opinion the aim is not to free oneself by redeeming from sins but rather to find peace of one's own free will. In Islamic perception of guidance, living in accordance with mental and conscientious principles is accepted as the way to achieve peace of mind both in this world and in the Hereafter, which is the aim of religious teaching. In this context, guidance approach of Mātūrīdī distinguishes itself with its stable and conciliatory approach between reason and revelation.

¹ Harun Çağlayan, *Etik Açısından Mātūrīdī'nin Hidayet Anlayışı* (Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları, 2015), 7.

1. CONCEPTUAL FRAME

1.1. Reaching Guidance

The word *hidayat* (in English *guidance*), is a noun derived from the Arabic root verb of *hadā*, has such meanings as leading the way, heading,² granting guidance,³ reaching to what is desired.⁴ As a concept, guidance is mainly defined as a person’s finding guidance with a divine grace.⁵

Guidance is touched upon in the Qur’ān more than three hundred times with its conceptual meaning.⁶ The word, guidance as used in the Qur’ān verses generally has the meanings of knowledge, (reason/*aql*, intelligence/*zakā*, a priori knowledge/‘*ilm al-ḍarūra*) report (messenger/*rasūl* and book/*al-kitāb*), divine support (*tawfiq*) and paradise.⁷ In the Qur’ān, guidance is used as having a positive meaning such as leading the guidance, showing the truth, or conveying someone to the truth.⁸ Only very few of these bears the meaning of leading towards evil (*al-A’rāf* 7/23; *al-Ḥajj* 22/4). The concept of guidance as a name has mostly positive meanings such as leading, guiding, true belief and gift.⁹ ‘*Al-Hādī*’, which is one of the most frequently used names of Allah in the Qur’ān, means ‘The one who shows the path through guidance’.¹⁰

1.2. Approaches on Guidance

In *Kalām*, the subject of guidance, mainly related with the acts of servants (*af’āl al-‘ibād*), is explained with three approaches namely ‘*jabrī*’, ‘*tizālī*’ and ‘*sunnī*’.¹¹ According to *Jabriyya*, as humans have no effectiveness and they are obliged to the life appreciated to them by God, being the absolute power in their wills and acts, guidance is completely dependent on the appreciation of the God.¹² In other words, since God

² Abū al-Fadl Camāluddīn Muhammad Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-Arab*, ed. Abdullah Ali al-Kabīr, Muhammad Ahmed Hasabullah, Hashim Muhammad Shāzalī (Cairo: Dār al-Maārif, nd.), 51: 4638; Ebū al-Qāsim Husayn b. Muhammad b. al-Fadl al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī, *al-Mufradāt fi gharīb al-Qurān*, critical ed. Muhammad Sayyid Kaylānī (Beirut: Dār al-Marafah, nd.), 538.

³ Abū al-Husayn Ahmed b. Zakariyyā Ibn Fāris, *Mu’jam makāyīs al-lughā*, critical ed. Abdussalām Muhammad Hārūn (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), 6: 42.

⁴ al-Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta’rīfāt* (Beirut: Maktab Lubnān, 1985), 277.

⁵ Isfahānī, *Mufradāt*, 538.

⁶ Muhammad Fu’ād ‘Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu’jam al-mufahras li’l alfāz al-Qur’ān al-karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Misriyya, 1364), 731-735.

⁷ Isfahānī, *Mufradāt*, 538.

⁸ Muhammad Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur’an Dili* (Istanbul: Eser Yayınları, 1979), 1: 119.

⁹ Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-Arab*, 51: 4639; Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta’rīfāt*, 277.

¹⁰ Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-Arab*, 51: 4638.

¹¹ Abdulmalik al-Juvaynī, *Kitāb al-Irshād*, ed. Muhammad Yusuf Mūsa, Ali Abdulmunīm Abdulhamīd (Baghdad: al-Maktab al-Hanjī, 1950), 381.

¹² Abū al-Mu‘īn al-Nasafī, *Bahr al-kalām fi ‘ilm al-tawhīd*, critical ed. Muhammad Sālih al-Farfūr (Damascus: Maktab Dār al-Farfūr, 2000), 145.

is the one who determines all thoughts, statements and attitudes of an individual, people have no other option but to show their consent to belief and deny his faith.¹³ We can perceive jabrī approach to guidance as denying human freedom in the name of divine dominance.¹⁴

According to Mu‘tazila, as individuals are free, they are the creator of their free will and acts.¹⁵ Therefore, people either reach guidance or evil solely with their own efforts.¹⁶ What is meant with the expression in verses is that guidance comes from God, and that guidance is declared through revelation. Without making any discrimination, God has desired guidance for all humans but not all of them have reached guidance.¹⁷ Those who have reached the guidance have improved their guidance further with their good acts.¹⁸ In this case, guidance is not a value that is already present in the hearts but is an invitation or a declaration made to all in order for them to see the truth and comply with it.¹⁹ We can perceive guidance approach of Mu‘tazila as an attempt to save the free will.²⁰

In general, according to the Sunnī approach, a person is responsible from his free will and acts, but he is not the creator of his acts. According to them, the reason why people are responsible for their acts is that they intend and tend to realize an act of their earned (kasb) or particular will (juzi irāda) because right after free will of a person, the act is created by God. Accordingly, human and God act together in the formation of individual acts.²¹

In the definitions of guidance made by Muslim theologians, it is seen that meanings of granting and showing the way, which are related with the root “to indicate” were influential. Jabrī, and sunnī approaches claim that reaching guidance is a gift, since the root “heda” means to grant, whereas Mu‘tazila claims that guidance is a declaration since it has the meaning of showing the way.²²

Since Māturīdī lived in ideologically dynamic geography, he had a more tolerable policy towards different opinions. When evaluating the topics, he relied on rationalism as much as or even more than

¹³ Abū al-Ḥasan‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Iṣḥāq al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, critical ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn‘Abd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo: Maktaba al-Nahdat al-Misriyya, 1950), 1: 312.

¹⁴ Çağlayan, *Etik Açından Māturīdī’nin Hidayet Anlayışı*, 20.

¹⁵ Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 1: 273; Nasafī, *Bahr al-kalām*, 147.

¹⁶ Metin Özdemir, *İslam Düşüncesinde Kötülük Problemi* (Istanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları, 2014), 231-311.

¹⁷ Abū Mansūr al-Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt al-Qur’ān*, critical ed. Majdī Bāsālūm (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-İlmiyya, 2005), 1: 583; 4: 155; Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 1: 298.

¹⁸ Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 1: 298, 299.

¹⁹ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 368; Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 1: 298; Juvaynī, *Kitāb al-Irshād*, 211.

²⁰ Çağlayan, *Etik Açından Māturīdī’nin Hidayet Anlayışı*, 20, 21.

²¹ Abū Mansūr al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, critical ed. Bekir Topaloğlu, Muhammad Aruçi (Ankara: Turkey Diyanet Foundation, 2003), 365, 366.

²² Çağlayan, *Etik Açından Māturīdī’nin Hidayet Anlayışı*, 22.

Mu‘tazila. We can regard him as one of the pioneers of theological rationalism.²³ In that respect, we can define Māturīdī’s academic method as a blend of scientific and social accumulations of his period in terms of reason.

1.3. Māturīdī’s Understanding of Guidance

Muslim theologians generally investigate guidance under two categories being ‘Guidance in General’ and ‘Particular Guidance’. While general guidance is reason and the ability to think (*istidlāl*), which humans have as they are born, private guidance means messenger and revelation that are granted to humans as a grace.²⁴ In order to have a more sound understanding of Māturīdī’s various analyses of the issue of guidance, the concept of gained guidance was used for general guidance and the term given guidance was used for particular guidance.

Māturīdī, who linked the source of correct information to reason and report,²⁵ thinks that the God has granted general guidance to everyone but that as most people were not aware of this, they remained deprived of guidance.²⁶ He states that no one will be responsible for guidance of someone else since reaching guidance is left to the person himself.²⁷

Epistemology of Māturīdī that is based on the principles of Sensation, Reporting and Reasoning,²⁸ is the source of his guidance approach at the same time. He defines hearing, seeing and reason of existence of hearts as being granted to humans to reach guidance knowingly.²⁹

Māturīdī states that the Arabic verb ‘hada’ has two meanings, which indicate the unity of the God and ensuring obedience to Him.³⁰ According to him, concepts of reaching and heading to guidance are synonymous. However, since it expresses reaching to truth in a better way and as its usage is more widespread, concept of ‘guidance’ has become more famous. Māturīdī states the basis of his opinion relating with the topic of guidance, as he interprets (al-Fātiḥa 1/6) the verse as “Direct us to the guidance!” right at the beginning of his exegesis (in Ta’wilāt al-The Qur’ān). According to him, guidance can be understood in three ways which are declaration (*bayān*), divine support (*tawfiq*), and pray (*du‘ā*). There are two meanings

²³ For Māturīdī’s rationality and his place in al-Hanafī tradition, See. Şaban Ali Düzgün, “Semerkant İlim Havzası ve Mātūrīdī”, *Mātūrīdī’nin Düşünce Dünyası*, ed. Şaban Ali Düzgün (Ankara: Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism - Kuban Yayınları, 2018), 18-20; Sönmez Kutlu, “Bilinen ve Bilinmeyen Yönleriyle İmam Mātūrīdī”, *İmam Mātūrīdī ve Maturidilik*, ed. Sönmez Kutlu (Ankara: Otto Yayınları, 2011), 27-29.

²⁴ Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 1: 298; Sa‘d-al-Dīn‘Umar al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāsid: Maqāsid fī ‘ilm al-kalām*, critical ed. Sālih Mūsā Sharif, (Beirut: Ālem al-Kutüb, 1988), 4: 310, 311.

²⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 5, 620, 621; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 109; 6: 144.

²⁶ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 184, 185.

²⁷ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 7: 10, 166; 9: 92.

²⁸ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 13-17; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 591.

²⁹ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 10: 128.

³⁰ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 95.

in the praying of believers to reach guidance as specified in verse (al-Fātiḥa 1/6). First one of them is the desire not to leave from the blessing of guidance and the second one is to wish to realize the act of guidance continuously. In this way, a person who is a believer wishes to express that he is far away from acting as contradictory to his faith.³¹ Therefore, the expression of ‘guidance’, which is referred to in the verse (al-Fātiḥa 1/6) has the meaning of faith that prioritizes knowledge and reason.³² Māturīdī deems believers who wish to be directed to the path of people whom the God has blessed in their prayers (al-Fātiḥa 1/7) as an evidence for refutation of the aslah theory³³. According to him, if the God had to do the best for His people as a requirement of aslah principle, he would have created guidance for everyone. However, it is stated that guidance is only for those who are blessed.³⁴

Guidance, which is defined as showing the right way by Māturīdī, is related both with the desire and creation of the God and with the wish and power of humans. That is, guidance is the outcome of common efforts open to divine and human influences.³⁵ According to Māturīdī, guidance, which takes someone from darkness into the light takes place in four different ways³⁶. First one of these is the declaration of the truth, the second one is encouragement for the truth, the third one is invitation to the truth and the final one is reaching to the truth by means of reasoning. First three types of guidance are realized with the mediation of messengers, while the last one is realized with divine support.³⁷ Accordingly, we can define Māturīdī’s guidance understanding as Allah’s showing humans the right path as a result of divine grace, though He is not obliged to do so. He argues that guidance is granted as a reminder of blessings He granted and encouraged people to seek refuge in Allah.³⁸

2. GAINED GUIDANCE

In theology of Muslim, gained or attained guidance means a person’s reaching the truth as a result of his own investigations. While this can occur as a result of comprehensive research, it can also take place as a result of internal enlightenment happening as outcome of a short contemplation. Internal enlightenment is a divine grace, but it is not revelation.³⁹

³¹ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 366.

³² Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 366, 367; 6: 32, 309, 358.

³³ Aslāh is obligation of the god to do the best in the literature of Kalām. Abū al-Mu‘īn al-Nasafī, *al-Tamhīd fī usūl al-dīn*, critical ed. Abdulhay Kābīl (Cairo: Dār al-Sagāfa, 1987), 84.

³⁴ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 368.

³⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 358, 359; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 366.

³⁶ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 10: 40.

³⁷ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 6: 359.

³⁸ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 369.

³⁹ Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāsid*, 4: 310, 311.

Knowledge found with attained guidance occurs as the outcome of a mental process that is gained as a result of intellectual experiences.⁴⁰ The fact that this knowledge was attained with inspiration, perceptions (*khavāṭır*), comprehension or heart enlightenment does not change the truth that it has come out with one’s own efforts.⁴¹

Since attained guidance is related with individual efforts, it is closely related with the information sources. Māturīdī related the fact that humans came to exist on earth with the capabilities of sight, hearing, and comprehending with guidance, while they did not know anything in the Qur’ān (al-Naḥl 16/78). Because humans can only make reasoning with these capabilities to learn, they have to be grateful to the God and reach guidance.⁴²

2.1. Sensual Perception

Māturīdī uses the terms of ‘senses’ and ‘observing’ (*iyān*) for the sense organs themselves or for sensual perception. While there are small differences of meaning among them⁴³, it can be considered that they are synonymous. According to Māturīdī, main source of our knowledge about the reality of existence is observing. The word observation defines the data and information that are perceived by healthy sense organs. As ‘eye’ is the first sensory organ that comes to the mind, the concept of observation has been derived from Arabic noun of ‘eye’ (*‘ayn*).⁴⁴ In the information theory of Māturīdī, the word observation represents the perception rather than the organ itself. With this perception or comprehension, a person can be relieved from lack of knowledge and he can find guidance.⁴⁵

According to Māturīdī⁴⁶ clear perception is the most powerful information source to deal with insufficiency of sense organs and delusions that can occur as results of such qualities of the object to be perceived as distance and being massless⁴⁷ because observing provides information about the universe that is perceived as a pure fact,⁴⁸ compared to reported information, it is more stable and less suspicious.⁴⁹

In the information theory of Māturīdī, the place and importance of what is apparent or sensual perception can vary. Such that, as being different from other living creatures, humans are not only limited with sensual information, but they make reasoning as based on this information and produce new knowledge and transfer this knowledge to the future generations by means of report. According to this

⁴⁰ Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 1: 298.

⁴¹ Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, 4: 309, 310.

⁴² Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 6: 645.

⁴³ Hanifi Özcan, *Māturīdī’de Bilgi Problemi* (Istanbul: MÜ İFAV Yayınları, 1993), 58.

⁴⁴ Özcan, *Māturīdī’de Bilgi Problemi*, 59.

⁴⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 11, 12.

⁴⁶ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 15, 229.

⁴⁷ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 15; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 153.

⁴⁸ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 12.

⁴⁹ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 153.

equation, in reality, reasoning and reporting occur as observing. Therefore, it is possible to consider observing perception as the source of information.⁵⁰

Even though they follow similar mental processes, there are important differences between observing and reasoning.⁵¹ While information about universe is especially attained with observing, general information about sensual and beyond sensual universe is perceived by means of reasoning.⁵² In this way, by using sensual, rational, and report, humans get to know particulars such as beneficial-harmful, clean-dirty and sweet-bitter.⁵³

Māturīdī interprets the fact that owners of a sense do not know the content and functioning of sense organs as the evidence of existence of a power that is independent of sensual awareness and that owns knowledge and wisdom. According to him, existence of someone who creates and observes him is logically required.⁵⁴ For this reason, someone who knows himself also knows his Lord because even though he knows his deficiencies regarding particulars such as continuity and stability, he is not capable of eliminating them. Therefore, it is required for a creator to exist who can eliminate his incapability.⁵⁵ Similarly, as per its structure, a creature should exist afterwards (*ḥādith*), because his existence before his creator would be logically conflicting.⁵⁶

Since Māturīdī knew that there will be no perceptual and mental process without clear perception, he states that a person cannot be far away from sensual information. According to him, only stubborn people do not accept clear sensual perception because even the plants and animals tend towards life giving things and avoid deadly particulars by using their sense organs.⁵⁷ Hence, apart from some of the sophists, sensual perception is a clear information source, which everyone agrees to be an absolute information source.⁵⁸

Māturīdī proposes that opinionated people (sceptic) who don't accept the reality of sensual information should be physically punished and he deems their not being able to stand with the pain and to shout as evidences for rootlessness of their assertions that sensual information has no truth.⁵⁹ What Māturīdī wishes to do with this proposal is not to torture his competitors but to emphasize the inconsistency in rejecting what is apparent with a methodological opinion.

⁵⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 281; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 4: 144; 6: 545.

⁵¹ Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 5: 26, 27; 10: 351.

⁵² Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 4: 382; 5: 97; 10: 128.

⁵³ Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 7: 486.

⁵⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 199, 268; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 4: 455.

⁵⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 159, 160.

⁵⁶ Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 5: 194, 195.

⁵⁷ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 12.

⁵⁸ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 235; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 5: 97.

⁵⁹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 12-14, 20, 234.

According to Māturīdī, direct information about the God cannot be obtained by observing perception⁶⁰ but by knowing the God in an indirect way, however, observing perception has an important contribution. This contribution enables us to find opportunity to be informed about physical universe by observing perception. With this information, a person makes preparation for reasoning process, which he will use in topics of theology. Similar with this information, the faulty of ‘Mudjassima’ that embodies God and ‘Mushabbiha’ that assimilates God with other creatures can be proven.⁶¹

Universe is made of different substances (*jawhar*)⁶² and accidents (*aʿrād*).⁶³ Substance, which constitutes the essence of a body (*jism*), needs to be together with other substances and accidents.⁶⁴ This dependency of substances show that they are not absolute and that they need other things to continue existing. However, being a pre-eternal necessitates self-existence and not needing anything to continue existing, whereas being a non-eternal means having temporary qualities that can come together and become separated. So, the universe is an important evidence in knowing God in a correct way and it is not possible for God to be created by nature that has formed in an unconscious way from the substance that existed later on.⁶⁵

2.2. Reasoning

Human is the only creature that can understand what is happening around him together with the reasons and outcomes. With this capability, he knows that a truth is needed that could keep him away from conflicting so that the universe and community in which he lives can sustain its existence.⁶⁶ For a person to acquire this information, it is possible with the ability to reason that is granted to him.⁶⁷

Māturīdī uses the concepts of reasoning (*istidlāl*) and speculation (*naẓar*), which are used by Muslim theologians, in the same meaning as the ability to think.⁶⁸ Similarly, he deems expressions such as reasoning, contemplation and deliberation to be synonymous with the concept of speculation.⁶⁹ In this respect, speculation denotes a common language used by humans to agree upon a truth.⁷⁰ In the epistemology theory

⁶⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 13; Id, *Taʿwilāt*, 4: 135.

⁶¹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 47-51; Id, *Taʿwilāt*, 9: 420, 421.

⁶² Jawhar is constant and basic quality of the existence that cannot be independent of itself in the literature of Kalām. Nasafī, *al-Tamhīd*, 4.

⁶³ Aʿrād is variable attributes of the existence that can be independent of itself such as colors and motion-stop in the literature of Kalām. Nasafī, *al-Tamhīd*, 4.

⁶⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 25; Id, *Taʿwilāt*, 2: 520; 3: 143.

⁶⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 25, 26; Id, *Taʿwilāt*, 8: 701; 2: 104.

⁶⁶ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 5-7; Id, *Taʿwilāt*, 4: 459.

⁶⁷ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 254.

⁶⁸ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 27.

⁶⁹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 17; Id, *Taʿwilāt*, 6: 525; 9: 150, 194.

⁷⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 47.

of Māturīdī, speculation, which is one of the three fundamental information sources,⁷¹ corresponds not to the mind itself as a noun but to the processing of the mind as a way of using the mind. According to Māturīdī, speculation is one of the sources enabling us to reach the information relating with the existence, unity, and nature of the God.⁷² Furthermore, according to him, a human can be seen as a contact only with respect to religious aspects by means of his mind, it cannot be mentioned about guidance where there is no reason.⁷³

Importance of speculation with respect to reaching guidance is significant.⁷⁴ Humans are granted with senses, and the reason is to enable them to know the paths that will lead them to things which are to their benefit.⁷⁵ The most important quality that differentiates humans from other living creatures is their ability to reason.⁷⁶ Even though they have senses just like all other living creatures, deniers who deny the truth that the God has revealed could not find guidance as they could not reason.⁷⁷ In this respect, according to Māturīdī deniers are at a status that is even lower than that of animals because unlike animals deniers are deprived of guidance even though they have the chance to reason and find the truth.⁷⁸

According to Māturīdī, speculation is a quality that is present in the essence of humans and the idea that information provided by it can be wrong is satanic. By means of perception, a person can find guidance in his life in the world and hereafter and he can find the opportunity to make preparations for after-life before it comes. As a matter of fact, human involuntarily begins to think when he pays attention to events. Speculation is an essential quality for the person.⁷⁹

By means of reasoning, a person can see the similarity and closeness between rational truths and revelation truths.⁸⁰ There is no order in any part of the Qur’ān that states inconveniences relating with reasoning. Since a person who wishes to prove that reasoning is not a source of information as per logical aspects, has no other option but to create ideas by means of reasoning. It is apparent that each attempt he makes will not serve anything but to confute his statements because he tries to prove that making reasoning

⁷¹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 12.

⁷² Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 3-271; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 7: 262, 333; 8: 55.

⁷³ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 71; 3: 601.

⁷⁴ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 7: 482.

⁷⁵ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 10: 128.

⁷⁶ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 118.

⁷⁷ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 5: 175, 176; 3: 547, 548,

⁷⁸ Māturīdī *Ta’wilāt*, 5: 97.

⁷⁹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 20.

⁸⁰ Abdülgaffar Aslan, “Kelam’da Aklın Epistemolojik Fonksiyonu”, *Dini Araştırmalar* 4 (2001): 112.

is not sufficient by reasoning.⁸¹ Therefore, as reasoning is a need in every circumstance, it is impossible to consider abandoning it.⁸²

According to Māturīdī, in order for the mind to fulfill its function, it is required to reason on information provided by sense organs⁸³ because according to him, only the universe can be an evidence to know the God.⁸⁴ Therefore, reason of existence of ground and skies, night and day, wind and clouds is for the existence and oneness of the God to be known.⁸⁵ Universe is equipped with signs in order for the God to be known by humans.⁸⁶ Just like smoke requires fire, brightness requires sun and writing requires an author, universe requires God, as being its creator.⁸⁷ Hence, a person can observe the processing of the universe and he can witness the qualities of God.⁸⁸

Māturīdī interprets such statements as “Don't you think?” (*Afalā Tatafakkarūn*) and “Don't you reason?” (*Afalā Ta'qilūn*) in Quran verses, to mean that human beings do not use their mind as required.⁸⁹ Warnings and recommendations are only for those who use their minds correctly.⁹⁰ Those who use their mind not to receive advice but for evilness cannot reach guidance.⁹¹ In this respect, the reason for attracting attention to the processing of nature in the verses (al-Baqara 2/164; al-Dhāriyāt 51/20-21) is to enable people to know that these are designed by someone.⁹² Those who don't consider the processing in nature and the warnings, can get away from guidance as they are deprived of lesson that must be derived from these.⁹³

In the world of thought of Māturīdī, reaching guidance with the mind is composed of stages of verification of the reason and the approval of heart, which are the continuation of one another. If we would define it generally, a person's reaching guidance by making reasoning is realized by analyzing the particulars to be believed by means of verification of the reason and by believing in them through approval of the heart, after being sure about their correctness.⁹⁴

⁸¹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 21; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 1: 373.

⁸² Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 207.

⁸³ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 200; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 6: 144; 8: 591.

⁸⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 199.

⁸⁵ Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 1: 613.

⁸⁶ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 200, 201; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 8: 55, 56.

⁸⁷ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 281, 282.

⁸⁸ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 199; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 2: 334.

⁸⁹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 16, 17; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 1: 621, 622; 2: 464.

⁹⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 13; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 2: 262.

⁹¹ Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 10: 310, 311; 8: 226.

⁹² Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 5-7; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 1: 613; 9: 381, 382.

⁹³ Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 1: 397.

⁹⁴ Çağlayan, *Etik Açısından Māturīdī'nin Hidayet Anlayışı*, 58.

2.2.1. Verification of Reason

Everyone has a belief whether it is right or wrong.⁹⁵ As Māturīdī saw that what causes war and destruction is that everyone does not agree upon a truth, he began to search for a common truth.⁹⁶ While there is only one truth, people following previous generations without questioning reveals that imitation (*taqlīd*)⁹⁷ cannot be a method for reaching the truth.⁹⁸ Path to the right way passes through prudence. Prudence is to be purified from lust, desire (*havā*) and envy and to invite to the God with knowledge and evidences.⁹⁹

According to Māturīdī, correctness of opinions is not related with majority of its supporters but with its content. By means of imitation, it is possible for an incorrect path to get widespread but it cannot continue existing unless it does away with inconsistency. Therefore, in order for a belief to be continuous, it needs to go from imitation to the level of inquiry and it is required to comply with mental principles.¹⁰⁰ In this respect, it cannot be stated that the term guidance in the Qur’ān corresponds to imitated belief.¹⁰¹

When a person thinks about the universe, he understands that it has been created for some purpose and he wonders about the aspects of this reason. The creator of the universe cannot be a human;¹⁰² despite all his superior capabilities. Besides, fundamental substances such as moving celestial bodies, oppositions, essence (*hayūlā*) and temperament (*tīynat*) cannot be the creator either, because all of these are particulars that existed together with the universe later on. In this case, it is required for the creator to be God that is outside the universe.¹⁰³ God is the creator and the organizer of everything that exists in the universe.¹⁰⁴ As attention is paid, Māturīdī takes information provided by sensual perception (observation) to the forefront while he proves that the universe has been created and he takes information provided by spiritual perception (reasoning) to the forefront while he proves that the universe has a creator.

For Māturīdī, what is more important than knowing that the universe has a creator while reaching guidance is the requirement for this creator to be only one because if this creator is not one, it is inevitable for certain problems to come out. Māturīdī evaluates these problems with respect to ‘Contradictory Argument’. If there were more than one creator, by observing the order in the universe, we would think

⁹⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 4; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 432.

⁹⁶ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 11.

⁹⁷ As a religious term *taqlīd* is to believe and to act as others without reasoning in the literature of Kalām. Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 4.

⁹⁸ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 4; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 432; 1: 621; 8: 311.

⁹⁹ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 6: 297; 3: 547.

¹⁰⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 4; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 440, 562; 3: 3.

¹⁰¹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 4; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 440, 441.

¹⁰² Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 34, 35.

¹⁰³ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 171-174.

¹⁰⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 93, 227, 238; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 10: 548.

that they had agreed to create the universe together. There can be no God who realizes his wishes by agreement. When we think that they have not agreed but fought, the situation does not change because no matter who the winner of war is, as neither the winner nor the loser can be the absolute power; it cannot be God.¹⁰⁵ Contradictory argument is an evidence is based on the Qurān (al-Mu’minūn 23/91).¹⁰⁶

Māturīdī, who reaches to the existence and the unity of the God from the existence and continuity of the universe, does not mention much about the nature of the God. To the question of “What is it?” relating with God, Māturīdī replies with a negation (*salbī*): “He is the unique one with no similar ones.”, and he keeps away from confusing the minds.¹⁰⁷ In fact as there is no similarity between the criteria of the material world and the divineness,¹⁰⁸ the negation method used by Muslim theologians is the most solid method that eliminates all the similarities between divine and material qualities.¹⁰⁹

As much as it is understood, Māturīdī considers physical universe as an evidence for metaphysics from two respects. He accepts that the universe points out to hereafter as real/material evidence and he considers the sign of God as rational/mental evidence.¹¹⁰ According to this, a human being who witnesses the current status of universe does not have difficulty in accepting that the same or a similar one can be created. Similarly, as the universe cannot logically exist on its own, he rationally accepts that it must have a creator.¹¹¹

2.2.2. Approval of Heart

According to Māturīdī, there is not a real separation between verification of the reason and approval of the heart because functions of both of them are the same.¹¹² Probably Māturīdī has made such separation in order for the concepts to be more easily understood and to explain the stages of realization of belief that help one reach to guidance. According to him, while reason is related with reasoning through sensual perception, the heart reasons through sensual and emotional perception.¹¹³

Probably according to Māturīdī, place of sensual perception in verification of the reason is the same as the place of emotional perception in approval of heart, because according to his understanding of guidance, when the heart sees the information, correctness of which has been approved by the mind, it activates decision making ability of the person and enables him to accept them.¹¹⁴ According to this, the

¹⁰⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 32-35, 115, 170, 214; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 521, 517, 518.

¹⁰⁶ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 336; 8: 477.

¹⁰⁷ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 47-50, 193; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 267.

¹⁰⁸ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 384, 391, 392; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 267.

¹⁰⁹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 194, 203.

¹¹⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 221.

¹¹¹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 49, 93, 142, 171, 217, 252.

¹¹² Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 608; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 374.

¹¹³ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 144.

¹¹⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 608; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 374.

heart, for Māturīdī, is both the place where reasoning is made to reach the truth and it is the place where truth is approved.¹¹⁵ In other words according to him, psychological aspects of belief are represented by the heart and its scientific aspects are represented by the reason. However, these are melted in the same pot and form the belief. In this way, conscience and logic meet in the heart.¹¹⁶

Māturīdī states the following about the unity of belief and the mind: “Being involved in belief is required with the existence of mind but information relating with the content of particulars forming the belief are gained by thinking and reasoning. This act (reasoning) is also a function of heart just like the belief.”¹¹⁷ He has the opinion that having belief can only be possible with approval of the heart based on information.¹¹⁸ Hence, when there is no information, approval has no meaning and when there is no approval, belief has no meaning. In other words, being uninformed causes ignorance, ignorance causes denial and denial causes getting away from guidance.¹¹⁹

According to Māturīdī, knowing (*ma'rifa*) is not enough on its own for believing although it has the capability of opening the way of approval,¹²⁰ because belief is not knowing but approving. If believing was related with knowing, its opposite would not be denial but ignorance.¹²¹ Meaning that knowing that something exists is not approval and not knowing it is not denial.¹²² Therefore, cognitive concepts such as delusion, suspicion, supposition and knowledge are not belief on their own, but they are the stages of development.¹²³

Māturīdī asserts that belief which is the source of guidance should be away from all kinds of suspicions. Therefore, he says that the Quranic ‘Hopefully’ for the issues that are beyond the capability of Muslims (al-Kahf 18/23, 24), he thinks that saying of ‘hopefully’ (*inshallāh*) in faith matters is meaningless because ‘hopefully’ is stated in case any doubt or suspicion exists. Furthermore, in the Qurān, believers are referred as: “Those who never doubt afterwards” (al-Ḥujurāt 49/15), and hypocrite non-believers (*munāfiq*) are referred as: “Those who are subject to suspicion and supposition” (al-Ḥadīd 57/14). In situations where there are no suppositions, predictions and suspicions, it is not possible to say ‘hopefully!’ Therefore, if a person who has reached guidance says: “Hopefully there is no god but Allah” (*Lā ilāha illā Allāh Inshallāh*), as this would cause weakness of belief and loss of blessing of guidance, it is not correct.¹²⁴

¹¹⁵ Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 6: 545; 5: 545; 8: 333.

¹¹⁶ Hülya Alper, *İmam Māturīdī'de Akıl-Vahiy İlişkisi* (Istanbul: İz Yayınları 2009), 57.

¹¹⁷ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 608.

¹¹⁸ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 532, 535, 567, 604; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 1: 374.

¹¹⁹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 567; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 5: 456.

¹²⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 563, 611-613; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 9: 183.

¹²¹ Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt*, 3: 520, 419; 5: 242.

¹²² Özcan, *Māturīdī'de Bilgi Problemi*, 144.

¹²³ Hanifi Özcan, *Epistemolojik Açından İman* (Istanbul: MÜ İFAV Yayınları, 1992), 35.

¹²⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 624-635; Id, *Ta'wilāt*, 7: 158.

3. GIVEN GUIDANCE

In theological literature, guidance which is readily found by someone, without efforts, is named as given guidance. Given guidance is defined as one’s reaching the truth by getting help from outside. This help coming from outside is divine message or revelation brought by angels and human messengers. So, reaching to the guidance with guidance of revelation is named as given guidance.¹²⁵ Therefore, without having a guide that makes someone reach guidance and an explanatory book, it cannot be called as given guidance.¹²⁶

Importance of report information is significant both in the coming of revelation and in its being transmitted to the future generations. Māturīdī, who is aware that religious information mainly comes through notification,¹²⁷ counts the reports among necessary information sources. According to him, there is no report that is more reliable than the ones brought by messengers due to miracles which prove the truth of reported information. Therefore, it is not possible for anyone to reject the news of a messenger apart from stubborn and arrogant people.¹²⁸

Just like news, which is necessary for the order of communities, prophethood is an information source which everyone asserting to have wisdom should accept.¹²⁹ Hence, information about far places, kingdoms, wars and various other issues can only be spread by means of news. While news is so important and essential for carrying out world issues, it is not correct to consider report invalid for knowing about particulars relating with theology. Without doubt, messengers and reports they bring with themselves are clear evidences for humans to reach guidance.¹³⁰

Leaving the news aside, due to the probability that they can be false or faulty is not only useless but it is also a harmful attitude. Because after people learn about things that can provide benefit or harm to them by experimenting, they transfer these experiences to others by means of news. Therefore, it is wrong for wise people not to rely on information provided by news that are based on expertise. According to Māturīdī, who says that news doesn’t have any informative value to humans is satanic. When a human cannot deny the sensual reality of information he has heard with his ears, satan states that this information is false, and he wants the person to get away from what is beneficial for him. However, with the reason, it is possible to verify both hearing and the news being heard. According to this, both sensual information and news are methods in obtaining correct information and as long as they are not superior to one another in a clear way, they are equal with respect to being information sources.¹³¹

¹²⁵ Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 1: 298; Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, 4: 310, 311.

¹²⁶ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 3; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 7: 393; 8: 553.

¹²⁷ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 164, 282.

¹²⁸ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 14, 271, 308; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 109.

¹²⁹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 5.

¹³⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 25, 281, 282; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 332.

¹³¹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 19, 20; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 420.

In the transfer of divine message into future generations, since those narrating cannot be free from faults, it is always required to analyze reports with the mind. In this respect, reports which are seen as reliable reports (*mutawātir*) by Muslim theologians are even not absolute¹³² because majority of news relating with the killing of Holy Jesus are not true even though they are reliable reports.¹³³ As individual reports (*āḥād/khabar al-wāḥid*) that have not reached to reliable level can be most probably faulty, according to Māturīdī individual reports should be analyzed with respect to reference and text, and their correctness should be verified. All types of reports that do not contradict with scientific and religious facts in final evaluation have a truth that bears information value in Muslim culture.¹³⁴

3.1. The Messenger

The God has sent messengers so that humans can reach guidance and find peace. With the messages they brought, messengers have given the good news of paradise to those preferring guidance and they were assigned to warn those not accepting or denying it with torment.¹³⁵ In this context, it is a beneficial attitude for humans to tidy up within the frame of message brought by messengers and to reach guidance.¹³⁶

Messengers have no private powers to make people reach guidance, other than fulfilling their assignments related with good news and warnings. In other words, what is expressed in verses such as “It is for sure that you are heading towards the right way.” (al-Shūrā 42/52) and “Each tribe has someone who makes them reach the guidance” (al-Ra‘d 13/7) is that messengers are guides for reaching guidance and guidance is notified in a healthy way.¹³⁷ According to this, messengers are obliged to explain the message they receive from God without making addition and hiding any part of it.¹³⁸

Māturīdī considers that reason is sufficient for people to find the truth and he does not consider it to be appropriate for other opportunities to be insufficient. According to him, if it is thought even further, it is asserted that reason itself proposes other opportunities to be used for reaching guidance. Since mind operates on the principle of getting closer to the beneficial and getting away from the harmful things, it does not get into danger if there is opportunity. For example, against the probability that food about which a person does not have any information about whether it is poisonous, it is the reason that recommends him to make investigation before consuming it. Just like advises of a person, who is experienced about this food, is important for the person being in this situation, in a similar way for a person searching for guidance, the reports brought by messengers are as important. Therefore, mind itself approves that messengers make

¹³² Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 15; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 18.

¹³³ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 14; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 409, 410.

¹³⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 15; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 257, 332.

¹³⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 308, 321; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 144, 145.

¹³⁶ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 7.

¹³⁷ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 572.

¹³⁸ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 557, 630; 6: 354, 509; 7: 186.

significant contribution to him as he reaches guidance.¹³⁹ Furthermore, as the reason remains insufficient regarding particulars establishing the basis of religion, the reports of messengers are required to decree.¹⁴⁰

Māturīdī is of the opinion that even if the mind would not need it, it would be permissible for messengers to be sent to believers as a grace by God because the God qualifies Himself with being grateful and He qualifies his believers as being in need of grace. Hence, while only one of them was enough, God has created many of human organs as double and while less would be sufficient, he has provided plenty and variety of sustenance. All of these prove that God is very gracious to humans. Therefore, in order to help them find guidance, God’s sending messengers to humans in addition to giving them the ability to reason are indicators of His grace.¹⁴¹

According to Māturīdī, God sends messengers not only because of His being gracious but also for justice. Thanks to messengers, human beings cannot make excuses for not reasoning. Hence, in the verses for humans not to say: “Our God! If a messenger was sent to us, we would have followed your orders before finding ourselves in this vile situation.” (Ṭā Hā 20/134) and “After the messengers, in order for believers not to have excuses against their creator” (al-Qaṣaṣ 28/47), the God has sent messengers.¹⁴²

In the delivery of messengers, there are various benefits with respect to practical aspects. For example, even though the reason has superior capabilities, we witness that its opportunities are limited and that it cannot decree correctly regarding every issue.¹⁴³ We witness that it can be misleading even for issues it is authorized to decree.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, while a human is surrounded with various earthy involvements and sensual desires, it would not be appropriate for him to leave the path leading to guidance, which he can reach without putting in more efforts for finding the truth.¹⁴⁵

According to Māturīdī, the need of humans for messengers in their religious and earthy affairs, turns it into a requirement beyond favor. Requirement for messengers with respect to religious aspects is related with the fact that a person knows how to be grateful to his God, logically the healthiest method is messengers because he best knows what kind of gratitude God expects from himself. Requirement for messenger regarding earthy affairs is related with the need to have an unbiased authority to make reconciliation regarding social and political disputes among humans. Apart from them as the best authority for humans is God, it is wrong to neglect news brought by messengers.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 275.

¹⁴⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 282; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 420, 421; 9: 36, 37.

¹⁴¹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 283; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 477.

¹⁴² Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 282; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 420, 421; 9: 36, 37.

¹⁴³ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 179.

¹⁴⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 290.

¹⁴⁵ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 284, 285, 277; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 5: 360; 1: 611.

¹⁴⁶ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 278, 279, 282; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 6: 144.

3.2. The Book

In reaching guidance, Māturīdī also considers believing in divine books besides messengers and reason as one of the essences of faith because the source of divine message or revelation is God. The evidence that revelation has been sent by God is its being in harmony with rational and real principles.¹⁴⁷

Concepts such as evidences (*bayyināt*) and the book of enlightenment (*al-kitāb al-munīr*) (Āl‘Imrān 3/184), which are used in The Qur’ān are synonymous for Māturīdī. According to him, the word ‘book’ in the phrase illuminating book refers to the book that is comprised of religious provisions and word of ‘illuminating’ denotes the value that enlightens the hearts of people reaching guidance. Therefore, as they differentiate between what is right and what is null and as they make people reach guidance, all divine books feature light (*munīr*) and differentiating (*furqān*) good from evil.¹⁴⁸

According to Māturīdī, the most clear evidence that the books are source of guidance is the verse: “This book is the guide for reaching the guidance, with which God leads whomever He wishes to the guidance” (al-Zumar 39/23).¹⁴⁹ Books can only be evidence and guide for guidance for those who wish to harmonize with him.¹⁵⁰ Book’s being evidence that makes someone reach guidance and that differentiates the truth from the faulty¹⁵¹ necessitates it to be clear and reasonable. Or else, revelation will have no meaning proposing and providing guidance.¹⁵²

Even though they contain the same evidences for all humans, divine books lead some people towards guidance and some towards unruliness.¹⁵³ In this respect Māturīdī returns back to the debate about whether guidance is a declaration or not and he is of the opinion that what is meant by the term “guidance” used in such verses as “This book which does not have any suspicion in itself leads those having devotion to the guidance” (al-Baqara 2/1) is not ‘clear declaration’. If it was a ‘declaration’ that the book stated in the verse was a source of guidance, there would be no difference between the person having devotion or not. However, in such verses, it is stated that the book can only be a guide for pious people.¹⁵⁴ Those who see the truth and believe in the book and who still don’t act in accordance with it and who hide the truth stated in it, cannot reach guidance.¹⁵⁵

According to Māturīdī, revelation is a source of light, spirit, healing and reaching guidance. Human beings reach information about truth with the light, the existence with the spirit, get rid of problems with

¹⁴⁷ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 273.

¹⁴⁸ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 550.

¹⁴⁹ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 675.

¹⁵⁰ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 4: 168, 170, 437.

¹⁵¹ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 431.

¹⁵² Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 578.

¹⁵³ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 7: 383.

¹⁵⁴ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 1: 373, 583.

¹⁵⁵ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 10: 8, 9.

the healing, and have awareness of goodness with the guidance, and he finds peace.¹⁵⁶ Revelation enhances guidance and belief of the believers, and sin and denial of the deniers.¹⁵⁷ While the book is the source of guidance for believers on earth that guides them in their affairs, it becomes a source of mercy in the afterlife and a reason for them to be forgiven.¹⁵⁸ Invitation of divine books for reaching guidance is a general call including everyone, but on private level, it only addresses those who obey this call.¹⁵⁹

In the thought system of Māturīdī, we can define delivery of divine message to the messenger as ‘revelation’ (*waḥy*) and we call its being transmitted from the messenger to humans as ‘the report of the messenger’ (*khabar al-rasūl*) coming from the messenger of the God.¹⁶⁰ For the last messenger, meaning of the report of messenger for generations coming after the prophet is the Holy Qur’ān.¹⁶¹ In other words, the book that is sent with Prophet Muhammad is the Qur’ān.¹⁶² According to Māturīdī, the Qur’ān will continue existing without being distorted until the doomsday because it is both being transferred from generation to generation as reliable report and it remains valid as an intellectual miracle.¹⁶³

According to our opinion, the Qur’ān is an intellectual miracle as it is different from other literature works with respect to source, meaning and method. The Qur’ān is unique with respect to its source and it is impossible for a similar one to be brought in that sense. Māturīdī argues that Qur’ān is an intellectual miracle with its richness in meaning and style. According to him, proper and effective wording art is divided in two types: poems and prophecy. The Qur’ān is different and superior to poems with respect to the order and it is different and superior to prophecy with respect to the influence. This feature of the Qur’ān shows that it is a divine book.¹⁶⁴ Most probably, due to his emphasis that the Qur’ān is a miracle with respect to its meaning and provisions, Māturīdī mentions a narrative about fatwa of Abū Hanīfe that salat can also be performed in languages other than Arabic because with respect to reaching guidance, the main particular is not the language of divine books but it is related with the message given.¹⁶⁵

According to Māturīdī, all of the words, integration and sentence sequences that are used in the Qur’ān were known by the Arabic people but none of these were offered in a unity of harmony and meaning that The Qur’ān has. The fact that such a message has come out of the mouth of someone who has not received any formal or non-formal education in his life is nothing but miracle according to Māturīdī.

¹⁵⁶ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 261.

¹⁵⁷ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 4: 438.

¹⁵⁸ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 134.

¹⁵⁹ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 7: 12.

¹⁶⁰ Özcan, *Māturīdī’de Bilgi Problemi*, 64.

¹⁶¹ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 320.

¹⁶² Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 9: 168; 7: 161.

¹⁶³ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 300, 308.

¹⁶⁴ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 325, 329; *Id*, *Ta’wilāt*, 8: 235.

¹⁶⁵ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 200, 201.

Therefore, the Qur’ān, the similar of which can only be brought by the God, is a unique miracle just like other miracles.¹⁶⁶

The Qur’ān is the source of reaching guidance for each generation until doomsday because the news it gave with regard to the past and the future comply with historical facts and the evidences it uses are away from deficiencies and conflicts. Furthermore, the Qur’ān states that it is not an upstart and that it approves the previous divine books and prophets. Therefore, Māturīdī has shown that the Qur’ān is a source of guidance in people of the scriptures (*ahl al-kitāb*).¹⁶⁷

CONCLUSION

With respect to quality and opportunities, it is possible to explain all types of guidance basically under two approaches: ‘declaration’ (*bayān*) and ‘grace’ (*luṭf*). According to the approach led by Mu’tazila, guidance means explanation of the right path to all humans so that they can reach the truth with their own efforts. As grace that is emphasized by Ahl-i Sunne, guidance is a private gift to which no one else other than previously determined special people can reach.

Guidance theory of Māturīdī has a structure that contains parts from declaration and grace theories. As he explains the issue of guidance, he thinks like Mu’tazila at the stage of formation and development, and like Ahl-i Sunne at the conclusion stage. From his attitude, it is possible for us to see that he does not see declaration and grace theories as substitutes of one another. Therefore, while Māturīdī states that guidance is not a declaration as he opposes Mu’tazila, he does not mean that he has no connection with him because sensual perception (*‘iyān*) and reasoning (*naẓar*), which he considers as sources of guidance are already declaration as per their structures.

In kalam, there are two basic methods for reaching guidance: given guidance, which is reached by notifying information, and gained guidance, which is reached by mental information. With that being said, guidance is defined as reaching the right way with the accompaniment of an external guide such as a messenger or a book, and gained guidance is defined as reaching guidance with the accompaniment of a guide such as mind and ethics. Māturīdī does not make preference among methods of guidance, and he shapes his guidance approach in accordance by deeming both of them as correct. For this reason, what is essential in reaching guidance is not what the method is but whether it yields a correct outcome or not.

According to Māturīdī, while revelation is necessary source of given guidance for knowing the God, it is a must for knowing religious provisions. While the reason, source of gained guidance, is a requirement for knowing the God, it is a necessity for knowing religious provisions. According to this, when revelation does not reach a person, he can find the God by considering general goodness and badness principles. But when he reaches revelation, he can reach guidance by learning religious provisions and by living in accordance with them. In this situation, revelation is a requirement not for knowing the God but related with fiqh provisions.

¹⁶⁶ Māturīdī, *Ta’wilāt*, 320; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 2: 375, 376.

¹⁶⁷ Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*, 300-302; Id, *Ta’wilāt*, 3: 533.

In the final analysis, Mâtūrîdî argues that sources of guidance are the reason and the heart. Humans can know the truth by reasoning and by believing with their hearts and they can reach guidance. What is important in the issue of guidance is that it must be away from unquestioned imitation and must be unconditioned no matter which method it uses. Only in this way a person accepting guidance can make his preference with information and a person denying can again make his preference based on information.

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