

# THE MAMLUK SCHOLAR HASAN B. ABĪ BAKR AL-MAQDISĪ'S METHOD OF UNDERSTANDING RŪ'YATULLAH

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## Abstract

The theological scholar al-Maqdisī lived in the fifteenth century during the Mamluk period, a period of great scholarship in every aspect of scientific life. Although two of his works have survived to the present day, his only commentary on Bahr al-Kalām, entitled *Gāyat al-Marām fī Sharḥ Bahr al-Kalām*, is very important in terms of providing information about his understanding of theology and that of his period. In this study, al-Maqdisī's views on the issue of rū'yatullah will be analyzed in the context of *Ghāyat al-Marām*. In our country, it is seen that the studies on Mamluk scholarly life and especially the understanding of theology of this period are not at a sufficient level; however, it is known that academic works have been written and symposiums have been held in recent years. For this reason, our study aims to fill the gap in the literature on this field by showing what kind of a structure theology had in the Mamluks from the perspective of al-Maqdisī. Our article will be based primarily on the commentary entitled *Ghāyat al-Marām*, since it contains al-Maqdisī's views. In addition, for a better understanding of the subject, the views of the Māturīdī theological scholars who lived in the Mutaqaddimūn and Maturkhirūn periods will be included. In his commentary, al-Maqdisī explains the issue of rū'yatullah by taking the classical Māturīdī view into account; however, since he lived in the Maturakhirūn period, it has been determined that he provided a better understanding of the subject by frequently referring to logical propositions. Especially in the subject we are studying, the verses cited as evidence are explained by logical arguments. As a result, the fact that he wrote his work with such a point of view at a time when logic and philosophy were distant reveals that he went to a different type of writing than other scholars.

**Keywords:** Kalam, Mamluk, Maturidi, Maqdisi, Ru'atullah

## INTRODUCTION

The problem of rū'yatullah is discussed in the books of kalām as a topic that was debated by the mujtahids in the II/VIII century. It is mentioned in various sources that this issue emerged as a result of a debate between Jahm b. Safwan, one of the early theological scholars, and members of the Sumeniyya. [1] The views put forward by the sects on the issue of rū'yatullah are generally shaped around the conception of God defended by the sects. The Mu'tazilite and Ahl al-Sunnah schools of theology put forward different views on this issue. The Mu'tazilite school of theology has a system based more on tawzih, based on the concern that God would resemble objects as a result of the realization of the vision. Their approach to the issue of rū'yat in this way is due to their adoption of a the'il and reason-centered understanding. The Ahl al-Sunnah, on the contrary, claim that Allah's vision is permissible in terms of being present, and that He is far from resembling the sighting of animate beings.[2], [3].

In theological works, the seeing of Allah is generally analysed in two parts: the world and the hereafter. In addition to this, the issue of whether God can be seen in the hereafter or not is discussed in theological books as the main part of the debate on rū'yat. [5] The problem of how to understand the âyat-i-kerîmas mentioned in the Qur'ân al-kerîm "*Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision. He is the Subtile, the Aware.(Al-An'am 6/103), "And when Moses came to Our appointed tryst and his Lord had spoken unto him, he said: My Lord! Show me (Thy self), that I may gaze upon Thee. He said: Thou wilt not see Me" (Al-A'raf 7/143), "For those who do good is the best (reward) and more (thereto). Neither dust nor ignominy cometh near their faces. Such are rightful owners of the Garden; they will abide therein." (Yunus 10/23), "We are your protecting friends in the life of the world and in the Hereafter. There ye will have (all) that your souls desire, and there ye will have (all) for which ye pray.." (Ha-Mim 41/31), "That day will faces be resplendent; Looking toward their Lord" (Al-Qiyamat 75/22-23) and "Nay, but surely on that day they will be covered from (the mercy of) their Lord." (Al-Mutaffife 83/15)* lies at the root of the problem of rū'yatullah. The schools of theology have either considered the literal meaning of the verses mentioned here or subjected them to the interpretation of the verses. The rational proofs used in the problem of rū'yatullah, on the other hand, do not have a persuasive nature when compared to the verses; because the occurrence of rū'yatullah in the hereafter falls within the scope of both the future tense and the absent. [4].

The issue of rū'yatullah has been analysed both in the relevant chapters of theological books and in independent studies. Detached works on this subject are as follows: Abū Bakr al-Ajurī's al-Taṣdīq bi al-naẓar ilallāhi ta'ala fi al-āḥire; al-Dāraqutnī's Ru'yetullāhi 'azza wa jalla; Maryam 'Abd al-Rahman Zāmil's Ru'yetullāh bayna al-Salaf wa al-Itizāl; Shāqir "Abd al-Jabbār's Keyfa nera'llāh; "Abd al-'Aziz b. Zayd al-Rūmī's Delālat al-Ḳur'ān wa'l-āṣār 'alā rū'yetillāhi bi'l-baṣar; 'Abd al-Rāzī b. 'Abd al-Rūmī's Izām al-minna fi rū'yeti al-mu'minīn rabbehum fi'l-jenne. [1] Researchers in Turkey, on the other hand, have written books, theses and articles on the subject of rū'yatullah, both on a sectarian and individual basis.

First, the works of both Mutaqadimūn and Mutaḥkhirūn period Māturīdī theological scholars will be consulted, since our study is centred on the work of a scholar belonging to the Māturīdī school of theology. The aim of limiting the literature in this way is to show al-Maqdisī's knowledge of this school and his position, and also to show whether there are methods that have not been mentioned by the scholars of the Māturīdī theological school but have been mentioned by the commentator. In addition, for a better

understanding of the subject, the views of the Mu'tazilites, Ash'arites and other schools of thought, as well as contemporary studies on Rū'yatullāh, are used in some places.

In this study, we will attempt to show the approach of Maqdisī, a Māturīdī theological scholar who lived in Mamluk Egypt in the fifteenth century, to the question of rū'yatullah. By reflecting on the content of his work *Bahr al-Kalām*, our study aims to show what kind of thought structure al-Maqdisī is trying to reveal about rū'yatullah. The author follows the method of responding to both rational and narrative evidence provided by the Mu'tazilites in a certain order. By following this method, the study aims to show the way of conveying the thought of the person belonging to this sect and the way of conveying the subject by remaining faithful to the intellectual structure of the age in which he lived, rather than conveying the general opinion of a particular sect.

It is known that logic and philosophy were to a certain extent kept at a distance in Mamluk scholarly life; however, both in the issue of rū'yatullah, which is the subject of our study, and in other issues in the field of kalām, it is seen that the commentator clarifies the issues by using logical arguments. In this respect, our study aims to show that logical arguments and philosophy were also used in Mamluk scholarship. In this way, it will be shown, albeit in a limited way, what kind of a structure the Mamluk understanding of theology had.

Since it is not possible to present the various topics covered in al-Maqdisī's commentary entitled *Ghāyat al-Marām fī Sharḥ Bahri al-Kalām* in an academic text with certain limitations, such as an article, only the topic of rū'yatullah will be presented in this study. Finally, it aims to introduce al-Maqdisī by providing information on his life and scholarly personality.

## **The life and works of Hasan b. Abi Bakr Maqdisī**

Hasan b. Abī Bakr al-Maqdisī was born in Al-Quds in 766/1365 AH. His full name is Hasan b. Sharaf al-Dīn Abū Bakr b. Ahmad Bedr al-Dīn b. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Maqdisī al-Qahirī al-Khanafī al-Hanafī. [6], Al-Maqdisī was known in Al-Quds as Ibn Bukeyra [6], [9], the nickname given to his father, and although the names of his uncle Shihāb Ahmad and his brother al-Shams Muhammad al-'Atī are mentioned in the books of *tanāt* and *rijāl*, there is no detailed information on whether he had a wife and children.[6] Since al-Maqdisī came to Qahira to study and was a well-known scholar in the region where he stayed, the fact that the names of his wife and children are not mentioned in the works gives us the impression that he never married. Al-Maqdisī began his studies in al-Quds (Jerusalem), the city of his birth, and is known to have traveled to cities such as Dimashq (Damascus) and al-Qahira as a student of knowledge. [10]. He learned from his uncle Shihāb Ahmad, Shurayhī, Hayr al-Dīn and other scholars of his time. [6] During his time as a professor in al-Qahira, the name of his student, Shihāb al-Mansūr al-Shā'ir, who took grammar lessons from him, appears in the sources; [6] however, the exact time and place where Maqdisī taught him have not been definitively determined. Al-Maqdisī, who was less well-known than other scholars of his time, has two extant works. He wrote two commentaries on Abū al-Mu'īn al-Nafsī's *Bahr al-Kalām* in the field of kalām, *Gāyāt al-Marām fī Sharḥ Bahr al-Kalām* [11], [12], [8], and *Sharḥ al-Sudūr bi Sharḥ al-Zawāidi al-Shuzūr* on Ibn Hisham's *Shuz'ūr al-zeheb* in the field of grammar. [11], [13].

Ulema is known as a class that affects both the life of science and the general society in the Islamic world.[14] For this reason, the value given to scholars in Islamic science and civilisation continued in the Mamluk period. In addition, in these mosques, madrasas and hangahs, the views of every sect were included. In order for the sultans in the Mamluk state to become leaders, they had to improve themselves both in terms of knowledge and politics.[15] As a result of this, Mamluk sultans ensured that the ulema

class assumed an intermediary role between the people and the administration in order to both hold political power in their hands and to have information about the situation of the people. The sultans of the Mamluk state, due to their great emphasis on scholars and the teaching of knowledge, established many mosques, madrasahs, and khanqahs in the capital, Cairo, and ensured that scholars were appointed to these institutions. It is seen that the value given to education in the Mamluk state was at high levels in terms of both the educational institutions opened and the equipment of the scholars trained. Such a system of education not only ensured scholars' access to work, but also led to the writing of quality works. The increase in the quality of knowledge and education increased the quality of human life.[16] After completing his academic studies there, Makdisî fulfilled the various tasks assigned to him by the Mamluk rulers. In addition to being the sheikh of the Shaykhūniyya, an important position for Hanafī-Māturīdī scholars, he also served as a muderris and preacher in various mosques and madrasahs.[6, p. 3/96]Detailed information about Makdisî's life is scarce, but it is known that he passed away on the 3rd of Rabī' al-Ākhir, 836 AH (1433 CE) in Cairo. [11], [10], [9], [12], [6]. His grave is located in the Hazira (graveyard) of the Shaykhuniyya Mosque. [6]

Although there is no detailed information about al-Maqdisī's scholarly personality and life, it is mentioned in the sources that he was talented[11], [10], [6] and well-equipped in Arabic, Fiqh [17], [18] and various Islamic disciplines, and that he was a person who took care to use words and expressions in their proper places when giving information to people.[9] The following statement by Sehawī, an important historian and biographer from the Mamluk period, provides us with more enlightening information about Makdisî's scholarly qualifications: "...When Makdisî came to Egypt, none of his students paid him any special attention. While he resided in the Jawār market, no one thought that he was worthy of the position of the Shaykh of the Shaykhuniyya, yet Makdisî assumed the leadership of the Shaykhuniyya." This passage reflects the high regard in which Makdisî was ultimately held, despite initially not receiving much recognition, and highlights his intellectual capacity and ability to attain significant scholarly positions.[6]

### **Maqdisī's Approach to the Issue of Rū'yatullah in the Context of his work entitled Gayat al- Merâm**

It is known that the schools of theology have various views on the possibility of rū'yatullah. Al-Maqdisī, on the other hand, states in his work that the schools of theology that claim that rū'yatullah will not be realized are the Mu'tazilites, Zaydiyya, Imāmiyya, Philosophers, and Khāricīs. On the other hand, he conveys the viewpoint of the Ahl al-Sunnah school of theology, which argues that ru'yat will take place, as follows: The sight of God will not be a mental act based on the power of thought, i.e., a set of images conceived in one's own mental world, or an imagination that we obtain with our sense organs, but will be observed with the eyes themselves. [19], Abū al-Mu'u'īn al-Nafsī (d. 508/1115), one of the leading scholars of the Māturīdī school of theology, describes the way God is seen as follows in his work al-Tamhīd li-kawāidi al-tamhīd: "Allah will be seen without any location or encounter, without the reaching of light, and without any dimension of distance between the seeing and the seen eyes." [20]

Al-Maqdisī first gives general information about the schools of thought that accept and reject rū'yatullah and then draws the reader's attention to the issue with a hadīth. He emphasizes that in a hadīth narrated from the Messenger of Allah, Allah will be seen by Muslims in the same way that the full moon shining in the night sky is seen without any effort, and that the time of the vision is neither at a time before entering Paradise nor on earth, but only in Paradise.[14].

Before presenting the evidence of the Ahl al-Sunnah, who claim that rū'yat will be realized, the author presents the evidence of the Mu'tazilites, who try to prove that Allah cannot be seen both in this world and in the hereafter by putting forward transmitted and rational evidences, as follows:

- a. *“And when Moses came to Our appointed tryst and his Lord had spoken unto him, he said: My Lord! Show me (Thy self), that I may gaze upon Thee. He said: Thou wilt not see Me” (Al-A'raf 7/143)* the preposition "لن" used in the verse signifies eternity, meaning that it denotes an absolute impossibility.
- b. *“Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision. He is the Subtile, the Aware.(Al-An'am 6/103)* In this verse, Allah uses the invisibility of His essence as an expression of praise. However, when His essence is attributed with sight, a state of incompleteness will occur, which is impossible for Him.
- c. It was narrated from 'A'ishah that she said, *“I asked the Messenger of Allah: Did you see your Allah on the night of the miraj? The Messenger of Allah said: No.”*(This hadīth quoted by al-Maqdisī in his work is mentioned in Saḥīḥ al-Muṣlīm with differences in wording although the meaning is the same. [21] This hadīth also proves that Allah cannot be seen.
- d. Al-Maqdisī presents the syllogism, *'If Allah were to be seen, He would have to be characterized by an attribute that is impossible for Him,'* as a rational argument put forward by the Mu'tazilites concerning the vision of Allah. The unified conditional syllogism mentioned here is explained as follows: 'If Allah were seen, He would have to be in a direction', where the Muqaddam part is "If Allah were seen" and the tālī part is "If Allah were seen, He would have to be in a direction'. The author gives the following explanation as to why this logical argument was used by them: Here, the invalidity of the secondary part in the proposition put forward by the unified conditional syllogism is based on the following reasons: In order for a person or object to be seen, there must either be an encounter, meaning the object must be in front of the observer; or the observer's eye must be able to direct light to the visible entity (The meaning here is that a light emanating from the eyes of the seer reaches the other party); or the object must not be too far away. The invalidity of the subordinate part is demonstrated here by the fact that these conditions for vision cannot be attributed to Allah. In the science of logic, since the invalidity of the subordinate parts of syllogisms necessitates the invalidity of the premises, the impossibility of the vision of Allah, as expressed in this proposition, is proven. [19]

The rational and transmitted proofs put forward by the Mu'tazila above are based on the work Bahr al-Kalām, as used by Maqdisī. This is because he wrote a commentary on this work, and although he did not add any further explanation to the proofs presented by Abu'l Mu'īn al-Nasafī on this issue, it is evident that he made the issue more comprehensible by using logical arguments in the section referred to as the rational proof.

Al-Maqdisī states in his work that the Ahl al-Sunnah, who claim that rū'yatullah will take place, use four verses from the Qur'ān al-kerīm and a hadīth narrated from the Messenger of Allah as evidence for this issue. The author explains these proofs in detail through logical arguments. In addition, al-Maqdisī includes the rational proofs mentioned in Bahr al-Kalām in the last part of his commentary in the context of a view expressed by the Mu'tazilites. Al-Maqdisī cites the following narrative proofs of the Ahl al-Sunnah regarding the possibility of rū'ah, including his own explanations:

- a. If the vision of Allah were conceived as impossible, then in the verse, *“My Lord! Show me (Thy self), that I may gaze upon Thee.” (Al-A'raf 7/143)* it would have been necessary for Prophet Musa not to make such a request from Allah. For it is as absurd/ inappropriate for an intelligent person to ask a question or

make a request about something that is intellectually impossible, as it is absurd/ inappropriate for an innocent prophet to make such a request of Allah. Moreover, when Prophet Musa made such a request from Allah regarding the vision, he should have been admonished; however, it is known that Allah did not admonish Prophet Musa regarding the impossibility of the vision. The unified conditional syllogism presented in the sentence can be summarized as follows: If vision were impossible, then Moses would not have asked the question. Since Moses did ask the question, it follows that vision is not impossible. Similarly, if vision were impossible, Allah would have given a warning regarding the question. However, since Allah did not give any warning, it can be concluded that vision is not impossible. Therefore, both premises lead to the conclusion that vision is possible. Here, the invalidity of the subordinate parts, which describe Prophet Musa asking a question and Allah admonishing him in response to these questions, proves the invalidity of the premise that the vision is impossible. The possibility of the vision occurring indicates both that the question asked by Prophet Musa is not impossible, and that Allah has given permission regarding the vision.

*"Allah said: "By no means canst thou see Me (direct); But look upon the mount; if it abide in its place, then shalt thou see Me." (Al-A'raf 7/143)* the âyat-i-kerîma in the following verse also points to the possibility of rû'yatullah. In this verse, presented as evidence, Allah links the possibility of the vision to the stability (steadfastness) of the mountain, which is within the realm of possibility. Based on the principle that something dependent on the possible is itself possible, and something dependent on the impossible is impossible, the occurrence of the vision is proven. This is because Allah links the vision to the stability (steadfastness) of the mountain, which is within the realm of possibility. In addition to the evidence presented regarding this verse, if the vision is considered to be linked to the moment when the mountain remains stability (steadfastness), the impossibility of the vision becomes apparent. This is because an objection has been raised that when Allah manifested Himself to the mountain, stability (steadfastness) did not occur at that moment. The author responds to this objection by pointing out that the state in which the vision will take place is only a standing in place, and that the time of its realization is the Hereafter. In this context, in response to the objection raised by the opponents, which suggests that if the mountain's stability (steadfastness) were linked to the vision, then the vision would have to occur, the author responds as follows: It is well known that this situation is invalid according to *ijmā'*. When we say "*mü'allak 'aleyh*" (the thing upon which something depends), we are referring to the stability itself; because taking stability in isolation ensures that the vision will occur in the future, and it is not necessary for the vision to occur at that moment. Opponents who approach the issue of the impossibility of the vision from a different perspective argue that when Prophet Ibrahim asked Allah to show him how the dead are resurrected, his request was granted. However, when Prophet Musa asked about the vision, it would be expected that Allah would fulfill this request, assuming the vision was possible. Since it is definitively known that this was not the case, the impossibility of the vision is proven. According to the author, these two situations differ from each other because in some cases the request is fulfilled by wisdom, while in other cases the request is forbidden by wisdom. Another argument presented regarding the impossibility of the vision being linked to a possible event is as follows: Allah did not link His own vision to the mountain's stability (steadfastness); rather, He attributed the manifestation condition to the mountain's stability (steadfastness). Since the mountain's stability is impossible during the manifestation, the vision is thus linked to a situation that is beyond the realm of possibility. According to the author, since the attribution of a state to a contingent work is realized only by God's will and discretion, there is no impossibility in attributing the manifestation to stability.

- b. In the verse, “*That day will faces be resplendent; Looking toward their Lord*” (Al-Qiyamat 75/22-23) the news that some people's faces will be radiant signifies that these individuals will be pleased to look at Allah with their own eyes. In the verse, the preposition "إلى" (ilā) makes the verb "نظر" (to look) transitive, transforming its original meaning into the sense of looking at or seeing, rather than its initial, intransitive meaning. To support this view, the author presents the verse, “*My Lord! Show me (Thy self), that I may gaze upon Thee.*” (Al-A'raf 7/143). However, it is not understood here that, as in the observable world, the desire is for the eyes to turn towards the entity to be seen, meaning that the vision is not understood in terms of a specific direction. If vision were understood in terms of direction, it would imply that Prophet Musa's seeing Allah would involve both the movement of his pupils and a direction being aimed at. However, it is impossible for Allah to be in any specific direction, side, or place. The author's attention to the change in meaning caused by the preposition is due to the Mu'tazila school interpreting this verb as meaning "to wait." Additionally, considering the perspective of the Mu'tazila school on the matter, the presence of meanings indicating a blessing before the mentioned verse leads to the idea that those who have been granted the blessing are in a state of predetermined waiting, which results in an unbecoming form of generosity. The Arabic usage “I saw him, but I did not look at him” ( نظرت ايه فلم أبصره ) proves that the verb ( نظر ) means to look.
- c. In the verse, "So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous work" (Al-Kahf 18:110), the term "likâ" (meeting) is realized through "muwājaha" (encounter). Meeting, in turn, is essential for the realization of the vision.
- d. The verses, "There is for you in it [Paradise] what your souls desire (Ha-Mim 41/3)" and "There is for you in it [Paradise] what your souls desire and what your eyes delight in, (Al-Zukhruf 43/73)" indicate that the believers will have access to everything they desire in the life of Paradise. It is stated by scholars that the most desired thing in the life of Paradise is to behold the vision of Allah. Just as it is possible for the believers to obtain whatever they desire in Paradise, it is also within the realm of possibility for them to see Allah and wish for that. Otherwise, it would lead to the conclusion that there are contradictory statements in the Qur'an.
- e. In the beginning of his discussion on the possibility of the vision, Al-Maqdisī draws the reader's attention to this issue by referring to the hadith, "You will see your Lord as you see the moon on a clear night, with no difficulty," [22], [23]:“Sunnah,” 233 (No. 4729); [24]:“Muqaddimah,” 63 (No. 177).; [21]:“Masājid wa Mawādi al-salāt”, 633; [25]:“Paradise,” 311 (No. 2551) which is narrated from the Messenger of Allah. Although he does not quote the hadith verbatim, he makes some clarifications by referencing it. However, in the section where he presents the evidence of the Ahl al-Sunnah, he includes the literal wording of this hadith and explains it as follows: The analogy presented with the full moon here proves, without any doubt, that Allah will be seen. It is understood from this hadith that, just as people look at the moon in the sky without difficulty, in Paradise, they will also see Allah without any hardship. [19]
- f. The author responds to the allegations of the Mu'tazilites after presenting the arguments of both the Mu'tazilites and the Ahl al-Sunnah on the issue of rū'yatullah. The author states that the preposition "لن" in the verse "You cannot see Me" (Al-A'raf 7/143) which is cited by the Mu'tazila as evidence, carries the meaning of "eternity" (permanence), and this is an invalid interpretation. According to him, the literal meaning of a word used in language should be considered. In this context, since the preposition "لن" can take on different meanings depending on its usage in various parts of the verse, it is not appropriate to restrict it to a single meaning. The author supports his claim by citing the verses,

“But they will never long for it, because of that which their own hands have sent before them. Allah is Aware of evildoers.” (Al-Baqarah 2/95) and “And they cry: O master! Let thy Lord make an end of us. He saith: Lo! here ye must remain.” (Al-Zukhruf 43/77) to show that the prepositions "لن" in these verses do not carry the meaning of "eternity" (permanence). Because the disbelievers did not initially wish for death for themselves, but later did, it is evident that the reference here is not to eternity, but to a specific time limitation. As conveyed by the Mu'tazila, restricting this preposition to a specific meaning would result in contradictory and erroneous interpretations in the words of Allah. Al-Maqdisī emphasizes that the preposition "لن" in the verse “Lo! I have vowed a fast unto the Beneficent, and may not speak this day to any mortal.” (Maryam 19:26), does not carry the meaning of "eternity" (permanence), due to the context provided by the word "اليوم" (today) in the verse. Finally, the author mentions that in the verse “And they cry: O master! Let thy Lord make an end of us. He saith: Lo! here ye must remain.” (Al-Zukhruf 43/77), the word "ماكتون" means to remain for a long period of time. [19]

Regarding the invalidity of the verse "... you cannot see Me..." (Al-A'raf 7/143) as an argument for the impossibility of the vision, Makdisī provides the following explanations: The verse denies the occurrence and existence of the vision of Allah, but it does not negate its permissibility. It can be understood from this that if the permissibility of the vision were to be denied, expressions such as "ليست بمرئي" (It is not visible) or "لا تصح رؤيتي" (My vision is not valid) would have been used by Allah in the verse. In addition to the view expressed here, regarding the denial of the occurrence and permissibility of the vision, Al-Maqdisī responds as follows to a theologian who presents a different view: The negation of the occurrence and permissibility of the vision in both this world and the Hereafter leads to an overgeneralization. However, the fact that Moses asked this question to God while in this world indicates that the vision will not only occur in this world. In this context, it is incorrect to apply a general rule to the specific nature of worldly life and extend it to the Hereafter, because negating a specific case does not necessarily entail negating a general principle.[19]

According to the Mu'tazila, who use the verse “Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision. He is the Subtile, the Aware.(Al-An'am 6/103) as evidence regarding the vision, this verse is interpreted to mean that Allah cannot be seen in any way. They base this claim on the assertion in the verse that "vision cannot grasp Him". The Mu'tazila theological school argues that in the verse, the term "idrak" (perception) is used in the same context as "eyes," and therefore it should only be understood as meaning vision. However, they emphasize that since the verse negates this perception in an absolute sense, it implies that the vision of Allah is impossible. [26] According to al-Maqdisī's view, the Mu'tazilites' argument for the impossibility of rū'yat on the basis of the eyes' inability to perceive is an invalid claim. Qadi Abduljabbar states that when the term "idrak" is used in its absolute sense, it refers to maturity or intellectual development, but when it is used in conjunction with the term "eyes", it refers to vision. [26] According to him, the perception mentioned in this verse refers to a special form of seeing. This is realized in the form of comprehending the seen being in all aspects and gaining knowledge of all its parts and boundaries. In addition to this, the author emphasizes that vision is a general (absolute) form of seeing and that the negation of the general will not be necessary as a result of the negation of the particular (perception). After stating his own opinion here, al-Maqdisī quotes Imam al-Ash'arī's opinion on the verse as follows: “We say that it necessitates vision. Because the verse excludes the perception of the eyes, but it does not exclude the perception of the seer”. [19] In Ibn Fūrek's Mujarred al-Makalāti al-Shaykh Abī al-Hasan al-Ash'arī, the chapter quoted by al-Maqdisī is mentioned. [27]:81

Al-Maqdisī, a theological scholar who lived in the later period, uses logical arguments to prove the possibility of rū'yat in the context of the verse quoted above. His use of this method of proof shows that he was familiar with the scientific understanding of his time. However, it is seen that our author was not affected by the distance shown to philosophy and logic in the Mamluk period; on the contrary, he conveyed



logical arguments and philosophical views in many parts of his commentary. The author argues the possibility of the vision based on the phrase “*Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision. He is the Subtile, the Aware.*(*Al-An’am 6/103*) (لاتدرکه الابصار) in the verse indicates a particular negation (specific negation), meaning that it should be understood as "not all eyes can grasp Him; rather, some eyes can grasp Him. Because the definite article "ال" in the word "الابصار" stands in place of a universal negation (sālība-i kullīyah), this results in the meaning of the sentence being understood as "no eye can grasp Him. However, if the negation preposition "لا" at the beginning of the verse is not taken into account, the meaning would be interpreted as "every eye can grasp Him." As mentioned earlier, the combination of the definite article "ال" in "الابصار" and the negation preposition "لا" leads to the transformation of the meaning in the verse into a universal negation (sālība-i kullīyah). In this context, the verse implies the meaning: “The disbelievers' eyes cannot grasp Him; rather, the believers will grasp Him.” Building on this logical argument, the author emphasizes that the verse does not express the generalization of negation (umūmu’s-salb), but rather the negation of the general (salbī’l-umūm). If the negation were generalized, it would lead to a universal negation, aligning with the view of the Mu’tazila. However, since the verse expresses the negation of the general, it contains a particular negation (tikel olumsuz), which is in accordance with the view of the Ahl al-Sunnah. As a result, according to logical arguments, the verse “*Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision. He is the Subtile, the Aware.*(*Al-An’am 6/103*) (لاتدرکه الابصار) contains a particular negation, proving that the view of the Mu’tazila is incorrect. [19], Abū al-Barakāt al-Nafsī makes explanations on this subject in his work. [20].

After proving the invalidity of the Mu’tazilites' view on rū’yat by using logical arguments, the author presents the possibility of rū’yat in a different way by including the views of Shams al-Dīn al-Samarqandī (d. 702/1303) in his work *al-Sahā’if al-ilāhiyya*: The part of the verse “*Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision*” (*Al-An’am 6/103*), followed by *He is the Subtile, the Aware.*(*Al-An’am 6/103*), also serves as evidence regarding the vision. In this context, when both the first and last parts of the verse are considered, it becomes evident that both sections serve as praise. While the negation of perception in the verse is an expression of praise, the ability of eyes to perceive would imply imperfection. From this, it can be understood that the meaning expressed in the verse is umūmu’s-salb (general negation), and therefore, the correctness of sālība-i cūziya (particular negation) does not create any contradiction with the correctness of sālība-i kullīyah (universal negation). Al-Maqdisī interprets al-Samarqandī’s way of thinking here as follows, explaining the issue with an approach that is in opposition to the view quoted by him above: Due to the meanings emphasized in the verse, while it is accepted that it contains both praise and the correctness of sālība-i kullīyah (universal negation), it should also be noted that its selb-i’l-umūm (negation of the general) applies not to both this world and the Hereafter, but rather only to the world. [19], [29]

The Mu’tazila theological school agrees that Allah cannot be seen in this world, based on the two hadiths: one narrated by Aisha, which states “*I asked the Messenger of Allah: Did you see your Lord on the Night of Ascension? The Messenger of Allah replied: No.*” [22]:“Tawhīd,” 127 (No. 7434); [23]:“Sunnah,” 233 (No. 4729); [14]:“Muqaddimah,” 63 (No. 177); [21]:“Masājīd wa Mawādi al-salāt”, 633;[25]:“Paradise,” 311 (No. 2551)However, when faced with the objection, "If Allah can be seen in the Hereafter, why do you deny it?" they respond as follows: The possibility of Allah being seen in the Hereafter would necessitate His being described with a specific direction. The unified conditional syllogism here implies that the secondary premise — Allah being attributed to a direction — would make the primary premise — the vision of Allah in the Hereafter — impossible.[19]

In response to the Mu'tazila's explanation regarding direction (the mukābalaḥ proof) in relation to vision, Al-Maḡdisī states the following: It is impossible for objects in the observed world to be seen without a specific direction. Moreover, the removal of the direction, which is a condition for the perception of objects, does not imply that the perception itself ceases. In this regard, since it is known that Allah does not belong to any direction, there is no need for a specific direction for His vision. To further clarify the issue, the author emphasizes that the attribute of knowledge can serve as an example in this case. When something is known to be in a certain direction, it is understood in its particular state in that position. For example, if someone knows that Zayd is in the house, this knowledge entails knowing Zayd's presence there. Similarly, if something is not known to be in a particular direction, it is known in a state where it is not in a direction, and this applies to our knowledge of Allah's essence.[19]

## CONCLUSION

The issue of rū'yatullah began to be discussed in theology in the II/VIII century. Each school of theology endeavored to understand rū'yatullah in a way that reflected its own conception of God. While the Mu'tazilite school of theology expressed the impossibility of rū'yatullah by adopting an absolute absolutist understanding based on the concern of God's resemblance to created beings, the Māturīdī and Ash'arī schools of theology, which belong to the Ahl al-Sunnah, emphasized that rū'yatullah would be realized by claiming that God would not be seen with a vision like the vision of humans.

Al-Maḡdisī, who lived in the Mūteahhirūn period, put forward the possibility of rū'yatullah by emphasizing the views of the Māturīdī school to which he belonged. It has been observed that the author started to explain the subject by first mentioning the schools of thought that assert the impossibility of the realization of rū'yatullah. Maintaining the general style of theological composition, he then responds to the arguments of the Mu'tazilite school of theology on this subject. In addition, he presents the possibility of rū'yatullah by quoting four verses from the Qur'ān al-kerīm and four hadīths narrated from the Messenger of Allah.

Before starting to explain rū'yatullah in his commentary, al-Maḡdisī states that Allah will not be seen in the Hereafter either by the power of thought or by a vision in the form of imagination obtained with the sense organs, but that He will be seen personally with the eyes, which is a prominent point in the work in terms of showing that he is under the roof of Ahl al-Sunnah regarding rū'yatullah. In addition to this, the fact that he explains rū'yatullah with hadīths without mentioning any words suggests that his writing style is different. Since the author is writing a commentary on Bahr al-Kalām, he first explains what Abū al-Mu'ūn al-Nafṣī meant by the expressions he used and then provides information on the subject that may be missing or useful for the reader. In doing so, al-Maḡdisī seems to have remained faithful to the scholarly writing of his school and period. In some parts of the text, he agrees with al-Nafṣī's views and refrains from making any additional explanation, while in others he makes logical explanations because he is a theologian of the Mūteahhirūn period. It is also seen that he analyzes the words in the verses in terms of grammar. Al-Maḡdisī's references to various scholars in his commentary and to the works of scholars such as Imam al-Ash'arī and Shams al-Dīn al-Samarqandī in his commentary on the subject of rū'yatullah in particular show that he is familiar with the works of theology.

Although it is known that there was a certain distance from logic and philosophy during the Mamluk period, Makdisī's inclusion of logical analyses in his work demonstrates his adherence to the theological writing style of the Mūteahhirūn period. His explanation of the argument put forward by the Mu'tazila as a rational proof, considering the compound conditional syllogism, and especially his explanation of the verse al-An'am 6/103 using logical arguments, shows that he possessed advanced knowledge in the field of logic.

The scholars of the Mamluk period, who left a great scholarly heritage to the Islamic world, wrote valuable works in the fields of fiqh, hadith, history, biography and theology. Although there are various studies on the scholarly status of this period in our country, it is understood that there are still important areas that need to be researched in terms of the structure of the scholars and the content of their works. Determining the understanding of theology in the Mamluk period and the theological scholars who grew up in this period and the works they wrote will fill an important gap in the literature. Murat Kaş's article on this subject is titled "The Reflections of the Discussions on the Scientific Identity of the Science of Kalam in Mamluk Geography" and Büşra Edis's doctoral dissertation titled "The Science of Kalam in the Mamluk Period and the Problem of Its Legitimacy". A detailed study of biographies and rijal books will provide new information about the nature of theology in the Mamluk period.

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