



Original Research Article

The Role of Sensation and Intellect in Religious Epistemology from the Perspective of Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī

Article History:

Name of Author:

Fakhruddin Faizi¹ Afghanistan), Dr. Seyed Zuhair Al-Mesilini (Tunisia)²

Affiliation: ¹PhD student in Islamic Theology, Department of Philosophy and Islamic Theology, Al-Mustafa International University, Golestan Branch, Afghanistan

² Scientific Department of Islamic Theology, Golestan Representative Office, Al-Mustafa International University, Tunisia
<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-1335-7267>

Received: 11-11-2025

Revised: 26-11-2025

Accepted: 10-12-2025

Published: 31-12-2025

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

Abstract: Many Muslim theologians consider both sensory perception and intellect as foundational sources of religious knowledge. Among them, Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and Fakhr al-Din al-Razi have given special attention to these faculties, treating them as essential cognitive tools in the pursuit of truth. Establishing valid epistemological instruments is crucial for acquiring accurate and reliable knowledge, as no epistemic system can function without them. The exploration of knowledge sources remains a central concern in both general and religious epistemology. Within Islamic intellectual history, various scholars have contributed to this discourse. Al-Razi, a leading figure among the Ash'arites, and al-Maturidi, the founder of the Maturidi theological school, are particularly notable. Their views are especially important given their foundational roles within their respective traditions—Maturidi as a pioneer of rational theology in Central Asia, and Razi as a critical voice in Ash'arite thought. In contemporary times, where the use of reason and sensory perception often falls into extremes—either overemphasized or underutilized—examining the balanced perspectives of these classical thinkers can offer insightful guidance. This study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach to examine how al-Maturidi and al-Razi conceptualize the roles of sense perception and intellect in religious epistemology. Findings show that both accept multiple sources of knowledge, including sense, reason, and intuition. However, they diverge in how they define the scope and function of each. Despite these differences, both emphasize the importance of these faculties in theological domains such as understanding God, prophethood, and the afterlife.

Keywords: Epistemology, Epistemological Tools, Sensory Perception, Intellect, Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi.

INTRODUCTION

Religious epistemology is one of the most fundamental subjects in theology and the philosophy of religion, and it has always attracted the attention of Muslim theologians and thinkers. Among the key issues in this field is the relationship between sensory perception and intellect in attaining religious knowledge. Two of the most prominent Islamic thinkers who have presented significant views on this

topic are Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 333 AH) and Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606 AH).

Al-Maturidi, the founder of the Maturidi theological school, places strong emphasis on the role of reason in religious knowledge. He believes that intellect, even without revelation, is capable of understanding certain fundamental theological principles, such as divine unity (tawḥīd) and divine justice. While he

acknowledges sense perception as one of the sources of knowledge, he considers it insufficient on its own and stresses the necessity of intellect in interpreting sensory data. In contrast, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, a leading Ash'arite theologian and renowned Islamic philosopher, accepts the role of reason but also points to its limitations, placing greater emphasis on revelation as the ultimate source of religious knowledge.

This study examines the perspectives of these two thinkers regarding the role of sensory perception and intellect in religious epistemology. It analyzes their points of convergence and divergence, contributing not only to a deeper understanding of Maturidi and Ash'arite theological foundations but also offering insights for contemporary discourse on religious rationality and its relationship to sensory experience and revelation.

1. Conceptual Clarification

In this section, an effort is made to discuss some of the key and practical terms used in this study, such as sense and intellect.

1.1. Sense (Ḥiss):

Ḥiss refers to the faculty by which tangible and sensory phenomena are perceived. It can denote the perception of subtle sounds, understanding through awareness and reflection, and is sometimes used in the sense of conscience or knowledge as well.

In technical terms, sense refers to those forms (ṣuwar) of external objects that are reflected in the mind during direct interaction with the external world—primarily through the activation of one of the five senses. For instance, when a person looks at a scene, an image of that scene is imprinted in the mind. This image is a specific mental state that a person directly observes within themselves, which is referred to as seeing.

1.2. Intellect ('Aql):

Linguistically, the word 'aql means to restrain, withhold, bind, or stop. The expression 'aqala al-ba'ir bi-l-'iqāl means "he tied the camel with a rope," and 'aqīlat al-mar'a sha'rahā means "the woman tied her hair."

Intellect is a ray of divine light within the human being that guides him toward the abode of truth. God Almighty has placed this faculty in man as an inner proof (ḥujjat bāṭiniyya), so that through its guidance, he may find the straight path. The term 'aql has various meanings, and the Qur'an contains many synonyms for it. Theologians have offered broad interpretations of intellect, and their understandings are deeply rooted in Qur'anic and revelatory knowledge.

This section seeks to explore the intellect from the perspective of theologians. In general scholarly usage, the term 'aql is applied to three aspects:

- a. Dignity and composure in a person, defined as: "Intellect is the praiseworthy state of a human being in speech, behavior, and choices."
- b. The general principles that a person attains through experience, defined as: "Meanings accumulated in the mind which are extracted by the human being as premises, objectives, and sources."
- c. The originality and soundness of the innate nature (fiṭrah), defined as: "A power that discerns the beauty and ugliness, and perfection and deficiency of things."

1. The Role of Sense Perception in Religious Epistemology According to Abu Mansur al-Maturidi
The Maturidiyyah school recognizes the senses as one of the sources of knowledge. Abu Mansur al-Maturidi himself refers to this as 'iyān (immediate perception), stating that 'iyān is that which is apprehended through the senses. From his perspective, sense perception is the foundation of all knowledge that is immune to ignorance. Through the senses, humans experience pain and pleasure, and anyone who denies such experiences—when exposed to pain—would inevitably be compelled to admit their existence.

Abu Mu'in al-Nasafi refers to these as sound senses (ḥawāss salimah) and considers them one of the means and sources of knowledge. He enumerates them as hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch. The method of affirming knowledge through the senses is regarded as self-evident. All of these can serve as pathways to knowing God—for example, through observing the wonders and marvels of the universe, the creation of the heavens and the earth, their changes, the process of growth, and the creation of the human soul.

Similarly, witnessing the miracle of the Prophet, such as the Qur'an—where opponents were unable to produce a book like it—demonstrates the truth of his mission. Other miracles such as the splitting of the moon and the testimony of inanimate objects to his prophethood also serve this function, all of which evidently point to knowledge of God and His Prophet, and are established through sense perception.

In another work, al-Tamhīd li-Qawā'id al-Tawḥīd, al-Maturidi again lists the senses as means of acquiring knowledge and states that each sense is limited to the faculty for which it was created. He emphasizes that there is no basis for denying the senses, and that such denial stems from obstinacy and arrogance. He asserts that knowledge is provable through these senses, and denying these evident

truths is mere boastfulness and pride.

Furthermore, he writes that no one would deny knowledge and the affirmation of truths through the senses except one who has reached the peak of shamelessness and hostility, and who blatantly rejects truths and knowledge gained through sensory experience. He argues that such individuals should be punished by disabling their limbs, withholding food and drink, until they cry out in desperation and beg for sustenance. At that moment, it should be said to them: "The pain of amputation, the blows, hunger, and thirst are not real." Their response—if they protest—proves the reality of these sensory experiences and compels them to acknowledge the truth. Continued denial on their part reveals the falsehood of their claims, the invalidity of their approach, and the baselessness of their beliefs. If they admit the falsity of their own views, this would suffice as a rebuttal to their claims.

2. The Role of Sense Perception in Religious Knowledge According to Fakhr al-Din al-Razi

Fakhr al-Din al-Razi categorizes the sources of religious knowledge in accordance with the principles of religion, stating that humans can acquire sensory and rational knowledge through natural means and intellectual effort. He considers inspiration (ilham) as the second source, through which knowledge is attained in the heart. 'Ilm ladunni (divine knowledge bestowed without effort) is understood as knowledge that does not require intellectual endeavor, but can be attained through spiritual discipline and struggle against the self, encompassing the sciences and knowledge revealed by God.

Another factor contributing to certainty in humans is fitrah (innate nature), by which a person can discern the right path—provided they are free from harmful influences such as false teachings, parental upbringing, greed, and jealousy. Among the divinely granted means of knowledge affirmed by religion is firasah, an insight through which a person can ascertain the inner qualities of others by external observation.

However, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi holds that some knowledge exists beyond the limits of the sensory and rational realms. The proper method to access such knowledge is through trust and faith in revealed principles. According to him, some knowledge can be acquired through human cognitive faculties, but there are higher realms of knowledge in existence that humans can access only through the prophets; cognitive faculties alone are insufficient to attain them.

He believes that humans, based on their individual capacities, can acquire knowledge, and through their

external and internal distinctions, by the illumination of the heart, tongue's remembrance of God, and bodily obedience, they are considered the noblest of beings. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi asserts that the heart is the primary locus of the soul, the place of discernment and understanding—i.e., the seat of intellect and knowledge—where the data from other faculties are examined. He also maintains that hearing and sight are instruments of the heart, and the condition of the heart influences their function. The heart's power and ability to discriminate and utilize other bodily faculties in acquiring knowledge demonstrate that humans, according to their aptitude, understanding, intellectual strength, and cognitive faculties, can attain true knowledge.

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, in volume 20 of *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, under the commentary of the noble verse:

"And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks", states:

The human soul at the beginning of creation is devoid of any knowledge or understanding. God, in His grace, endowed humans with the senses so that through them, they may acquire knowledge and wisdom. Al-Rāzī interprets the phrase "you knew nothing" to mean that the soul, at the beginning of infancy, possesses no knowledge. From the continuation of the verse "and He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts," he infers that the initial inscription of knowledge and understanding upon the tablet of the human soul occurs through the senses.

He then delves into this issue in detail and begins by posing a challenge: Concepts (taṣawwūrāt) and judgments (taṣdīqāt) are either self-evident or innate. Certainly, speculative knowledge must be derived from self-evident principles. Therefore, self-evident truths must precede speculative knowledge in the mind.

At this point, a question arises: Where do self-evident truths originate from? Were they present from the beginning of creation, or did they arise later?

He argues that the first possibility is certainly false, because we know that a fetus in its mother's womb is aware of no self-evident truths—for example, it does not understand that the coexistence of two contradictory propositions is impossible, or that the whole is greater than the part.

Thus, the second option must be accepted: that self-evident truths are also acquired. But if they are acquired, they must come from other forms of knowledge. This implies that all our supposed self-evident truths are actually speculative—and such

circular reasoning would lead us endlessly in a loop with no resolution.

After presenting this powerful objection, al-Rāzī offers a response: he accepts the second option and admits that self-evident truths were not present at the beginning but appeared later. However, he argues that this does not entail that they are speculative or acquired through reasoning, because the acquisition of self-evident truths occurs with the assistance of sensory faculties—namely hearing and sight—and not through speculative reasoning or intellectual effort.

3. The Role of Reason in Religious Knowledge According to Abu Mansur al-Maturidi

Unlike al-Ash'ari, who followed the Hanbali-Maliki tradition, al-Maturidi (d. 333 AH) aligned himself with the views of the Hanafis. This was because Abu Hanifa was among the proponents of rational opinion (ra'y) and recognized analogical reasoning (qiyās) as valid in deriving legal rulings. Thus, Maturidi considered his views to be in agreement with Abu Hanifa's approach.

The Maturidi school, which traces back to al-Maturidi himself, gives greater authority to reason ('aql) than the Ash'arite school. He advanced the role of intellect in religious epistemology further than the Ash'arites. For instance, he divided reason into theoretical and practical reason, deemed both types valid, and considered reason one of the legitimate paths to knowledge—holding that man cannot do without it.

On the subject of good and evil (ḥusn wa qubḥ), al-Maturidi, like the Mu'tazilites, believed that good and evil are inherent in things. He classified things into three categories:

1. Things whose goodness (ḥusn) can be known by reason alone;
2. Things whose evil (qubḥ) can be known by reason alone;
3. Things that the human intellect cannot grasp, and for which one must refer to revelation for guidance.

From this classification, al-Maturidi concluded that reason can comprehend the goodness or badness of certain actions. However, unlike the Mu'tazilites, he held that reason cannot impose obligations; it is only through divine revelation that obligations (taklīf) are assigned. God alone is the one who commands and obligates, as the function of reason is discovery, not to legislate or bind God in any way.

On the topic of determinism and free will, the Maturidis held that divine wisdom and justice require that human accountability be based on free, voluntary actions. Therefore, while all actions

performed by human beings are created by God, humans acquire (kasb) these actions and exercise free will in doing so. Reward and punishment are accordingly attached to this acquisition.

According to al-Maturidi, acquisition (kasb) occurs by means of the power that God has bestowed upon human beings. Thus, a person can choose to perform or refrain from an act. In reality, this acquisition is made possible by the power and agency of the individual. Therefore, there is no contradiction between God's creation of the act and human free will.

In contrast, the Ash'arites argued that the servant has no real power over actions and is only the possessor of kasb, which merely accompanies the act without exerting causal influence.

Hence, in the Maturidi view, kasb is interpreted in such a way that it preserves both divine omnipotence and human freedom—upholding God's exclusive role as Creator while affirming human responsibility and agency.

Regarding the issue of ambiguous attributes (ṣifāt khabariyya), although al-Māturīdī himself, emphasizing the transcendence (tanzīh) of God and relying on the Qur'anic verse "There is nothing like unto Him", entrusted the interpretation of such attributes to tafwīd (consigning the meaning to God), some later Māturīdī theologians—such as Abū al-Mu'īn al-Nasafi—resorted to ta'wīl (figurative interpretation) of these verses. From this perspective, their approach draws closer to the rationalist stance of the Mu'tazila.

In comparing the Ash'arīs and the Māturīdīs, one may conclude that the Ash'arīs followed a path between Mu'tazilite rationalism and the textualism of the traditionists (ahl al-ḥadīth), while the Māturīdīs charted a middle course between the Ash'arīs and the Mu'tazila. In other words, if we imagine the intellectual space of the four principal theological schools of Islam—each of which is recognized within the fold of faith by the broader Muslim community—as a field divided into four zones, the Mu'tazila would occupy one side, the ahl al-ḥadīth the opposite side, with the Māturīdīs adjacent to the Mu'tazila, and the Ash'arīs aligned more closely with the traditionists.

Based on this framework, reason ('aql) enjoys a prominent and dynamic role in Māturīdī thought, a role that manifests itself throughout their theological system. Compared to the Ash'arīs, the Māturīdīs advanced rational engagement a step further: they recognized not only theoretical reason but also practical reason as valid, embraced the concepts of

intrinsic good and evil (ḥusn wa qubḥ 'aqlī), and incorporated these into their rational discourse. Moreover, their rationalism was not merely philosophical but was framed as a religious and scripturally guided pursuit. They viewed the use of reason as a divinely sanctioned endeavor, one that operates under the guidance of revelation.

Therefore, it can be argued that had there not been widespread opposition to rationalism—particularly following the decline of the Mu'tazila in the fourth Islamic century—the role of reason in religious epistemology, from the perspective of the Māturīdīs, would have become even more pronounced and played a more expansive role in the development of Islamic theology.

4. The Role of Reason in Religious Knowledge from the Ash'arī Perspective

The Ash'arī school is attributed to Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl ibn Ishāq al-Ash'arī (260–324 AH / 874–936 CE), who initially inclined toward the Mu'tazilite doctrine and defended its teachings for many years. He studied under Abū 'Alī al-Jubā'ī, a prominent Mu'tazilite theologian, and was considered one of his foremost students, occasionally substituting for his teacher. He remained closely attached to him for nearly forty years until a profound spiritual transformation led him to abandon the Mu'tazilite creed. On a Friday, in the Great Mosque of Basra, he publicly announced his change of belief with a loud voice. The Ash'arī school essentially emerged as a synthesis of the intense disputes between two prior schools—Ahl al-Ḥadīth (the Traditionists) and the Mu'tazila—attempting to establish a moderate path in opposition to the extremisms of both.

In the domain of theoretical reason ('aql nazarī), the theological debate between Ahl al-Ḥadīth and the Mu'tazila demonstrates the deep-rooted importance of reason within these two sects. While Ahl al-Ḥadīth denied any significant role for reason in engaging with Qur'ānic verses and Prophetic traditions and regarded human beings as constrained believers compelled to accept the texts without question—even when faced with *ṣifāt khabariyya* (ambiguous attributes) whose apparent meanings suggested anthropomorphism—they deferred interpretation to God alone and confined themselves to belief. Conversely, as noted above, the Mu'tazila granted reason a broad scope, accepting its judgment in both rational knowledge and moral laws (*aḥkām al-'aql*), interpreting ambiguous attributes allegorically. For instance, they understood *yad mabṣūṭa* ("extended hand") as generosity and mercy; *wajh* ("face") as essence or existence; and *istiwa'* ("establishment") as possession and dominion.

The Ash'arī school took a middle course between these two approaches. They neither wholly accepted the Mu'tazilite rational principles nor completely submitted to reason, instead choosing a moderate path between the two previous extremes—one of absolute rationalism and the other of outright rejection of reason. This meant that while they employed reason in interpreting religious texts, they did not consider it absolute and limited the authority and faculties of reason, thus prioritizing scriptural teachings over philosophical reasoning.

Regarding practical reason ('aql 'amali), as previously noted, Ahl al-Ḥadīth held that humans are compelled in their actions and that God is the primary agent behind all acts, attributing even voluntary human actions to God's will (the doctrine of *jabr*). The Mu'tazila, opposing this view, argued that humans themselves are the creators of their voluntary good and evil deeds (the doctrine of *tafwīd*), and that individuals will be rewarded or punished in the hereafter according to their earthly deeds. Between these views, the Ash'arīs adopted the doctrine known as *kasb* ("acquisition"), seeking a middle ground. According to this view, God is the creator of human voluntary acts, but humans are the "acquirers" of these acts. Their rationale was that humans do not possess the power to create their actions; if they did, they would also be able to create other acts. For Ash'arīs, human free will depends on one's will (*irāda*), not on one's power (*qudra*). Furthermore, since it is established that humans acquire acts through their will, divine justice in reward and punishment becomes clear: the act's efficacy is from God, and the servant's role is limited to willing the act that leads to good or evil. This is supported by the Qur'ānic verse: "كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ" (Every person is a hostage to what he has earned). Therefore, any act chosen by a human has two characteristics: first, it is willed by the human and accompanied by the capacity to perform it; second, it is brought into existence by God's will and power. The Ash'arīs liken this dual status to a movement God creates in a body, which in turn causes the body to move.

Regarding the ambiguous attributes (*ṣifāt khabariyya*), the Ash'arī school holds that such attributes must be affirmed in a manner befitting God's exalted essence. Their position is intermediate, between the Mu'tazila and the Ḥashwiyya (literalists). Their affirmation of these attributes denies the Mu'tazilite rejection of attributes as distinct from God's essence, yet they also reject any literal meanings that lead to anthropomorphism. They conclude that: first, God's essence possesses attributes such as *yad* (hand), *istiwa'* (establishment), *'ayn* (eye), *wajh* (face), and the like; second, the modality (*kayfiyya*) of these attributes is unknown to

us and must be accepted without asking how (bilā kayf); third, God's attributes differ in essence from human attributes—a difference described as the "theory of opposition" (naẓariyyat al-mukhālafah).

5. Instances and Applications of Reason's Role in Religious Epistemology

The question of God and theology occupies a central place in every religion and school of thought. Belief in the existence of God can rightfully be considered the cornerstone of any divine doctrine. Among the most significant expressions of reason's role in religious epistemology are the domains of prophethood and eschatology, both of which hold a special position in theological discourse.

5-1. The Role of Reason in Theology (God-Knowledge)

In the discussion of theology (God-knowing), the first question that may arise is: What exactly is meant by theology? In other words, when the subject of theology is raised, people—depending on their intellectual and cultural backgrounds—may have different understandings and conceptions of it. Therefore, to clarify what theology means in theological schools such as the Māturīdiyyah and Ash'ariyyah, it is necessary to first explore its various levels.

Generally, theology can be discussed on three primary levels:

1. Knowledge of the Divine Essence

Can humans or any other creature grasp the essence and inner reality (kunn) of God? Most theologians and Muslim scholars across different schools agree that no created being—whether human or otherwise—can know God's essence. The rationale they provide is that knowledge requires a form of intellectual encompassing (ihāṭah) of the object known by the knower. Since God is the absolute and infinite being, and all other beings are limited and finite, such encompassing is impossible. The Holy Qur'an affirms this reality: "He knows what lies before them and what is behind them, but they cannot encompass Him in knowledge."

Although the Māturīdīs and Ash'arīs have not addressed this issue independently in detail, it is evident from their language and methodology that they agree with other Muslim theologians in affirming the impossibility of grasping the Divine Essence.

2. Knowledge of God's Existence

The second level of theology pertains to knowledge of God's very existence. In this regard, the consensus among Muslim theologians—including the Māturīdīs—is that such knowledge is not only possible but constitutes the foundational level of all

other theological inquiry

3. Knowledge of Divine Attributes and Acts

The third level of theology involves knowing God's attributes and actions. Once a person acknowledges the existence of God, they naturally seek more detailed knowledge of His qualities and deeds.

Before delving into the discussion on attributes, a preliminary question must be addressed: Why is knowledge of God necessary, and in what sense is it obligatory?

Muslim thinkers have differed on whether the obligation to know God is a matter of reason or revealed law. Rationalist schools such as the Mu'tazilites and the Adliyya maintain that knowledge of God is a rational obligation. They argue that even in the absence of prophetic revelation, the human intellect is sufficient to prompt reflection on oneself and the surrounding world and to deduce the existence of a Creator.

In contrast, groups like the Ahl al-Ḥadīth and the Ash'arīs argue that the obligation to know God can only be known through revelation (shar'), and that without divine legislation, nothing can be deemed obligatory upon humans.

The Māturīdī school, which in terms of methodology is closely aligned with the Adliyya, follows Imām Abū Hanīfa in affirming that the knowledge of God is a rational obligation. They believe that even if no prophet had been sent and no religion revealed, human beings would still be obliged—by reason alone—to recognize the Creator of existence

Nevertheless, while most Māturīdīs adhere to this view as attributed to Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī, some among them consider the obligation to know God as grounded in shar' rather than reason.

It is worth noting that Māturīdī theology remained localized in the region of Samarqand for about a century and did not initially spread to other areas of Transoxiana, nor even among the Hanafīs of Bukhara—most of whom adhered to the ḥadīth-oriented tradition.

2-5. The Role of Reason in Prophethood (Nubuwwah)

The intellect that God has bestowed upon human beings serves as the basis for moral responsibility and divine testing in this world. Accordingly, a morally accountable human being must, for the proper organization of their worldly life and for attaining success in the Hereafter, come to know the matters for which they are held responsible. The means for acquiring this knowledge can be categorized into two

types.

The first category includes matters that the intellect alone is incapable of comprehending—such as the specific times of prayer, the number of its units (rak'āt), the attributes of Paradise and Hell, and the regulation of certain worldly matters, such as social and familial relationships in a manner that is not driven by carnal desires. For this reason, divine wisdom necessitated that prophets be sent in every era to clarify and deliver the necessary rulings and teachings to people, and to affirm that which reason independently recognizes as good and beneficial.

The second category also consists of matters beyond the reach of reason alone—such as the times and units of prayer, the characteristics of Paradise and Hell, and the ordering of worldly relations in a way not governed by base desires. Therefore, divine wisdom likewise dictated the sending of prophets in every age, so that they may address humanity's legislative needs and confirm what reason discerns on its own.

3-5. The Role of Reason in Eschatology

A study of the works of Maturidi and Razi shows that, generally, Islamic scholars, based on transmitted arguments concerning resurrection and the annihilation of bodies, have been categorized into three groups.

a) The first group: This faction believes that annihilation means the disintegration of the parts of the bodies, and resurrection means their reassembly. This school has provided three main proofs for their claim.

First) Their argument is based on the story of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), as mentioned in the Qur'an: "And [mention] when Abraham said, 'My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead.'" Then God commanded him to take four birds, cut them into pieces, scatter the parts on different mountains, and then call them. Abraham obeyed, and then each piece rejoined its own part, gathered together, and they all became the original birds again.

Second) Their second argument concerns the story of Prophet Uzair (Ezra) (peace be upon him), who passed by a village and saw that all its people were dead. Wondering how God would resurrect them after death, God caused Uzair and his donkey to die for a hundred years and then revived them. Uzair witnessed that the bones of his donkey first grew flesh, then came together, and finally the donkey was restored to life. The Qur'an states:

"Or [consider] the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said, 'How will Allah bring this to life after its death?' So Allah caused him

to die for a hundred years; then He revived him. He said, 'How long have you remained [dead]?' The man said, 'I have remained a day or part of a day.' He said, 'Rather, you have remained one hundred years. Look at your food and your drink; it has not changed with time. And look at your donkey; and thus We make you a sign for the people. And look at the bones [of this donkey] — how We raise them and then We cover them with flesh.' And when it became clear to him, he said, 'I know that Allah is over all things competent.'"

Third) Their third argument is that God calls dry land "dead" and green, fresh land "alive" and says: "And it is Allah who sends the winds, and they stir the clouds and spread them in the sky however He wills, and He makes them fragments so you see the rain emerge from within them. And when He causes it to fall upon the earth, then it causes the earth to become alive. Indeed, He is over all things competent."

Therefore, according to this group, resurrection and reassembly do not mean becoming alive again in the usual sense, but rather it is not annihilation.

Up to this point, this was the viewpoint of the first school, grounded in Qur'anic verses and historical narratives.

b) The second group: This faction believes that annihilation means the actual destruction of bodies, and resurrection means their re-creation. This school also defends its view with various arguments.

The first argument is based on the verse in which Almighty God says: "Everyone upon it [the earth] will perish, and there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor."

The second argument is also derived from another verse of the Holy Qur'an, which states: "Everything will be destroyed except His Face."

Their reasoning is that if the parts of human bodies were to remain after death, the universal statement "everything will be destroyed" (kullu shay'in hālikun) would not hold true, and the generality of the verse would be violated.

The third argument refers to the following verse: "He is the First and the Last."

In elaborating on this argument, they assert that if the parts of bodies were to remain, the attribute "the Last" (al-Ākhir) would lose its proper meaning, for the implication is that the end should be, like the beginning, a state of non-existence.

The fourth argument of this group refers to the blessed verse in which God says: "Just as We began the first creation, We shall repeat it."

Based on this verse, they claim that just as the beginning of creation emerged from non-existence,

so too will the re-creation arise from non-existence. The main difference between this view and the first view lies in the fact that this doctrine holds the belief in the re-creation of the non-existent (i'ādat al-ma'dūm); however, its proponents differ regarding the mode of annihilation of physical bodies

Conclusion

The topics addressed in this study have been organized into two main sections, each comprising several subheadings. The first section focused on defining ḥiss (sense perception) and 'aql (intellect). The second section examined the role of both sense and intellect in religious epistemology, as understood by two prominent Islamic theologians: Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and Fakhr al-Din al-Razi. Finally, in the fifth part, specific instances and applications of reason in acquiring religious knowledge were discussed.

Sense (ḥiss): In the discussion on the role of sensory perception in religious knowledge from the perspectives of al-Maturidi and al-Razi, it was concluded that the senses serve as a crucial tool in the process of acquiring knowledge. Linguistically, ḥiss refers to perception, reception, and awareness. It is also regarded as a faculty responsible for perceiving tangible realities.

Reason ('aql): The function of reason in religious knowledge was likewise explored through the views of Maturidi and Razi. The study began with an analysis of their respective understandings of the epistemic authority of reason in religion, followed by an exploration of the various instances and practical applications of reason in this domain. Overall, the conclusion drawn is that reason is a radiance from divine light placed within human beings as an inner proof (ḥujjah bāṭinah), enabling them to discern truth from falsehood and to walk the path of guidance through its illumination.

References

1. Ebrahimi Dinani, Gholam Hossein. The Story of Philosophical Thought in the Islamic World. 3 vols. 1st ed. Tehran: [Publisher not specified], [Date not specified].
2. Ebrahimi Dinani, Gholam Hossein.

"Theological Thought of the Maturidis." Kayhan Farhangi, [No date or issue number available].

3. Abu Zahra, Muhammad. History of Islamic Doctrines. Translated by Alireza Imani. Qom-Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 2005 [1384 AH].
4. Ahmadian, Abdullah. An Analytical History of Sunni Theology: From Hasan al-Basri to Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari. Tehran: Nashr-e Ehsan, [Date not specified].
5. Al-Ash'ari, Abu al-Hasan. Risalah ila Ahl al-Thaghar. In: Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah Software, under "Ijma' 'Ashir"; also in The Great Islamic Encyclopedia, vol. 8.
6. Jalali, Sayyid Lotfollah. History of Maturidi Beliefs. Qom: University of Religions and Denominations, 2011 [1390 SH].
7. Saliba, Jamil. Dictionary of Philosophy and Social Sciences. Translated by Kazem Barg-Neysi and Sadeq Sajjadi. [No date, no place].
8. Al-Shahrastani. Al-Milal wa al-Nihal; also: Watt, William Montgomery. Islamic Philosophy and Theology, translated by Abu al-Fadl 'Izzati. 2nd ed. Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publishing Company, 2001 [1380 SH].
9. Tabataba'i, Sayyid Muhammad Husayn. The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism. Tehran: Offset Company (Public Joint Stock), 1953 [1332 SH].
10. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Muhammad ibn 'Umar. Al-Tafsir al-Kabir, vol. 1. Tehran: Asatir Publishing, 1992 [1371 SH].
11. Al-Farahari, Muhammad 'Abd al-'Aziz. Al-Nibras: Commentary on al-Nasafi's Creed. Multan, Pakistan: Maktabah Imdadiyyah, [No date].
12. Al-Maturidi, Abu Mansur Muhammad ibn Muhammad. Kitab al-Tawhid. Edited by Dr. Bekir Topaloglu and Dr. Muhammad Aruci. Istanbul: Irshad Publishing, Ramadan 1404 [1322 AH].
13. Al-Mahdi, Abu al-Yazid Joudah. The Sufi Approach Among the Great Qur'anic Commentators. Cairo: Al-Dar al-Joudiyyah, 2007.
14. Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah Software, under "Ijma' 'Ashir"; also in The Great Islamic Encyclopedia.
15. Al-Nasafi, Abu al-Mu'in Maymun ibn Muhammad. Tabsirat al-Adillah. 1st ed. Cairo: [No publisher], 2011; Damascus: [No publisher], 1990.