THE INFLUENCE OF IMAM AL-JUWAYNI ON THE THEOLOGY
OF IMAM AL-GHAZALI

Ismail Haji Abdullah

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St. Andrews

1996

Full metadata for this item is available in
Research@StAndrews:FullText
at:
http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/

Please use this identifier to cite or link to this item:
http://hdl.handle.net/10023/2929

This item is protected by original copyright
THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

THE INFLUENCE OF IMĀM AL-JUWAYNĪ ON THE THEOLOGY
OF IMĀM AL-GHAZĀLĪ

BY

ISMAIL HAJI ABDULLAH

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS FOR THE DEGREE OF Ph.D.

1995
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my profound thanks and deep appreciation to my supervisor Dr. R. A. Kimber for his expert guidance, useful suggestions for alterations or additions to this work and encouragement at all times.

I also wish to express my special gratitude to Professor John Burton who supervised this work for two years. His advice and criticism have been of great value, sustaining this work especially during its early preparation.

I owe a special thanks to Dr. DEP Jackson for his valuable guidance and assistance throughout my studies. I want to thank my friend who supported me in various ways during my stay in St. Andrews.

I am also happy to express my thanks to the International Islamic University Malaysia, which granted me a three-year study leave with generous financial support to pursue my studies for the time I spent in the United Kingdom.
Finally, I owe special thanks to my wife, Rashidah Ahmad for her moral support and patience, and to my daughter Nur Afaf and my son Ayman for their understanding. Without their patience the completion of this work would have been impossible.
ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to study in depth the influence of Imām al-Juwaynī on Imām al-Ghazālī’s discussion of theology and whether or not the latter’s ideas are properly derived from the former. The first chapter deals with an analysis of the life of both the Imāms against the background of the religious milieu of their time. The second chapter discuss the views of the two Imāms on ‘Ilm al-Kalām. The third chapter attempts to compare and contrast Imām al-Juwaynī’s and Imām al-Ghazālī’s approach to the doctrine of the origin of the world and the existence of God. In the fourth chapter we assess the views of the two Imāms on the problem of the attributes of God. The fifth chapter deals with the question of human actions and free will. The final chapter present their views on prophethood and messengership.

While many Islamic scholars have a vague notion that Imām al-Ghazālī’s ideas on theology depend heavily upon Imām al-Juwaynī, this thesis attempts to prove that Imām al-Ghazālī’s theological position and views have been greatly influenced by his teacher, Imām al-Juwaynī. This work sets out to show this in detail.
NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Letter</th>
<th>Transliteration</th>
<th>Short Vowels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ٌ</td>
<td>' (hamzah)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>َ</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ُ</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ِ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Long Vowels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ُ</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ُ</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ُ</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Diphthongs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ُ</td>
<td>aw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ُ</td>
<td>ay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes on transliteration</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of contents</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER ONE: The World of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART ONE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1 Political background</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1.1 Sectarian altercation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.2 Social background</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.3 Cultural background</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART TWO</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1 The life of Imām al-Juwaynī</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1.1 Date of birth</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1.2 Place of birth</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1.3 Early education</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1.4 Travel to Baghdād and the Ḥijāz</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1.5 Life at Niẓāmiyyah school</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1.6 His teachers</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1.7 Date of death</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1.8 The works of Imām al-Juwaynī</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.2 The life of Imām al-Ghazālī</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2.2.1 Date and place of birth 41
1.2.2.2 Family background 41
1.2.2.3 Early education 42
1.2.2.4 The scepticism of Imam al-Ghazali 52
1.2.2.5 Seeking after the truth 55
1.2.2.6 Date of death 68
1.2.2.7 The works of Imam al-Ghazali 69

CHAPTER TWO: The Views of Imam al-Juwayni and Imam al-Ghazali on 'Ilm al-Kalâm.

2.1 The definitions of 'Ilm al-Kalâm 71
2.2 The view of the salaf on 'Ilm al-kalâm 74
2.3 The views of Imam al-Juwayni on 'Ilm al-Kalâm 80
2.4 The views of Imam al-Ghazali on 'Ilm al-kalâm 84
2.5 The views of Imam al-Juwayni and Imam al-Ghazali on the problem of rational and tradition proofs ('aql and naqîl) 97


3.1 Introduction 118
3.2 Definition of the words al-ʿālam and al-ḥudūth 120
3.2.1 Al-ʿālam 120
3.2.2 Al-ḥudūth 121
3.3 The origin of the world according to Imam al-Juwayni 126
3.3.1 The first doctrine 127
3.3.1.1 The origin of the world according to Imam al-Ghazali 139
3.3.2 The second doctrine

3.4 The existence and the one-ness of God according to Imām al-Juwaynī and his influence on Imām al-Ghazālī

CHAPTER FOUR: A Discussion of the Attributes of God According to Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī

4.1 The views of the Muʿtazilah

4.2 The views of the Mushabbihah

4.3 The views of the Ashʿariyyah

4.4 The attributes of God according to Imām al-Juwaynī

4.4.1 First: the "Impossible Attributes" of God

4.4.1.1 The "Impossible Attributes" of God according to Imām al-Ghazālī

4.4.2 Second: the "Necessary Attributes" of God

4.4.2.1 The qualitative attributes according to Imām al-Ghazālī

4.4.3 Third: the "Possible Attributes" of God

4.4.3.1 Vision of God according to Imām al-Ghazālī

CHAPTER FIVE: The Question of Human Action and Free Will

5.1 The analysis of human action according to the Jabriyyah

5.2 The analysis of human action according to the Muʿtazilah

5.3 The analysis of human action according to Ahl al-Sunnah

5.4 The analysis of human action according to Imām al-Juwaynī
CHAPTER SIX: The Views of Imam al-Juwayni and Imam al-Ghazali on Prophethood and Messengership

6.1 The meanings of prophet and messenger
6.2 The sending of messengers
6.3 The views of Imam al-Juwayni on the notion of messenger
6.4 The views of Imam al-Ghazali on the notion of messenger
6.5 Miracles (mu‘jizät)
6.6 Marvels (karâmät)
6.7 Magic (siḥr)
6.8 The proof of the messengership of the prophet Muhammad according to Imam al-Juwayni
6.8.1 Imam al-Juwayni’s rejection of the Jewish reservations
6.8.2 Imam al-Ghazali’s rejection of the Jewish reservations
6.9 Discussion of the proof of the miraculousness of the Qur‘an according to Imam al-Juwayni
6.10 The aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur‘an according to Imam al-Juwayni
6.10.1 The aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur‘an according to Imam al-Ghazali
6.11 General conclusion

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources
Secondary sources
Appendix
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Aqīdah</td>
<td>Al-Juwaynī, al-'Aqīdah al-Nīzāmiyyah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bidāyah</td>
<td>Ibn Kathīr, al-Nihāyah wa al-Bidāyah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burhān</td>
<td>Al-Juwaynī, al-Burhān fī Usūl al-Fiqh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faḍā'īḥ</td>
<td>Al-Ghazālī, Faḍā'īḥ al-Bāṭiniyyah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farq</td>
<td>Al-Baghdādī, al-Farq bayn al-Fīraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fayṣal</td>
<td>Al-Ghazālī, Fayṣal al-Tafriqaḥ bayn al-İslām wa al-Zanādiqaḥ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghiyāth</td>
<td>Al-Juwaynī, Ghiyāth al-Umam fī al-Tiyāth al-Ẓulm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iḥyā'</td>
<td>Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā' ‘Ulūm al-Dīn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iqtisād</td>
<td>Al-Ghazālī, al-Iqtisād fī al-Iʿtigād.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irshād</td>
<td>Al-Juwaynī, al-Irshād ilā qawāṭiʿ al-Adillah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumaʾ</td>
<td>Al-Juwaynī, Lumaʾ al-Adillah fī Qawāʾid 'Aqāʾid Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maʿārij</td>
<td>Al-Ghazālī, Maʿārij al-Quds fī Madārij al-Maʿrifah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mawāqif</td>
<td>Al-Ijī, al-Mawāqif fī 'Ilm al-Kalām.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Milal : Al-Shahrastānī, Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Nīḥal.

Mīzān : Al-Ghazālī, Mīzān al-ʿAmal.


Munqīdh : Al-Ghazālī, al-Munqīd min al-Ḍalāl.

Mugaddimah : Ibn Khaḍūn, Mugaddimah.

Muslim : Watt, Muslim Intellectual: a Study of al-Ghazālī.


Persia : Morgan, Medieval Persia.

Prophet : Kennedy, The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates.


Ṭabagāt : Al-Subkī, Ṭabagāt al-Shāfiʿīyyah al-Kubrā.


Taʿrīfāt : Al-Jurjānī, al-Taʿrīfāt.

Uṣūl : Al-Baghdādī, Uṣūl al-Dīn.

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the theological positions of Imam al-Juwaynī and his student, Imam al-Ghazālī, and hopes to define a relationship between these two important scholars and to demonstrate their importance in Islamic scholarship.

Imam al-Juwaynī is one of the outstanding theologians, jurists, and mystics of the fifth century of the Hijrah. He was knowledgeable in fiqh (jurisprudence), ‘Ilm al-Kalām (theology), taṣawwuf (mysticism), logic, and poetry. Many Islamic scholars of great renown studied under him.

One of his greatest students was Imam al-Ghazālī who is known as ḥujjat al-İslām (the proof of Islam). He was one of the religious reformers in the Islamic community in the fifth century of the Hijrah. He first met Imam al-Juwaynī in Nīsābūr in 473/1080 and studied under him until 478/1085. Within this period Imam al-Ghazālī learned widely from this man in various fields including theology, mysticism, and logic.

The works of Imam al-Ghazālī have been spread widely throughout the world and translated into many
languages such as English, Urdu, and Malay. He is very famous in the Islamic world for his knowledge and ideas, especially his views on theology. His work is considered one of the standard references of Islamic teaching.

Not many people know about his teacher, Imām al-Juwaynī, who influenced him in his ideas on theology. However, to Islamic scholars it has long been known that in his work on theology Imām al-Ghazālī depended very heavily upon this man. Despite this general scholarly knowledge no systematic study of this influenced has been researched. This provides the rationale for this study. Most of the theological opinions of Imām al-Ghazālī had already been touched upon by his teacher. That is why we believe that it is very important to research this relationship, to discover and show the theological influence of Imām al-Juwaynī on Imām al-Ghazālī.

The aim of this thesis is, therefore, to explore and expound the influence of Imām al-Juwaynī on the theology of Imām al-Ghazālī, and present an analysis of material to suggest the extent to which the latter’s ideas are derived from the former. The central question is the extent to which Imām al-Ghazālī was influenced by the teaching of Imām al-Juwaynī. To address this question we shall seek to discover influences and similarities between them in their
methods and in their opinions on identical or similar problems.

There are indeed several aspects from which the thought of these two men may be studied, the philosophical, the juristic, and the theological aspect. Their contribution to theology is an extremely important page in the history of Islamic thought, more particularly in the history of the Ashʿarīyah school. They played an important role in this school for the development of the Ashʿarite doctrine by combining philosophical and doctrinal problems and using rational argumentation to make their points.

Imām al-Ghazālī sometimes uses different methods from Imām al-Juwaynī in discussing his views on theological problems. Some of these differences are slight, some great, but on the whole the trend which he followed was similar to that of his teacher and the conclusions were the same. With this in mind, we may try to find out which of them was the more successful in dealing with such problems as the concept of God, His Attributes, and the like, and in clarifying and simplifying theological arguments, so that the community could comprehend and accept them.
Modern scholarship on the subject

To the best of my knowledge, there is no recent systematic study of the theological influence of Imām al-Juwaynī on Imām al-Ghazālī in the manner and on the scale being presented in this thesis. The few discussions to be found are somewhat summary in fashion and can serve as background for the study of some aspects of the thought of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī.

In 1903, D.B. Macdonald, wrote a few sentences about Imam al-Ghazzli's views on theology in his book, Development of Muslim Theology Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory.¹ In this work Macdonald likens Imām al-Ghazālī to the modern theologian, Ritschl, who rejected metaphysics and opposed the influence of any philosophical system on his theology.

A.J. Wensinck also wrote briefly about Imām al-Ghazālī's views on kalām in his book, The Muslim Creed.² In this book he asserts that among Imām al-

Ghazālī’s works on kalām is al-Iqtisād fī al-Iʿtiqād which consists of four aspects of kalām. Firstly Imām al-Ghazālī discuss the essence (dhāt) of God, His existence and its eternity; secondly he deals with the Attributes of God; thirdly he deals with the acts of God; and finally he deals with prophethood.

In 1947, A. S. Tritton, devoted a few pages to Imām al-Juwaynī’s views on theology in his book, Muslim Theology. In this work Tritton noted that the Imām al-Juwaynī rejected the validity of ‘Ilm al-Kalām at the end of his life. However, according to Tritton, al-Subkī rejects this account. L. Gardet and M. M. Anawati also wrote briefly about the theological views of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī in their book, Introduction a La Theologie Musulmane.

In 1960, Fawqiyah Ḥusayn Maḥmūd carried out a study of Imām al-Juwaynī’s views on the creation of the world. Her unpublished Ph.D thesis al-Juwaynī and his doctrine of the origination of the world throws some light on Imām al-Juwaynī’s theological views.

---

3A. S. Tritton, Muslim Theology, Bristol, 1947, p. 185.
However, her thesis is limited to a discussion of the origination of the world.

Maḥmūd commences her thesis with a discussion of the life and personality of Imām al-Juwaynī in which she explains the early life of Imām al-Juwaynī and his education. In the second part of her thesis, she discusses the origination of the world. In this she explains Imām al-Juwaynī's doctrine of knowledge. Under the title of the sources of knowledge, Maḥmūd discusses its degrees, subjects, the method of each subject, and the aim of Imām al-Juwaynī in seeking knowledge in all its forms. It seems that Maḥmūd tries to shows how Imām al-Juwaynī studied the world, and how Imām al-Juwaynī considered its problems. Maḥmūd then goes on to discuss how Imām al-Juwaynī distinguishes between studying the world according to theology and studying it to know its different phenomena. Her thesis then goes on to discuss the sources of knowledge according to Imām al-Juwaynī, which are reason (al-ʿAql), the senses (al-Ḥawāṣṣ) and the self (al-Nafs).

In the conclusion of part two of her thesis Maḥmūd draws comparisons between Imām al-Juwaynī and two of his predecessors, al-Bāqillānī and al-Baghdādī. The aim of her comparison is to show how far Imām al-Juwaynī was successful in presenting his predecessors' view in a better and neater way on the subject of the origination of the world. Finally in the part three of
her thesis, she presents an edited version of an unpublished work of Imām al-Juwaynī, Lumaʿ al-Adillah fī Qawāʿid ‘Aqāʿid Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah, which till then was still in manuscript form.

A certain amount of information about the similarity of Imām al-Juwaynī’s view on theology with those of Imām al-Ghazālī can also be found in the work of W.M. Watt, Islamic Philosophy and Theology. He mentions that the theological work produce by Imām al-Ghazālī, al-Iḥtiṣād fī al-ʿIṭiqād, was similar to the work of Imām al-Juwaynī, al-Irshād ilā Qawāṭiʿ al-Adillah fī Uṣūl al-ʿIṭiqād.

In 1967, J.W. Sweetman, in his book, Islam and Christian Theology, noted some of Imam al-Ghazālī’s views on theology. Sweetman compares Imam al-Ghazālī’s understanding as presented in Iḥyāʾ with Baghdādī’s al-Farq bayn al-Firaq and asserts that Imam al-Ghazālī does not seriously depart from the fundamental beliefs contained in Baghdādī’s al-Farq. He also noted that though Baghdādī is in many respects wider than Imam al-Ghazālī in his views, the main principles are the same in both. He also noted that Baghdādī does not include

---

in his discussion the question of God settling on the throne, whereas Imām al-Ghazālī did that in his discussion.

In 1976, H.A. Wolfson wrote a valuable book on the kalām, entitled The Philosophy of the Kalām. In this book he devotes a few very important pages to the similarity of Imām al-Juwaynī’s and Imām al-Ghazālī’s views on the theory of acquisition. According to him the argument used by Imām al-Ghazālī concerning the theory of acquisition is the same argument as used by Imām al-Ghazālī’s teacher, Imām al-Juwaynī, in his refutation of compulsionism.


A recent book, The Classification of Knowledge in Islam by Osman Bakar, mentions that Imām al-Ghazālī’s view on kalām was influenced by Imām al-

---

Juwaynī. He asserts that Imām al-Ghazālī studied *kalām* with Imām al-Juwaynī. The latter played a significant role in the philosophization of Ashʿarite *kalām*. This philosophization influenced Imām al-Ghazālī’s own vision and treatment of *kalām* as a discipline.

### Sources

This research is based mainly on primary sources which are in printed form. For Imām al-Juwaynī’s view on theological discussion we consulted three of his works:

a) *al-Shāmil fī Usūl al-Dīn*, written between 456/1063 and 459/1066. This book is useful because it contains most of Imām al-Juwaynī’s theological opinions. It deals thoroughly with his views on the origination of the world; the substance (*Jawhar*); the accident (*ʿaraḍ*); the existence of God and His Attributes; human actions; the prophethood of Muḥammad and the Imamate.

b) *Al-Irshād ilā Qawāṭiʿ al-Adillah fī Usūl al-Iʿtīqād*, written after 459/1066. This book covers

---

almost the same areas as discussed in *al-Shāmil*. However, the discussion in *al-Irshād* is more brief. In fact we could consider this book as a summary of *al-Shāmil*.

c) *Al-‘Aqīdah al-Nīẓāmiyyah*, written in about 471/1078. This book was composed late in Imam al-Juwaynī’s life and introduces the topic of *kalām*. This work presents his true opinion about *kalām*. He declares that *kalām* is a good way to prove the existence of God, but is not a means to the knowledge of God Himself. This opinion of Imam al-Juwaynī stresses the great importance of *kalām*, because he considers it as a science leading to the knowledge of the existence of God.

As for Imam al-Ghazālī, this thesis relies on three of his published works:

a) *al-Iqtisād fī al-Iṭṭiqa’d*, written in about 487/1094. Almost all of Imam al-Ghazālī’s views on theological discussion can be found in this book. This work deals with roughly the same topics as the *al-Irshād* of Imam al-Juwaynī. Both these works make full use of the syllogism in their discussion.

b) *Iḥyā’ Ulūm al-Dīn*, written in about 492/1098. This book is the greatest work of Imam al-Ghazālī in its length, the importance of its contents,
and its influence. The work is in four volumes and is divided into four quarters, dealing with: cult practices (‘ibādāt), social customs (‘ādāt), vices, or faults of character leading to perdition (muhliktāt), and virtues or qualities leading to salvation (munjiyāt). Each quarter has ten chapters. However, this thesis only utilises volume one, chapter Qawā‘id al-‘Aqā‘id, and volume four, chapter al-Tawḥīd wa al-Tawakkul, which deal with the subject of this research.

c) Al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl, written in about 502/1108. This book is not precisely an autobiography, nor an accurate chronological record of events. It is, however, arranged schematically according to the development of his religious opinions. The title of Al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl (Deliverance from Error), has presumably a social as well as an individual reference, and carried the implication that the community has somehow gone astray. Imam al-Ghazālī’s aim in this book is to show the reader the utmost degrees and inmost nature of the Islamic sciences and the perplexing depths of religious systems.

However, the range of works of both Imāms were also consulted in order to glean more detailed information. The above list was, however, the main source for the discussion.
CHAPTER ONE

The world of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī

To understand the contribution of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī to theological thought we need briefly to study their lives and historical context.

1.1.1 Political Background

Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī both lived in the fifth century of the Hijrah, an era of great political upheaval. To trace this we need to go back to the Abbasid caliphs. In the year 334/945 the power of the Abbasid caliph began to weaken and his rule became overshadowed by the Buyids who had become the power in the Baghdad area.1 The caliph of that particular time became only a caliph in name and lost any real power.2

The Buyids took this opportunity to spread the Shi‘ite doctrines throughout the land. The Fatimid caliph aided the Buyids by sending their delegates to

1Kennedy, Prophet, p. 198.
2Morgan, Persia, p. 23.
the leaders of the scattered communities in order to spread the Shi‘ite belief and to create confusion among the people and cause wider disagreements among them. This situation remained for a hundred years until the Saljūqs came to power in Baghdad in the year 447/1055.\textsuperscript{3} They were led by the founder of their house, Rukn al-Dawlah Abū Ṭālib, well known as Toghril Beg, who died in year 455/1063.\textsuperscript{4}

When Toghril Beg died his nephew, Alp Arslan, succeeded him and ruled the Saljuq’s empire in 455/1063.\textsuperscript{5} He had his own ‘prime minister’ known as Niẓām al-Mulk who had a deep knowledge of Islam and was a very generous, liberal and forgiving man. Most of his council members were fugahā\textsuperscript{2} and other Islamic leaders.\textsuperscript{6} He used his political wisdom to settle disputes among the sects and he achieved this by giving advice based on Sunnite principles.

1.1.1.1 Sectarian Altercation.

In the fifth century there were many instances of infighting caused by differences in

\textsuperscript{3}Kennedy, Prophet, p. 349.

\textsuperscript{4}Morgan, Persia, p. 27.

\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., p. 29.

\textsuperscript{6}Ibn Kathīr, Bidāyah, vol. 12, p. 217.
Islamic interpretation between madhhabs (sects) and we will only mention those conflicts which occurred at the time of Imām al-Juwaynī and were current at the end of Imām al-Ghazālī's life.

In Baghdad, the religious dissensions (fitan) occurred in 443/1051 between the Shi'ites and the Sunnites. The cause of this conflict was a sentence written in golden characters by some of the inhabitants of al-Karkh on towers flanking the fishermen's gate, "Muḥammad and ʿAlī are the best of mankind; whoever agrees is a believer and whoever denies this is an unbeliever." The Sunnites became incensed at this and refused to accept the association of ʿAlī and the prophet Muḥammad or the sense of an equal importance between them as suggested by the inscription on the tower.7

Moreover, the Ḥanbalites also interfered and prevented the Sunnite followers from drinking water from the Tigris river and gave them instead water which was mixed with contaminated. This water caused the death of one of the Hashimites. His body was taken to the city by his family who went around the streets with the death song. The Sunnite followers became angry at this death and took revenge by wrecking the graves of

the Buyid kings and ministers, plundering and robbing them. 

At the end of 444/1052 the conflict between Sunnite and Shi'ite flared again. The Shi'ites burned Sunnite houses and wrote the words "Muḥammad and ʿAlī are the best of mankind" on Sunnite mosques and called upon people to do likewise as a good deed.

In the year 447/1055 another dispute occurred in Baghdad between the fuqahā' of the Shāfiʿites and Ḥanbalites; the Ḥanbalites refused to utter the Basmalah (the name of God) openly and refused to recite the qunūt in the dawn prayer. Because of this the Shāfiʿites fuqahā' became angry and refused to attend the Friday prayer led by the Ḥanbalite imām. This caused more division between them.

In Nīsābūr, Civil disorders spread between 443/1051 and 447/1055. The dissension which caused the disorders is known in Islamic history as fitnah al-

---

8Ibid.
The reason for this strife was that al-Kunduri, who is described as a Hanafi and who was the minister (wazir) of Toghril Beg, envied the influence of the mayor of Nisâbûr, Abû Sahl b. al-Muwaffaq who was himself a pious Ash'arite scholar. Because of this piety the latter became famous among Sunnite followers. Al-Kunduri feared that Abû Sahl may compete for his position of prime minister. Therefore, he insinuated to the sultan that there ought to be a campaign against heresy in faith. In this way al-Kunduri hoped to camouflage his intention to condemn the Ash'arite and he hinted to the sultan that this group was guilty of heretical statements. He thus created false accounts that al-Ash'arî had uttered opinions contrary to the religion and Sunnah of the prophet Muḥammad. The sultan consequently became angry with what was reported and ordered that the Ash'arite should be prohibited from preaching in mosques, as well as being cursed from pulpits. This situation led to the emigration of some Ash'arites from the town, and among these emigrants was Imâm al-Juwaynî.

Towards the end of the life of Imâm al-Juwaynî, which is the period we consider as the beginning of the scholarship of Imâm al-Ghazâlî, these

12Al-Kunduri is the first minister (wazir) of the Saljûq sultan, Toghril Beg. His full name is Muḥammad b. Manşûr b. Muḥammad Abû Naṣr, died in 457/1064.
disputes proliferated. In the year 469/1076 another conflict between the Shāfiʿites and Ḥanbalites took place when Abū Naṣr b. al-Qushayrī arrived in Baghdad on his way to perform the hajj in Mecca. He addressed the Niẓāmiyyah school, and in this talk he preached to people to be closer to their teachers. So, he gained many followers and some of them were fanatical supporters. The quarrel between him and the Ḥanbalites who attended the talk began because all his talk was based on the beliefs of the Ashʿarite sect. The quarrel between them became so serious that he was killed by a group of Ḥanbalites.13

In the year 502/1108 peace between Shiʿites and Sunnites was established after a quarrel that had lasted many years. This was due to the efforts made by the Sultan. All Muslims at that time were happy at this news, especially the Sunnites and Shiʿites because the internecine war had lasted for so many years and so many lives had been lost.

At the end of the fifth century the Bāṭinite movement led by their leader Ḥasan b. Ṣabāḥ al-Ismāʿīlī, who died in 518/1124,14 caused many problems. The issue became more serious when the Bāṭinites overan the castle known as the Spanish fort which had been

14Ibid., p. 317.
built by Malik Shāh. When this news reached Niẓām al-Mulk, he sent his armies against the Bāṭinites and surrounded them. They reacted by sending their army to kill Niẓām al-Mulk and he was killed in the year 485/1092.15

In the year 494/1100 the Bāṭinite movement became more dangerous in Khurāsān. Sultan Berk-Yaruq wanted to destroy them; so he prepared his armies and went out to arrest and kill them. The sultan’s men killed some of the Bāṭinite followers and captured many.16

In the year 497/1103 the amir of Bazghash gathered the armies of Khurāsān to kill the Bāṭinite followers and many of them were killed and he released those who were still alive with several conditions: that is, they must build a fort for the sultan, and when finished, they must leave the country. So, in 498/1104 they were moved to the town Bayhaq where many of them died.17

However, the Bāṭinite still held the fort in Isbahān and in 500/1106 Sultan Muḥammad Jisha attacked

17Ibid., p. 228.
that fort and surrounded it until they agreed to return the fort to the sultan. That they did on the condition that he relinquished to them the Khalinjan fort. However, when the Bāṭinite followers were in this critical situation, the sultan ordered his armies to attack and kill them. The disturbances caused by the Bāṭinite movement continued until the death of Imām al-Ghazālī.

There is no doubt that these social conflicts affected the life of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī as mentioned by Islamic historians. These difficulties caused Imām al-Juwaynī and the leaders of the Sunnite to move to Baghdad and Hijāz.

Ibn Khallikān mentions that Imām al-Juwaynī travelled to Baghdad and met many ʿulamāʾ in that city. He used all his time to seek knowledge from these ʿulamāʾ by sitting with them to discuss religious matters and sought means to protect the faith. All this can be seen through his writing, especially on ʿIlm al-Kalām. He worked very hard to defend the Sunnite view and clearly mentioned that he followed the Salaf (early

18Ibid., p. 242.
Muslim) way and firmly followed what has been revealed in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the prophet Muḥammad. He also wrote a book on the problem of Imāmah which was popularly known as al-Ghiyāth.

In this book he acknowledges Niẓām al-Mulk who was working very hard to protect the Sunnite followers from heretical innovators. This can be seen from his introduction to the book in which he says: "The writer included the wide services of the Niẓāmiyyah in another book." This means that he wrote another book given the name of al-Niẓāmiyyah wa al-arkān al-Islāmiyyah, also known as al-ʿAqidah al-Niẓāmiyyah. This was in praise of Niẓām al-Mulk and to show his love and respect to this man who gave strong support and help to the Sunnite sect.

As for Imām al-Ghazālī, we can see his role in defending Islam from its enemies, spreading daʿwa (missionary activity) and calling people to return to the teaching of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the prophet Muḥammad. He also took the pious Salaf (early Muslim) as his model to follow in every day life. We can see that in one of his famous book, Faḍāʾiḥ al-Bāṭiniyyah, he castigates the Bāṭinite movement and says: "I have mentioned the wrongness of this group firstly, in the book al-Mustazhārī; secondly, in the

21Al-Juwaynī, Ghiyāth, p. 12.
book Ḥujjat al-Bayān; thirdly, in the book Mufaṣṣil al-Khilāf, which has twelve chapters; fourthly in the book al-Darj al-Marqūm; and fifthly, in the book al-Qisṭās al-Mustaqīm which means exposition of the knowledge and the declaration that there is no infallible imām."22

Imām al-Ghazālī proclaimed his fatwa clearly about Bāṭinītes: "This movement is murtadd (apostate) and kufr (infidel) because their beliefs deviated from Islam and they should be killed and not be allowed in this world because they only live for making trouble."23 He has also explained his analysis of this movement in his book al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl.24

1.1.2 Social Background

The society of that particular time and place consisted of different races such as Arabs, Persians, Turks and Kurds. As we discussed earlier, the rulers in the middle of the fifth century Hijrah were the Buyids (Banī Buwayh) of Persian origin, and later on they were replaced with Saljūqs of Turkish descent, who dominated Baghdad and most of the Islamic world.

22Al-Ghazālī, Munqidh, p. 137.
23Al-Ghazālī, Faḍāʾiḥ, p. 11.
24Al-Ghazālī, Munqidh, pp. 95-147.
Life in general in the society of that time was chaotic and unstable, and this was due to the weakness of the rulers, especially the caliph. This caused the spread of fitnah (civil strife) and war in that society. Society was divided into several classes. The Sultan, ministers, Amirs and leaders were in the elite with lives full of prosperity, and were also free to do anything they liked while the other classes were expected to obey the rules. The caliph used to spend the country's wealth on his own needs and desires. Ibn Kathîr gives an example of such excess when the caliph al-Muqtadî married the sultan Malik Shah's daughter in 480/1087. He prepared one hundred and thirty camels covered with silk cloths which were full of gold and silver and also prepared seventy four mules covered with silk, and their necklaces were made from gold and silver.25

The caliph spent thousands of dinars on his own needs without paying attention to the people who needed help to survive in their lives. Many people died in Baghdad at that time from lack of food and from disease. It is recorded they were very weak and had no strength even to bury their dead.26


26Ibid., p. 168.
Most of the scholars at that time were more interested in zuhd (asceticism), and some of them had totally relinquished an interest in the world, such as the scholar Abū Nasr al-Sirāj al-Ṭūsī (d. 378/988), his student Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Salami (d. 412/1021), and Imām al-Qushayrī. They all claimed that only the true taṣawwuf could implement the Sharī‘ah.27 The wazīr Nizām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092) was a pious and ascetic man. When he heard the call to prayer he would stop doing anything until he performed the prayer. Most of his offices were filled by the fuqahā' and scholars.

The Saljūq rulers were better than the Buyids. They gave back to the caliph some of his power and they worked very hard to fight and capture the leaders of the Bāṭinite movement. They also spread culture and knowledge throughout the country and they showed more concern for the situation of their citizens.

1.1.3 Cultural Background

The growth of education in the time of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī was very great. Islamic scholars at that time worked very hard to seek

knowledge and spread it to the public. Therefore, Islamic and other studies such as tafsîr, (exegesis) ḥadîth (tradition) fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) philosophy and logic, developed in that city.

When Niẓâm al-Mulk was appointed as wazîr by Alp Arslan in 455/1063 he started to build many schools such as the Madrasah of Baghdad, and the Madrasah of Nîsâbûr. The objective behind this was to spread the Sunnite sect through these schools. He spent a lot of money to maintain those schools and especially on those who wanted to seek knowledge. It is reported he spent about 600,000 dinars a year for this purpose.

When this news reached Malik Shâh, he said that the money which was spent by Niẓâm al-Mulk on the schools could have been used to build his army. Niẓâm al-Mulk then explained to Malik Shâh: "I was building for you a group of armies called "night armies". When your ordinary armies sleep at night, your night armies will take over from them to face God with their tears and their tongues to make ḍuʿā' (prayer) for you and your armies so you and your armies may live with their prayer and wisdom."30

28Al-Subkî, Ṭabaqāt, vol. 4, p. 303.
30Ibid.
The system of schools which was built by Nizâm al-Mulk was followed by the people after him. Abû al-Gharâ'im, known as Tāj al-Mulk, built a school in Baghdad called al-Nâjiyah in 480/1087.31 Abû Sa'd Sharaf al-Mulk al-Khawârizmî al-Ḥanafî (d.494/1100) also built a big school in Baghdad.32

Many great scholars in various fields flourished at that time, especially in Islamic studies, such as al-Qâdi Abû Bakr al-Ṭayyib al-Bâqillânî (d.403/1012);33 al-Qâdi 'Abd al-Jabbâr b. Ahmad Abû Ḣasan al-Muṭtazîlî (d.415/1024);34 Abû al-Maẓîfîr al-Isfarâîyînî (d.471/1078);35 Ḣasan b.‘Abdullah Ibn Šînâ (d.428/1036);36 the great šûfî Abû Qâsim al-Qushayrî (d.469/1076); the teacher of the Shâfî'î's, al-Shaykh Abû Isḥâq al-Shayrâzî (d.476/1083).37

32Ibid.
33Ibn ‘Asâkir, Tabyîn, p. 217.
34Al-Subkî, Tabaqât, vol. 3, p. 221.
37Ibid., vol. 12, p. 133.
1.2.1 The life of Imām al-Juwaynī

The full name of Imām al-Juwaynī is ‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Abdullah b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. Ḥayyūyah al-Juwaynī. He also has the patronymic (kunyah) name Abū al-Maʿālī.

As to his generic name (nisba) all biographers call him "al-Juwaynī" except al-Subkī, who calls him "al-Nīsābūrī" after the town of Nīsābūr. His name "al-Juwaynī" is inherited from his father who

38Al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt, vol. 5, p. 165.
-Ibn Asākir, Tābīn, p. 278.

39Ibid.

-Ibn Asākir, Tābīn, p. 278.

41Al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt, vol. 5, p. 166.
was also called "al-Juwaynī" after the place called "Juwayn."42

He was also known by the honorific name (laqab) Imām al-Ḥaramayn, because he lived at Mecca and Madinah for four years. There he served the Islamic faith by debating, giving decisions in Islamic Law and trying to spread religious knowledge far and wide.43

1.2.1.1 Date of Birth

His biographers differ about the date of his birth. Al-Subkī,44 Ibn Khallikān,45 and Ibn Kathīr,46 all write that he was born on the 18th of Muḥarram 419/1028. On the other hand Ibn Taghri Birdī,47 and Ibn al-Jawzī,48 note that he was born in 417/1026.

---

42Juwayn is located between Bistām and Nīsābūr, bounded by Bayhaq in the west and by Jājirām in the north. (See Muṣjam al-Buldān, vol. 2, p. 223)
43Ibid.
44Ibid., p. 17.
1.2.1.2 Place of Birth

Imām al-Juwaynī was born in the province of Khurāsān. Brockelmann in *Geschichte Der Arabischen Litteratur* mentions that he was born in Bustingān.49 However, none of the sources quoted by Brockelmann mention Imām al-Juwaynī's birthplace but all agree that Bustingān was the place where he died.

1.2.1.3 Early Education

Imām al-Juwaynī studied jurisprudence (*fiqh*) under his father,50 and earned his admiration. He also exerted himself in the study of legal rites (*al-madhāhib*), especially the Shāfiʿite one, their differences, and theology. He learnt ḥadīth (tradition) from several ‘ulamā’ (Islamic scholars) such as Abū Ḥasan, Abū Saʿd al-Nadawī, and Maṅṣūr b. Dāmis, a well-known muḥaddith (traditionalist).51

49Bustingān is one of the pleasant little villages near Nīsābūr. It is separated from Nīsābūr about 3 or 3 and half miles.


Imām al-Juwaynī had a very good command of the Arabic language, as al-Fārisī said. He studied the Qur'ān extensively and was noted for his eloquence. Most of those who met him were astonished at his ability to debate and his vast knowledge, so that, when his father died, he was recognized by them, in spite of his youth, as one of the very wise imāms. He was also known as a discriminating and honest critic.

His father was very proud of his son's wide knowledge. Imām al-Juwaynī read all the books which were written by his father and sometimes in his annotations he added where he thought necessary and also criticised him. His father was glad of that. Imām al-Juwaynī was clearly a genius and a child prodigy who enjoyed research. He was to reject anything which was contrary to reason (ʿaql) even if the error was from his own father. After his father's death, he used to repeat this sentence when he discovered one of his father's errors, "This is an error committed by the shaykh, God save his soul."53

Imām al-Juwaynī has noted in his own testimony that in his quest for truth he read extensively in the Islamic sciences and still

52Ibid., p. 254.
53Ibid., vol. 5, p. 169.
unsatisfied turned aside from the authoritatively transmitted knowledge to works condemned by the ahl al-Islām. Eventually, however, his quest took him back to the faith of the early Muslims and it was in that faith that he hoped to die.\textsuperscript{54}

Some biographers interpret the above admission as if Imām al-Juwaynī had at one time rejected the Islamic sciences. But as al-Subkī held correctly, we believe that all he did was to subject religious problems to a wider critical, and intellectual examination.

Imām al-Juwaynī was fond of reading and it is said that he had read a hundred books before he began to study theology under al-Isfarāyīnī.\textsuperscript{55} If we now bear in mind that Imām al-Juwaynī's father was fond of knowledge, that he tried to examine things critically, that he always encouraged his son to learn and that he was glad when his son criticised him, it is clear that it was he who set the pattern for his son's life.

When his father died, the son took his place in the school and began to teach. While teaching, he continued to widen his knowledge. He went to study under Abū al-Qāsim al-Isfarāyīnī (d.452/1060), who was

\textsuperscript{54}Ibid., vol. 3, p. 260.
\textsuperscript{55}Ibid.
considered a great man and a leading imām in jurisprudence and theology. He was an Ashʿarite and used to hold debates, taught Islamic sciences and pronounced decisions on Islamic law. He followed the ascetic practices of the early Muslims.56

Imām al-Juwaynī also attended the teaching of al-Kabbāzī (d.447/1055),57 who was the shaykh of the reciters of the Qurʿān. ‘Abd al-Ghaffār al-Fārisī mentioned that Imām al-Juwaynī had learnt the art of reciting the Qurʿān and other sciences from al-Kabbāzī whom he attended.58

1.2.1.4 Travel to Baghdad and the Ḥijāz

As discussed earlier, in the political, social, and cultural background, Imām al-Juwaynī encountered religious intrigues in Nīsābūr in his time. This was the reason which made him leave Nīsābūr. Al-Subkī quotes from ‘Abd al-Ghaffār al-Fārisī:

He went out to travel and left the country. He went out with the mashāyikhs (scholars) to their gathering, and then went to Baghdad to meet some of the greatest ‘ulamāʾ and learned from them until he gained greater knowledge and his name became well known. Later he visited Mecca to perform the ḥājj. He

56Ibn ʿAsākir, Taḥyīn, p.265.
57Ibid., p. 279.
stayed at Mecca for about four years, debating, giving decisions in Islamic Law, and trying to spread knowledge everywhere.\(^59\)

Ibn al-‘Imād also relates a similar account in his book, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*.\(^60\)

From the above it is clear that the reason which made Imām al-Juwaynī leave Nīsābūr was religious intrigue. We can see that during his stay at Baghdad he learnt from the greatest ‘ulamā’ the methods to use in religious matters and his name became famous in that town. Later he went to the Ḥijāz and stayed in Mecca for four years, debating and proclaiming fatāwā, and spreading knowledge to the public. Because of his stay in Mecca he was later to be called Imām al-Ḥaramayn, as we mentioned earlier.

During this period at Mecca, besides defending the Sunnite doctrine, Imām al-Juwaynī spent his time in pious devotion, between al-Safa and al-Marwa, until he had purified his soul. Indeed al-Subkī in describing his piety and sensitivity appears to imply that he was a şūfī. He says: "When in the course of his assemblies he launched into a account of conditions or şūfī states (aḥwāl) and waded into the science of şūfism, he used to reduce those present to

\(^{59}\)Ibid., p. 171.

tears by his own weeping and to make their eyes bleed by his cries, his recitations and his allusions, for he was ablaze within himself.  

This suggests a heightened sense of mysticism at this moment in his life.

Some of Imām al-Juwaynī’s own words show that he looked for a way other than ʿIlm al-Kalām, which is based on reasoning, to reach an understanding of the reality of God. He says that reason may be at a loss to apprehend reality, although it is sure of the existence of an eternal God. This means that Imām al-Juwaynī confirms that ʿIlm al-Kalām does not necessarily lead to the knowledge of the reality of God. This reality can also be known by the heart. It is the heart that leads to knowledge of that reality and this is şūfīsm.

It has to be said that biographers do not give many details about Imām al-Juwaynī’s life as a şūfī, any more than they do about the philosophical element in his knowledge. This come from the understanding that Imām al-Juwaynī was supposed to be mainly a theologian, for he was the head of al-Nīţāmiyyah school at Nīsābūr, which was built like the

---

61Al-Subkī, Ṭabagāt, vol. 5, p. 179.

62Ibid., p. 16.
other Niẓāmiyyah schools to keep the adherents of the Sunnite sect loyal and in good spirit.63

Imām al-Juwaynī himself seems to have been careful to keep two aspects of his life out of the public eye. None of his works known to us is on šu'fism, or discuss philosophical problems systematically.64 Šufism was not, at that time, the way recognised by all Muslims as a means to the knowledge of God. It seems even that it was not highly esteemed by most of them. Imām al-Qushayrī mentioned in his Risālah that there were at that time some bad šūfis who were harmful to šūfism.65

This means that Imām al-Qushayrī was trying to defend šūfism and to prove that it was not what these disreputable šūfis made it out to be. Philosophy was also attacked by many Muslim sects.66 This explains why Imām al-Juwaynī and his biographers were trying not to give many details about these two aspects of his life.

64Ibid., p. 54.
65Al-Qushayrī, Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm, al-Risālah fī ʿIlm al-Taṣawwuf, Cairo, 1346 A.H. p. 34.
66Ibid., p. 31.
1.2.1.5 Life at Niẓāmiyyah school

After he had studied with some of the great scholars of Hijāz, he returned to Nīsāḥūr. This was when Alp Arslan took over power from his uncle Toghril Beg who died in 455/1063 and Niẓām al-Mulk became his prime minister. Imām al-Juwaynī was appointed as a teacher at al-Nīzāmīyyah school in Nīsāḥūr where he continued teaching till the end of his life.67 Al-Subkī mentions that he served in this school for nearly thirty years without any pressure or force being exerted on him to remain there.

He became famous, and many people came to learn from him and he taught about three hundred pupils every day. When he became the head of the Sunnite community he was responsible for affairs. He was also appointed preacher in the mosque.68 At this stage his writings began to appear and his knowledge became mature. That he had a good command of philosophy as well as of Islamic sciences is very clear in his answers to the naturalists (ṭabaḍīyyūn) and other philosophers in al-Shāmil, which is one of his most

important books. This tallies with what al-Subkî says about the philosophical element in his thinking.\textsuperscript{69}

He mentions that Imâm al-Juwaynî debated the problem of the creation of the Qur'ân with a philosopher and refuted all their arguments so convincingly that partisans and opponents alike agreed that he had carried the day. Imâm al-Juwaynî's assertion that he had at one time turned to sciences other than the traditional ones may be taken to mean that he took to the study of philosophy. Ultimately, however, he came to disapprove of philosophy,\textsuperscript{70} as did most of his contemporaries.

That is why, when Imâm al-Juwaynî discusses the opinions of the philosophers whom he calls "heretics" (al-mulhidah), he does not expose them in an organised manner. He gives separate answers to separate problems because he does not want to engage in sophistry and related arguments.

When the Ḥanbalites said that Imâm al-Juwaynî was an unbeliever because he believed in some of the philosophers' opinions about the knowledge of God, namely that God knows universals and not particulars,\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{69}Ibid., vol. 3, p. 253.
\textsuperscript{70}Ibid., p. 260.
\textsuperscript{71}Al-Juwaynî, Irshâd, p. 104.
they were alluding in an unfair and abusive way to the fact that Imām al-Juwaynī had studied philosophy. Al-Shahrastānī also mentions that Imām al-Juwaynī shared the philosophers' views about the created power of man (al-qudrah al-ḥadīthah). This statement proves that al-Shahrastānī also believed that Imām al-Juwaynī had embraced philosophy.

Al-Subkī and other biographers make only slight allusion to this element, without giving any details about how, where and when he learnt philosophy. This was through veneration for the Imām, philosophy being a science abhorred by most of the Muslim thinkers.

Imām al-Juwaynī left Nīsābūr for Iṣbahān for a short time about the year 465/1072. It is noted of him that at the close of his life he wrote on the Shāfiʿite legal rites a book entitled Nihāyat al-Мaṭlab fī Dirāyat al-Madhhab, a huge book of about twenty-two volumes.

It has been mentioned that when Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Faḍl b. ʿAlī al-Majāshī the linguist came to Nīsābūr in 469/1076. Imām al-Juwaynī was humble enough

---

72 Al-Shahrastānī, Nihāyat, p. 78.
74 Ibid., p. 98.
to study grammar (nahw) under him. At that period Imām al-Shayrāzī came also to Nīsābūr in connection with some administrative affairs. Imām al-Juwaynī was also happy to receive this great imām. Imām al-Juwaynī then fell seriously ill. He recovered but a relapse followed. He asked to be transferred to Bustinqān because of its moderate climate and shortly afterwards died in this village.75

1.2.1.6 His Teachers

Imām la-Juwaynī studied first under his father, the great scholar on tafsīr, ḥadīth, and fiqh. When his father died, he went to al-Bayhaqī’s school and learnt usūl under Abū al-Qāsim al-Isfārāyīnī.76


---

75Ibid.
76Ibn ʿAsākir, Tabyīn, p. 279.
He learnt the recitation of the Qur'ān (al-Qira'āt) under Abū 'Abdullah al-Kabbāzī. He also studied the books of the previous scholars such as those of Imām Abū Ḥasan al-Ash'ārī and al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī. He said: "I would never utter a single word about 'Ilm al-Kalām until I memorised twelve thousand pages of the words of al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr."\(^{79}\)

1.2.1.7. Date of Death

All biographers agree on the date of Imām al-Juwaynī's death. They note that he died in Bustingān on Wednesday evening on the 25th of Rabī' al-Awwal 478/1085, and at that time he was 59 years old.\(^{80}\) This leads us to conclude that the date of his birth was probably the 18th of Muḥarram 419/1029.

1.2.1.8. The Works of Imām al-Juwaynī

Imām al-Juwaynī was a prolific writer. There are about twenty nine books in various fields of Islamic studies which have been attributed to him. The following are the list of his works: On Uṣūl al-Fiqh the books are: al-Burhān fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh, al-Talḥīs fī al-Uṣūl, al-Irshād fī Uṣūl al-Fikh, Mukhtaṣar al-Irshād


\(^{80}\)Ibid., p. 181.
1.2.2 The life of Imām al-Ghazālī

The full name of Imām al-Ghazālī is Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAḥmad al-Ṭūsī also known as
ḥujjat al-Islām (The proof of Islam). He was an outstanding theologian, jurist, original thinker, mystic and religious reformer.

1.2.2.1 Date and Place of Birth

Imām al-Ghazālī was born at Ṭūs in Khurasan, near the modern Meshhed in Iran, in 450/1058.

1.2.2.2 Family Background.

The father of Imām al-Ghazālī, though only a wool spinner and a poor man, was a very pious person. An example of his strict honesty and belief in hard work was that he would not eat any food except that produced by his own effort. He liked to visit the ‘ulamā’ (scholars) and sat with them to seek religious knowledge and also offer his services to them. When he heard the words of those ‘ulamā’ he would cry and pray to God to give him a son as pious as the ‘ulamā’.

According to the account presented by WM Watt, the father of Imām al-Ghazālī though not very highly educated man was marked by the strong humble piety so characteristic of Muslims of that time. We need to remember that this faith was without doubt

---

82 Watt, Muslim, p. 20.
founded upon a wide knowledge of the Qur'ān and ḥadīth, a knowledge gained by following the sermons and lectures given in the mosques.

Imām al-Ghazālī's brother Abū al-Futūḥ Aḥmad (d. 520/1126) was a distinguished scholar, mystic and preacher in Baghdad. His ruling passion was making public exhortations, and for this he neglected the law of which he was a doctor, but he gave lectures on this science in the Niẓāmiyyah College, when acting as substitute for his brother. The written work by Imām al-Ghazālī entitled Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn was abridged by his brother into one volume with the title of Lubāb al-Iḥyā'. His brother is also author of another treatise, al-dhakhīrā fī 'ilm al-baṣīra.83

1.2.2.3 Early Education

Imām al-Ghazālī, together with his brother and several sisters, was left an orphan at an early age. His father died when he and his brother were still young and before his death he committed his sons to the care of a Śūfī friend, to whom he stated that, because he had greatly regretted his own lack of education, such money as he was able to leave them was to be spent entirely on their education.

83Ibn Khallikān, Ṭafayyāt, vol. 4, p. 216.
This Şüfî friend undertook the education of the two boys until the small legacy was exhausted. Then, since he was himself a poor man, he advised them to go to college where, as students, they would have rations assigned to them. And this they did.

While still a boy, Imâm al-Ghazâlî began his studies with the desire for wealth and reputation, as he himself has acknowledged: "We sought learning for the sake of something other than God, but He would not allow it to be for anything but Himself." 84

Imâm al-Ghazâlî began his education in Tûs. His biographers mention that he studied fiqh (jurisprudence) under Aḩmad Ibn Muḥammad al-Radhakânî, 85 and thereafter travelled to Jurjân and became a pupil of Abû al-Qâsîm Ismā'îl Ibn Mas'adâ al-Ismā'îlî (d. 487/1094).

From this teacher he took copious notes, but at first neglected to memorize what he had written. This was characteristic of him, and the results are evident throughout his work. His quotations are exceedingly careless, and this is one of the great charges brought against him by his critics that he

---

84 Al-Subkî, Tabagät, vol. 4, p. 102.

85 Ibid.
falsified traditions. The fact was that he quoted from memory and very freely.

On Imām al-Ghazālī’s way back to Ṭūs from Jurjān he was to receive a lesson. He tells the story himself. The party was attacked by highway robbers, who carried off all that the travellers had with them. Imām al-Ghazālī went after them, though warned by the chief of the brigands that he imperiled his life by doing so. He persisted, however, and begged only for the return of his precious note-books, which could be of no value to them.

The robber chief asked him: "What are your note-books?" He explained that they contained notes of lectures he had recently heard and represented his knowledge of them. The robber laughed and said: "How can you lay claim to this knowledge when we have taken it from you? Being separated from your knowledge, you remain without it." Then he ordered one his men to restore the note-books to him.

Imām al-Ghazālī felt that the words of the robber were to be taken as divine guidance to him, and when he reached Ṭūs, he took himself to study for three years, during which time he committed to memory all the
contents of his note-books, so that if he were robbed again, he could not be deprived of his learning. 86

He later went to Nīsābūr where he studied under the most distinguished theologian of the age, Imām al-Juwaynī. 87 Some of the biographers mention that Imām al-Juwaynī gave full respect and vigilant care to al-Ghazālī. 88

He worked very hard to acquire knowledge from his teacher. His studies were of the broadest kind, embracing Islamic law, theology, dialectics, philosophy, logic and the doctrines and practices of the Ṣūfis. Imām al-Juwaynī who was proud of Imām al-Ghazālī's intellectual powers and ambition, describes him as al-bahr al-mughdiq 89 (a sea to drown in). Imām al-Ghazālī remained at Nīsābūr until Imām al-Juwaynī's death in 478/1085. 90

86 Ibid., p. 103.
87 Ibn ʿAsākir, Tabyīn, p. 292.
88 Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt, vol. 4, p. 64.
90 Ibid.
Imām al-Juwaynī allowed complete freedom of thought and expression to his pupils. They were encouraged to engage in debates and discussions of all kinds. Imām al-Ghazālī, in his debates with fellow students, showed great suppleness of mind and a gift for polemics. Consequently he easily took a commanding place among the other students.

It was during Imām al-Ghazālī’s student days at the Niẓāmiyyah college of Nīsābūr that he began to tutor his fellow students and taught them. Despite the comparative youth of his early twenties, he won a reputation for his writings which showed that he had made himself the master of every subject to which he had applied himself.

It is related that when Imām al-Ghazālī had written his book al-Mankhūl, he showed it to his master Imām al-Juwaynī who observed: "You have buried me while I am still alive. Why did you not have patience to wait until I was dead? For your book has thrust my writings out of sight."91

It was during this period that Imām al-Ghazālī also became impatient with dogmatic teaching and abandoned the policy of dependence upon authority (taqlīd). He rose up to free his mind from irksome

91Ibid.
captivity, in order to seek that which aroused the attention of the rational soul itself, and thereby facilitated for the soul the attainment of its happiness and joy.

Imām al-Ghazālī tells that from his boyhood, he had been possessed by the desire to comprehend the real meaning of things for himself and had come to the conclusion that one of the greatest hindrances in the search for truth was the uncritical acceptance of beliefs on the authority of parents and teachers, and a rigid adherence to the heritage of the past. This does not mean that inherited beliefs are inherently wrong or misguided, it is the blind acceptance that needed questioning.

He remembered the ḥadīth saying ascribed to the Prophet that every child is born with a naturally religious disposition (‘alā al-fiṭra), but then his parents make him into a Jew or a Christian or a Magian. Imām al-Ghazālī was anxious to know the nature of this innate disposition before it was affected by unreasoned convictions imposed by others.

So he set out to secure a knowledge which left no room for doubt and involved no possibility of error or conjecture. Finding that none of the knowledge which he had acquired (except that which was based on first-hand experience) satisfied these conditions, he
became a seeker after absolute truth and was content with no lower standard. He expresses this in a couplet which has become famous:

Take what you see and let hearsay alone,
When the sun has arisen, what need have you of Saturn?92

Driven by doubt, Imām al-Ghazālī began to investigate theological differences even when he was a student and not yet twenty. This can be seen in his book "al-munqīdh min al-ḍalāl" in which he says:

From my early youth, since I attained the age of puberty before I was twenty, until the present time when I am over fifty, I have ever recklessly launched out in to the midst of these ocean depths, I have ever bravely embarked on this open sea, throwing aside all craven caution; I have poked into every dark recess, I have made an assault on every problem, I have plunged into every abyss, I have scrutinized the creed of every sect, I have tried to lay bare the inmost doctrines of every community. All this have I done that I might distinguish between true and false, between sound tradition and heretical innovation. Whenever I meet one of the Bāṭiniyyah, I like to study his creed; whenever I meet one of the Zāhirīyyah, I want to know the essentials of his belief.93

Thus Imām al-Ghazālī relates his scholastic experience during his stay with his teacher Imām al-

92Al-Ghazālī, Mizān, p. 409.

93Watt, Faith, p. 20.
Juwaynī. This was before he was twenty years old. We believe that this is strong evidence to show the influence of Imām al-Juwaynī on his student Imām al-Ghazālī. He had opened the mind of his student to search for the truth among the altercation of the sects in his time.

Imām al-Ghazālī justified his scepticism by saying: "He who does not doubt, does not investigate, and he who does not investigate does not perceive, and he who does not perceive remains in blindness and error." All kinds of knowledge, he felt, should be investigated by the scholar, for all might be a help to him and the true scholar should be hostile to none. This is illustrated by his words: "For men are hostile to that of which they are ignorant." He says also that it is the business of the true investigator to embark, "on the deep waters of what is obscure (al-ishkāl), from which the common folk should be kept away, just as boys are kept away from the bank of the Tigris, lest they should be drowned. But those who are strong may embark upon such studies just as the skilled swimmer is free to dive into waters." This explains to us why he was driven to study and explore deeply in the knowledge he embarked on.

94 Al-Ghazālī, Mizān, p. 409.
95 Al-Ghazālī, Munqidh, p. 40.
96 Ibid., p. 27.
During his stay at Mīsābūr, Imām al-Ghazzālī is also reported to have been a disciple of several other teachers, mostly obscure, the best known being Abū 'Ali al-Farmadhi.97 From this teacher he learned more about the theory and practice of Sūfism. He even practised rigorous ascetic and Sūfistic exercises under his guidance but not to the desired effect. As he himself narrates, he could not attain to that stage where the mystics begin to receive pure inspiration from above. So he did not feel quite at ease or settled in his mind.

On the one hand, he felt philosophically dissatisfied with the speculative systems of the scholastic theologians and could not accept anything on authority; on the other hand, the Sūfistic practices also failed to make any definite impression on him for he had not received any sure results. There is no doubt, however, that the increasing attraction of the Sūfistic teaching, with its insistence upon a direct personal experience of God, added to Imām al-Ghazzālī's critical dissatisfaction with dogmatic theology.

When his teacher Imām al-Juwaynī died he moved into the camp of Nizām al-Mulk where many of the 'ulamā' were gathering and here he was received with

honour and respect by them. Then in the year 484/1091 he went to Baghdad to teach at the Niẓāmiyyah college. 98 This college had been restricted to Shāfi‘ite scholars. And according to Ibn al-Jawzī, Niẓām al-Mulk imposed as a condition that the teacher, preacher, librarian, grammarian, and the reciter of the Qur‘ān must all be Shāfi‘ite. 99

When Imām al-Ghazālī arrived to take up his appointment as professor to the chair of jurisprudence, the jurists came to him and said: "It has been the custom for everyone who teaches in this building to invite the jurists to be present and listen, and we wish you to invite us to your lectures on jurisprudence." He replied to this: "Most willingly." 100

From that time onwards some of the leading scholars attended his lectures on Shāfi‘ite jurisprudence, together with three hundred students of his own and one hundred of the sons of the princely families. 101 He received a warm welcome in Baghdad. It has been said that all the Baghdadis were astonished by the excellence of his lectures, his fluent delivery,

100 Al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol. 4, p. 113.
the extent of learning, the subtlety of his allusions, and the lucidity of his explanations, and they conceived a great regard for him and treated him as "the apple of their eye". Moreover, he came to be looked upon as the greatest jurist ever to enter Baghdad.

1.2.2.4 The Scepticism of Imam al-Ghazālī

Apparently, Imam al-Ghazālī attained all the glory that a scholar could by way of worldly success. He came to wield influence comparable to that of the highest officials of the state. However, inwardly he began to undergo an intellectual and spiritual crisis.

He doubted the evidence of the senses; he could see plainly that they often deceive. No eye could perceive the movement of a shadow, but still the shadow moves; a gold piece would cover any star, but still the star is a world larger than the earth.

Moreover, he doubted even the primary ideas of the mind. Is ten more than three? Can a thing both

102 Margaret Smith, Al-Ghazālī the Mystic, London, 1944, p. 21.
103 Al-Subkī, Ṭabagāt, vol. 4, p. 29.
104 Ibid., p. 107.
be and not be? Perhaps, he could not tell. If his senses deceived him, why not his mind? May there not be something behind the mind, transcending it, which would show the falsity of its convictions even as the mind shows the falsity of the information given by the senses? May not the dreams of the Sufis be true, and their revelations in ecstasy be the only real guides? When we awake in death, may it not be into a true but different existence? All these doubts occurred to Imam al-Ghazāli; and this preoccupied his mind for two months. During this time he was a sceptic in fact though not in theory or in outward expression. 105

At length God cured Imam al-Ghazāli of the breakdown. He writes:

"My being was restored to health and an even balance; the necessary truths of the intellect became once more accepted, as I regained confidence in their certain and trustworthy character. This did not come about by systematic demonstration or marshalled argument, but by a light which God most high cast into my breast. That light is the key to the greater part of knowledge..... The point of these accounts is that the task is perfectly fulfilled when the quest is prosecuted up to the stage of seeking what is not sought (but stops short of that). For first principles are not sought, since they are present and to hand, and if what is present is sought for, it becomes hidden and lost. When however, a man seeks what is not sought (and that only), he is not to be accused of falling short in the seeking of what is to be sought." 106


Though Imām al-Ghazālī said in his autobiography, al-Mungidh min al-Dalāl, that this period of scepticism occurred before he started studying theology, Bāṭinite teachings, philosophy and mysticism,107 "Some scholars claim that it seems certain that the fit of scepticism as he describes it, must have been preceded by some study of philosophy."108

This philosophical background is clearly evidenced by the instances when Imām al-Ghazālī discusses epistemological questions about the nature of knowledge and the nature of certainty. We can see that some of his debates seem close to those utilized by Miskawayh (d.422/1030) though these were for a different purpose altogether. Miskawayh refers to the use of reason for the judgment of sense, as in the instance of the sun, which by rational proofs is known to be a hundred and sixty times greater than the earth. Imām al-Ghazālī may or may not have been acquainted with this particular passage, but what seems certain is that one of the issues being discussed by Imām al-Ghazālī was a current topic for philosophers working in the Islamic world just prior to his own time.

107Ibid., pp. 26-27.
108Watt, Muslim, p. 51.
While we can scrutinise these specific instances of commonality between Imam al-Ghazālī and the philosophers, his critique of knowledge is important as it is in general philosophy. He seems very interested in a sphere above reason, and in this he is clearly echoing the Platonic tradition, so strong in philosophical writing in Arabic. Like this Platonic influence, Imam al-Ghazālī was seeking a level beyond the ordinary reason, a realm above simple logic.

Moreover, the very fact that Imam al-Ghazālī "came to regard the various seekers (seeking after truth) as comprising four groups,"\textsuperscript{109} indicates that he did some study of these groups previously.

1.2.2.5 Seeking After the Truth

Imam al-Ghazālī, being saved after the two months' crisis, regained the power to reason. Consequently, he began investigating what these four groups had achieved, "commencing with the science of theology and then taking the way of philosophy, the authoritative instruction of the Bāṭiniyyah, and the way of mysticism, in that order."\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{110}Ibid.
In theology, Imām al-Ghazālī found no intellectual certainty, for the theologians depended entirely on the acceptance of their dogmatic assumptions on authority. He denounced their over emphasis on the doctrinal, for it led to a faulty representation of religion by reducing it to a mere mould of orthodoxy and catechism of dogmas. The disputes of the scholastics among themselves he considered as mere dialectical logomachies which had no real relation with religious life.111

Realizing that the remedy for his ailment was not to be found in theology, Imām al-Ghazālī turned to philosophy which he pursued as diligently and as comprehensively as he could. He had seen already that the weakness of the theologians lay in their not having made a sufficient study of primary ideas and the laws of thought.

He spent three years on this. He was at Baghdad at the time, teaching jurisprudence and writing fatāwā. Working without a teacher, he gave two years to the study of the writings of the different schools of philosophy, and almost another to meditating and working over his results. He felt that he was the first Muslim doctor to do this with the requisite thoroughness.

111Ibid.
Imām al-Ghazālī divides the followers of philosophy in his time into three groups: materialists (Dahriyyūn), naturalists (ṭabīʿiyūn) and Theists (ilāhiyyūn). 112

Rejecting a creator, the materialists maintain that the world exists from all eternity, that the animal simply comes from the egg and the egg from the animal. The wonder of creation compels the materialists to admit a creator, but the creator is seen as a machine which has a certain balance of temperament in itself which keeps it running; thought is a mechanical part of human nature and ends with death. They thus reject a future life, though admitting a God with some attributes.

He deals at much greater length with the teachings of those whom he called Theists. Aristotle, he regards as the final master of the Greek school; their doctrines are best represented for Arabic readers in the books of Ibn Sīnā and al-Fārābī since the works of their predecessors on this subject are a mass of confusion. Part of these doctrines must be reckoned as unbelief, part as heresy, and part as theologically indifferent.

112Ibid., p. 30.
Imām al-Ghazālī then divides the philosophical sciences into six: mathematics, logic, physics, metaphysics, political economy, and ethics. He discusses these in detail, showing what must be rejected, what is indifferent, what dangers arise from each to him who studies or to him who rejects without study. Throughout, he is cautious to mark nothing as unbelief that is not really so, to admit always those truths of mathematics, logic and physics that cannot intellectually be rejected. He only warns against an attitude of intellectualism and a belief that mathematicians, with their acuteness and success in their own field, are to be followed in other fields, or that all subjects are susceptible of the exactness and certainty of syllogism in logic.

The great errors of the Theists are almost entirely in their metaphysical views. Three of their propositions mark them as unbelievers. Firstly, they reject the resurrection of the body and physical punishment hereafter, asserting that the punishments of the next world will be spiritual only. That there will be spiritual punishments Imām al-Ghazālī admits, but he holds that there will be physical punishment as well. Secondly, they hold that God knows universals only, not

113Ibid., p. 32.
particulars. Thirdly, they hold that the world exists from all eternity and to all eternity. When they reject the attributes of God and hold that He knows by His essence and not by something added to His essence, they are only heretics and not unbelievers.

In physics Imām al-Ghazālī accepts the constitution of the world as developed and explained by Philosophers; however all is to be regarded as entirely submissive to God, incapable of autonomous-movement, a tool of which the Creator makes use.

Finally, Imām al-Ghazālī considers that the philosopher's system of ethics is derived from the teaching of the Şūfīs. At all times there have been such saints, retired from the world. God has never left Himself without a witness and from their ecstasies and revelations knowledge of the human heart, for good and evil, is derived.114

Though Imām al-Ghazālī devoted two of his books (*Magāṣid al-falāṣīfa* and *Tahāfut al-falāṣīfa*) to summarizing and criticizing the views of the philosophers, he did almost the same in some of his non-philosophical books such as *al-Munqīdḥ min al-

114Ibid., p. 38.
In the third and last year spent in reflecting upon philosophy, it seems that Imām al-Ghazālī engaged in examining the doctrines of the Taʿlīmiyyah. In fact, Imām al-Ghazālī placed his study of the Taʿlīmiyyah after the third year of his stay in Baghdad, but this must not be accepted as an accurate chronological record of events. The reason for this is that Imām al-Ghazālī spent only four years in Baghdad; if three years out of these four were devoted totally to studying and reflecting upon philosophy, and for six months out of the last year Imām al-Ghazālī "was continuously tossed about between the attraction of worldly desires and the impulses towards eternal life," it is unlikely that he would have been able in the remaining time (only six months) to:

---

115 Al-Ghazālī, Munqidh, pp. 9, 18-27, 51, 55.  
116 Al-Ghazālī, Faysal, pp. 21-22.  
118 Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā', vol. 1, p. 20.  
119 The party of taʿlīm or 'authoritative instruction' (also known as Ismāʿīlīyyah and Bāṭinīyyah) held that truth is to be attained not by reason but by accepting the pronouncements of the infallible Imām. See Watt, Faith, p. 13.  
120 Watt, Faith, p. 57.
a) Write his two famous philosophical books, *Magāṣid al-falāsifa* and *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*.

b) Acquaint himself with the Şūfīs' beliefs by reading their books, so that he comprehended their fundamental teachings on the intellectual side, and progressed as far as is possible by study and oral instruction. 121

c) Continue his daily functions such as teaching to the three hundred of the most distinguished students of the time, and one hundred of the sons of the princely families. 122

d) Search for their (i.e. Taʿlīmites) books and collect their doctrines. 123 He made a collection of their utterances, arranged them in logical order and formulated them correctly. He went as far as "doing their work for them." 124

e) Write *al-Mustaẓhīrī* refuting the Taʿlīmites' doctrine.

So, it seems certain that the date of the study of the Taʿlīmite doctrines must have been from early in 487/1094. Whatever the date might be "it is enough to say that İmām al-Ghazzālī found the Taʿlīmites and their teachings eminently unsatisfactory; they had

121Ibid.

122Smith, op., cit. p. 22.

123Watt, Faith, p. 44.

124Ibid.
a lesson which they went over parrot-fashion, but beyond it they were in dense ignorance." 125

After Imâm al-Ghazâlî completed his study of the Ta‘lîmites, he turned to the books of the Şûfîs. If one follows strictly Imâm al-Ghazâlî's autobiography one will find no suggestion that he had a previous acquaintance with them and their practices. But probably this means nothing more than it does when he speaks in a similar way of studying theology and philosophy, namely, that he now took up the study of mysticism in earnest and with a new and definite purpose. His native country was steeped in Şûfîsm. His great teacher, Imâm al-Juwaynî, had been a devout Şûfî. According to the tradition, the friend to whom his father had entrusted his brother and himself had been a Şûfî.

However, Imâm al-Ghazâlî recognized that the mystic way includes both intellectual belief and practical activity. Since the intellectual belief was easier for him than the practical activity, he began to acquaint himself with şûfîs beliefs by reading books such as Qüt al-Quûb by Abû Ṭâlib al-Makkî (d.386/996), the works of al-Ḥârîth al-Muḥâsîbî (d.243/857), the various anecdotes about al-Junâyd (d.298/910), al-

125Macdonald, al-Ghazâlî, JACS, XX (1899), p. 87.
Shibli (d. 334/945), and Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d. 261/875) and other discourses of leading Sufi men.

After learning all the fundamental teachings of the mystic way on the intellectual side by the way of study and oral instruction, it became plain to Imam al-Ghazali that what is most distinctive of mysticism is something which cannot be apprehended by study, but only by immediate experience, by ecstasy and by a moral change.126

Since the attainment of this immediate experience was the only problem facing Imam al-Ghazali in his task of reaching the truth, he found himself continuously tossed about between the attractions of worldly desires and the impulses towards eternal life.127 Imam al-Ghazali felt that at last God had made it easy for him to abandon position and wealth and family ties and friends in order to fulfill his purpose of apprehending the truth. This came through a complete nervous breakdown, by which he collapsed physically and mentally and lost his power of speech.128

In year 488/1095 he was struck down by a mysterious disease which made it physically impossible

126 Watt, Faith, pp. 54-55.
127 Ibid, p. 57.
128 Ibid.
for him to lecture. After some months he left Baghdad
on the pretext of making the pilgrimage, but in reality
he was abandoning his professorship and his whole
career as a jurist and theologian. This he explains in
al-Munjidh:

In due course I entered Damascus, and
there I remained for nearly two years
with no other occupation than the
cultivation of retirement and
solitude together with religious and
ascetic exercises, as I busied myself
purifying my soul, improving my
character and cleansing my heart for
the constant recollection of God most
high, as I had learnt from my study
of mysticism. I used to go into
retreat for a period in the mosque of
Damascus, going up to the minaret of
the mosque for the whole day and
shutting myself in so as to be alone.
At length I made my way from Damascus
to the Holy House (that is
Jerusalem). There I used to enter
into the precinct of the rock every
day and shut myself in. Next there
arose in me a prompting to fulfill
the duty of the pilgrimage, gain the
blessings of Mecca and Medina, and
perform the visitation of the
Messenger of God most high (peace be
upon him), after first performing the
visitiation of al-khalil, the friend
of God (God blessing). I therefore
made the journey to the Hijaz.129

There has been speculation, from that time
until the present day, as to the motives which induced
Imām al-Ghazālī to abandon his professorship. Imām al-
Ghazālī himself gave as his reason his realization that
his appointment as a professor was not conducive to the

129Ibid., p. 59.
spiritual life, that he found himself working not solely in the service of God but also for his own worldly ambitions of wealth and fame, and that consequently he feared his spiritual downfall and damnation. 130

However, some recent scholars have attributed his decision to leave his post in Baghdad to much more mundane considerations. Macdonald suggests that certain trends in the political events at the time might have contributed to his decision. In 485/1092 the wazir Niẓām al-Mulk was assassinated and shortly afterwards, in the same year as Malik Shāh was murdered, a civil war broke out between different factions of the ruling family of the Saljūqs. In 488/1095, Barkiyāruq executed his uncle Tutush, who had been supported by the caliph and hence presumably by Imām al-Ghazālī, and it was not long before Barkiyāruq's own death in 499/1105 that Imām al-Ghazālī returned to teach in Nīsābūr. 131

WM Watt, however, doubts that these considerations played a large part in Imām al-Ghazālī's decision and writes: "There may be a grain of truth in the suggestion, however, in so far as the vicissitudes of the years after 485/1092 and the need for maintaining a delicate balance on the political tight-

131 Macdonald, al-Ghazālī, E.I.1, ii, p. 146.
rope may have helped to convince Imam al-Ghazālī that nothing of what he was interested in could be achieved through politics and his semi-political position in Baghdad."¹³² Watt argues further that the difficulties with Barkiyāruq were probably not intended to do more than call attention to this factor.

At this stage we accept Imam al-Ghazālī's conversion to the mystic life as genuine. The chief arguments are the coincidence of dates and Imam al-Ghazālī's implication in the recognition by the caliph of Barkiyāruq's rival Tutush for a time in 487/1094. It was in February 488/1095 that it became clear, with the death of Tutush, that Barkiyāruq was victor in the struggle with him (which had lasted since the death of Malik Shāh in November 485/1092). Imam al-Ghazālī's illness began in July 488/1095, and he left Baghdad in November. Again, Barkiyāruq's death was in late December 498/1104, and it was some eighteen months later that Imam al-Ghazālī returned to teach at Nīsābūr. Because of this correspondence of dates, some causal connection cannot be ruled out. On the whole, however, it seems unlikely. In the uncertain politics of the time, people frequently appeared to change sides. Barkiyāruq was generally on good terms with Fakhr al-Mulk, a son of Niẓām al-Mulk who had inherited something of his talents and his policies and who was

¹³²Watt, Muslim, pp. 140-141.
later responsible for Imām al-Ghazālī’s return to teaching at Nīṣābūr. With this powerful support it is not likely that some small fault of Imām al-Ghazālī would have required his departure from his post at Baghdad and he himself asserts that he was courted by the rulers. So it is credible that Imām al-Ghazālī himself decided to leave.

Another scholar, F Jadre, suggests that Imām al-Ghazālī was mainly afraid of the Bāṭinites who had murdered Nizām al-Mulk in 485/1092 and whom he had attacked in his writings. This suggestion is also doubted by Watt who thinks that Imām al-Ghazālī was not in very great danger from the Bāṭinites since assassination was not adopted by them as a regular activity until after 489/1095 and in any case the obvious candidate for assassination would have been the caliph and not a distinguished scholar.133

Watt relies, in the main, upon the reason given by Imām al-Ghazālī himself to explain his sudden departure from Baghdad, his dissatisfaction with the condition in which he had to work and with the quality of the life that was possible for the leading professor in Baghdad. Watt finds circumstantial evidence to support his view in suggesting that this dissatisfaction is the key to understanding Imām al-

133Ibid.
Ghazālī’s life and points to its predominance in the 
Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn.\textsuperscript{134}

Imām al-Ghazālī retired once more to his 
house in Tūs and established a college for students of 
jurisprudence, close by madrasah lil fuqahāʾ (school 
for legist),\textsuperscript{135} and also a convent (khānqah) for 
training young disciples in the theory and practice of 
the Şūfī life.\textsuperscript{136}

During Imām al-Ghazālī’s time in Tūs, he 
divided his time in the way best fitted to serve the 
needs of those around him. He devoted himself to 
reading the Qur’ān, to studying the Traditions afresh, 
to carrying out God’s will, to teaching and to prayer, 
so that he should not waste a single moment of his own 
time or that of those with him.\textsuperscript{137}

1.2.2.6 Date of Death

Imām al-Ghazālī died on Monday, 14th of 
Jumādā II 1111/505 at the age of fifty three.\textsuperscript{138} His 
body was buried outside Ṭabarān in a grave near to that

\textsuperscript{134}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{135}Al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt, vol. 4, p. 105, 109.
\textsuperscript{136}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{138}Ibid.
of the Persian poet, Firdawsī. 139

1.2.2.7 The Works of Imām al-Ghazālī

Imām al-Ghazālī has a vast number of works which he wrote on various aspects of Islamic studies. It is claimed that he composed over 500 works. However, Watt casts doubt upon the authenticity of some of the works which are ascribed to Imām al-Ghazālī. He suggests that: "Of each work as a whole we must ask: Are we certain that this is a genuine work of al-Ghazālī?" 140 The following is a list of some of Imām al-Ghazālī’s works: His works on jurisprudence are: al-Mankhūl fī Usūl al-Fiqh, al-Basīṭ fī al-Furū', Ghayāt al-Ghawr fī Masā’il ad-Dawr, al-Wasīṭ, al-Mustaṣfā min 'Ilm al-Uṣūl, al-Wajīz, Ghawr ad-Dawr fī al-Mas’ala al-Surayjiya. His works on Sufism are: Iḥyāʾ Ulūm al-Dīn, al-Risāla al-Ladunniyya, Bidāyat al-Hidāya, Mishkāt al-Anwār, al-Maqṣad al-Asnā Sharḥ Asmā’ Allah al-Ḥusnā, al-Arba‘īn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn. His works on Philosophy are: Tahāfut al-Falāsifa, Maqāsid al-Falāsifa, Miḥakk al-Naẓar, Miṣyār al-‘Ilm fī Fann al-Manṭiq. His works on Theology are: al-Iqtiṣād fī al-I’tiqād, Fayṣal al-

139Ibid.

140 Watt, "Works Attributed to al-Ghazālī" JRAS (1952), P. 25.
CHAPTER TWO

The views of Imam al-Juwayni and Imam al-Ghazali on 'Ilm al-Kalam

Before we discuss the views of Imam al-Juwayni and Imam al-Ghazali, we shall briefly give the salaf’s (early Muslims’) definition of 'Ilm al-Kalam and their views on the subject.

2.1 The definitions of 'Ilm al-Kalam.

'Ilm al-Kalam has many definitions, but we shall discuss only the definition given by some of the doctors of kalâm (mutakallimün) and Islamic philosophers.

One of the doctors of kalâm, al-Ijī (d.756/1355), in his book al-Mawāgif regards 'Ilm al-Kalâm as the science which is concerned with establishing religious beliefs firmly by adducing proofs and banishing doubts. He explains the meaning of belief as faith alone without action, while religion is the following of the prophet Muḥammad.1

1Al-Ijī, Mawāgif, p. 7.
Al-Fārābī (d. 339/950), one of the philosophers, regards ‘Ilm al-Kalām in his book Iḥṣā’ al-ʿulūm as a science which enables a man to procure the victory of the doctrines and actions laid down by the legislator of the religion, and to refute all opinions contradicting them.²

Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), gives a similar definition of ‘Ilm al-Kalām in his Muqaddimah as the discipline which brings to the service of religious beliefs the use of rational proofs from the salaf and sunnite views to oppose the doubters and deniers of faith.³

Al-Tahānawī (1158/1745), the author of Kashshāf iṣṭilāḥāt al-funūn, defines ‘Ilm al-Kalām as the science which is concerned with establishing religious beliefs firmly.⁴

Al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413) defines ‘Ilm al-Kalām as the science which discusses the dhāt (essence) of God and his ʿṣifāt (qualities) and

³ Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimah, p. 458.
permissible human behaviour based on Islamic principles according to Islamic law.  

Therefore, although 'Ilm al-Kalām has various interpretations, we can see that the intended meaning is always the same: to explain religious beliefs and to protect them from the doubters.

The meaning of Islamic beliefs, all decisions about faith and Islamic principles or the dhāt (essence) of God, His ṣifāt (qualities), His afʿāl (actions) or His relation to human beings are based on the Qur'ān and the sunnah of the prophet Muḥammad. In fact, 'Ilm al-Kalām is derived from religion or the Qur'ān, not from reason. Although reason develops arguments and proofs, naqāl (traditional proof) is required for support. Naqāl and reason are needed together. Both are the principles of the Muslims' belief in how to achieve the goal of truth.

These were the ways of 'Ilm al-Kalām in its early period but later different approaches were adopted. Some of the Islamic madhāhib (sects) used 'Ilm al-Kalām to their own ends in order to attack Muslims who opposed them and to accuse them without any proof.

---

5Al-Jurjānī, Taʾrīfāt, p. 238.
6ʿAbd. al-Fattāh Maḥmūd, ʾIṣālah al-Tafkīr al-Islāmī, Cairo, 1975, p. 16.
of being unbelievers. As a result of this, the real objective of 'Ilm al-Kalām was often misdirected. For some used 'Ilm al-Kalām for their sectarian interests, and not for the general religion.

2.2 The view of the salaf on 'Ilm al-Kalām

When we examine the attitude of the salaf to 'Ilm al-Kalām, we find that they avoided it because it was not the practice of the prophet Muḥammad and his companions.

The prophet Muḥammad warned his companions not to debate any problem which was related to God and he gave them his guidance. For example, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, he said:

Spread what I have told you. Indeed the people before you met destruction because they questioned and disagreed with their prophet. If I command you to do something, do it; if I forbid you from doing something, leave it.7

This hadīth shows that the prophet does not want his companions to discuss what had been brought by

7Ibn Mājah, vol. 1, p. 3.
him and ordered them to follow strictly without asking any question. In another hadīth narrated by Abu Hurayrah, the prophet said:

The people will keep asking you about knowledge until you say that this is God. Abu Hurayrah said: Some of the Bedouin came to me and asked: 'O Abu Hurayrah, God created us, who then created God?' Abu Hurayrah (to dismiss them) took a little stone with his hand and threw it at them saying: "Get up; what has been said by the prophet is the truth." 8

The companions of the prophet did not argue amongst themselves about the creation of God and if they faced any problems which related to God, they referred them to the prophet. One day ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālīb was asked where God was. He replied: "He does not need a place"; and then they asked what God was like. He replied: "He does not have shape." He then asked for a candle and put it in a wooden tube and said to them: "In what direction is the flame burning?" When they

replied: "It does not have a specific direction," he said: "It is same with God." 9

That was the attitude of the prophet and his companions concerning God. This attitude was followed by the salaf. We can see that although they disputed some of these matters, they united to prevent issues from becoming exaggerated by using techniques of diplomacy and appeasement. They describe debates about these problems as heresies and issues which lead people astray.

We can find this in Imam Malik's views. When questioned about the meaning of the verse, "God sitting on the throne", 10 he answered: "That God is sitting on the throne is known; how it is done is unknown. It must be believed, and questions about it are heresies. I think you are already astray". Then he ordered the man to leave. 11

When Ahmad bin Hanbal was asked about fate and divine decree he said: "I gathered seventy men from the Tābi‘in (followers), the leaders of the Muslims and the greatest fuqahā’ (legists). They all believed in the decree of God, accepted His commands, were patient under His wisdom, followed His orders, kept from all that is prohibited, believed in the divine decree whether good or hurtful, avoided disputation and argumentation about religion." This demonstrates that this scholar was opposed to the study of ‘Ilm al-Kalām.

In his book "Ihya’ uṣūl al-Dīn" Imām al-Gazālī explained the stand of some scholars, such as Shāfi‘ī, Mālik and Ahmad bin Ḥanbal, on ‘Ilm al-Kalām. All of them forbade ‘Ilm al-Kalām and disputes about religion.

Ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā said: "I heard al-Shāfi‘ī say: 'To meet God with all kinds of sin except idolatry, is better then meeting Him with something which is from ‘Ilm al-Kalām. I had heard from Ḥafṣ (one of the Mu‘tazilite speakers) some words which made me unable to repeat them'. He said again: 'The mutakallimūn said something which I did not believe or expect.' Therefore, to do everything (except idolatry) forbidden by God is better than to turn to ‘Ilm al-Kalām."

12Ibid., p. 245.
It was reported by al-Karābiṣi that when Imām al-Shāfiʿī was asked about ‘Ilm al-Kalām, he became angry and said: "Ask that question from Ḥafṣ and his followers who will be punished by God. If anyone were to know that the ‘Ilm al-Kalām is full of corruption, they would shun it as they would run from a lion." Furthermore, he said: "If you hear someone say that something is indefinite or definite, beware, for he must be one of ahl al-Kalām who has no religion."

Al-Zaʿfarānī reported that Imām al-Shāfiʿī said: "My judgment of the ahl al-Kalām is to strike them with palm stalks and take them around the tribe and say: 'This is the reward of those who practise ‘Ilm al-Kalām and leave the Qur'ān and the Sunnah." Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal said that the ahl al-Kalām will not be successful ever and nothing can we find in their hearts except corruption. He also proclaimed that the kalām’s scholars are Zanādiqa (atheists).

Imām Mālik said: "The witnesses of ahl al-bidʿah (heretics) and ahl al-ahwāʾ (people with arbitrary desires) cannot be accepted." One of his followers explained that what he means by ahl al-ahwāʾ was ahl al-Kalām. Imām Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: "Do not discuss with ahl al-ahwāʾ; do not attend their teaching and to show our rejection do not listen to them." The Muḥaddithūn agreed with these views and claimed that
the companions of the prophet did not practise ‘Ilm al-Kalām in their life, even though they were better acquainted with the truth than others. This was due to the hadith in which the prophet said: "Destroy the meticulous, destroy the meticulous, destroy the meticulous." This shows their disapproval of these who go too deeply into argumentation.

They also argue that if the ‘Ilm al-Kalām were part of religion, the prophet would have asked his companions to practise it and taught them its methods as he taught them the knowledge of farā’iḍ (the law of succession and distribution). However he forbade them to have an argumentation about the divine decree, as he said: "Keep away from the divine decree."14

These were some of the views of the salaf concerning ‘Ilm al-Kalām. We believe that the reason they rejected this science is because it was not practised by the prophet and his companions in their time. We can understand that they saw ‘Ilm al-Kalām as sowing doubt.

13Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, vol. 16, p. 220.
14Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā’, vol. 1, pp. 94-95.
2.3 The views of Imām al-Juwaynī on 'Ilm al-Kalām.

We have already discussed the life of Imām al-Juwaynī in the earlier chapter and his interest in Islamic knowledge, an interest cultivated from an early age. He wrote on many different aspects of Islamic knowledge, one of which was 'Ilm al-Kalām. He wrote many books in this field such as al-Shāmil fī usūl al-dīn, al-Irshād, al-Luma' fī al-Adillah, and al-'Agīdah al-Nizāmiyyah.

Some of the biographers mentioned that Imām al-Juwaynī turned away from 'Ilm al-Kalām in the last days of his life. Ibn al-Jawzī narrates that Imām al-Juwaynī said: "You should follow the belief of al-'Ajā'īz (the Sunnite Śūfis)."\(^\text{15}\) This was his final turning away from 'Ilm al-Kalām for a life of meditation.

Al-Subki narrated in his book Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah al-Kubrā that Imām al-Juwaynī said: "Do not involve yourself with 'Ilm al-kalām. If I had known that through 'Ilm al-Kalām I would end up in this state, I would not have become involved with it."\(^\text{16}\) He suggested it was compulsory for an imām to have knowledge of usūl al-dīn to guide those Muslims who

\(^{15}\text{Ibn al-Jawzī, Muntazam, vol. 9, p. 19.}\)

\(^{16}\text{Al-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt, vol. 5, p. 180.}\)
have problems with 'Ilm al-Kalām by following the salaf, as he claimed that the duties of Imāms are to unite their followers and guide them to the way of the salaf, to avoid probing the unsolved problem, not to study the difficult too deeply and not to examine the dilemma too closely. They should just follow what had been taught to them without question. Although they are learned and possess authority, they tended to avoid discussion of any problem which could lead people astray from the religion.

The salaf cared about the problems of Muslims and tried their best to protect them from being led astray and from deviation from faith. Some people, however, will be led astray, as the prophet said: "My ummah will divided into seventy three groups, only one of which will be saved".17

Imām al-Juwaynī explains which group will be saved by saying: "Those who are in the same way with me and my friends. We do not allow discussion of 'Ilm al-Kalām and we do not evoke it in our considerations. We raise difficulties for those who are trying to revive this discussion."18

18Al-Juwaynī, Ghiyāth, pp. 190-191.
Thus, the views of Imām al-Juwaynī concerning ‘Ilm al-Kalām are clear to us. He claims that ‘Ilm al-Kalām can lead people astray and to deviate from the religion. He also claims that only the way of the salaf which he followed was the safe way, as he proclaims: "Know that I have withdrawn all my articles which were against the salaf and I request the scholar of Nīsābūr to do so." \[19\]

By examining the words of Imām al-Juwaynī in his own books we find that he called for isolation from ‘Ilm al-Kalām, but the question is, how can he agree with this as he himself used ‘Ilm al-Kalām and wrote many books about it?

We note that the period in which Imām al-Juwaynī lived was full of sectarian confusion. This caused the spread of anxiety and disputation among the people. He felt that his responsibility as a Muslim was to settle the disputes among them. This was one reason he started work from his early youth in his father’s school and later. This effort was followed by the other scholars and the Shāfi‘ite leaders. After he returned to Nīsābūr when the Saljūqs took power he lived at the Niẓāmiyyah college and all the Sunnite affairs began to improve at that particular time. \[20\]

\[19\] Al-Subkī, Ṭabagāt, vol. 5, p. 189.

\[20\] Ibn ‘Asākir, Tabyīn, p. 279.
As for himself, he chose the Šufi way as mentioned by al-Subkī. He would cry when he heard a telling line of poetry (bayt) or meditated on his life and when he began to talk about aḥwāl (states) he would include the Šufis' knowledge for his audience and would often cry, followed by the participants.\textsuperscript{21} Al-Subkī mentioned again that when he wore new clothes he warned his heart by saying: "We are human beings, we have to be well-turned out, we are not mountain or iron."\textsuperscript{22}

All these are Šufi practices, which show that Imam al-Juwaynī was involved in Tašawwuf. Tašawwuf or the mystical way at that particular time was not yet regarded by most Muslims as a means to the knowledge of God. This does not mean that Imam al-Juwaynī had totally rejected 'Ilm al-Kalām, but that he regarded it as a tool. It could cure some ills of the soul and not others. To him 'Ilm al-Kalām had its own value as long as it related to proving the existence of God and freeing Him from the attributes of His creations. He prefers Tašawwuf because this can lead him closer to the knowledge of the reality of God. He used 'Ilm al-

\textsuperscript{21}Al-Subkī, Ţabaqāt, vol. 5, p. 177.

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid.
Kalām as a tool to achieve the goal of truth and practised Taṣawwuf in his life.23

2.4 The views of Imām al-Ghazālī on ‘Iлm al-Kalām

The views of Imām al-Ghazālī on ‘Iлm al-Kalām are clear to us when we look through many of his books. We have taken his views on ‘Iлm al-Kalām from some of his famous books such as al-mungidh min al-dalāl, qawā‘id al-‘aqā‘id fī kitāb Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn, fayṣal al-tafrīqā bayn al-Īslām wa al-zanādiqah and al-īgtiṣād fī al-i‘tiqād.

Imām al-Ghazālī proposes that the study and use of ‘Iлm al-Kalām were essentially pragmatic in that it became a means of defending the orthodox creed especially against the heretical deviations being propounded by some. The argument runs thus. Through His messenger in the utterances of the Qur’ān and through the traditions, God has sent a creed which is the true faith and whose base provides for human welfare both in religious and secular matters. However, Satan also sent forth teachings and practices contrary to the true faith, and these are often in the form of the teachings of the heretics.

People often tend to accept these suggestions and in this way pervert the true creed for its adherents. Into this context God created the class of theologians so that they may be able to support the traditional faith. By means of systematic argument, by disclosing to scrutiny the confused and confusing doctrines deployed by the heretics who are at variance with traditional or orthodox beliefs, these theologians could reinforce the handed-down faith and refute heretical teachings. This argument explains the origins of theology and theologians, and therefore the use of ‘Ilm al-Kalām by Imām al-Ghazālī.24

The theologians were successful because in due course they performed the task assigned them by God. By refuting deviations and heretical innovations, they were able to safeguard the traditional belief and defend that faith which is the creed acquired from the prophetic source.25

Following the above argument it is clear that Imām al-Ghazālī supported the mutakallimūn and he explained the importance of ‘Ilm al-Kalām. But to him though ‘Ilm al-Kalām could attain its own objective, in the final analysis it was inadequate for him. He also said: "Theological argumentation was not adequate to my

24Watt, Faith, p. 27.
25Ibid., p. 28.
case and was unable to cure the malady of which I complained." 26

He explained this inadequacy of ‘Ilm al-Kalām. The mutakallimūn are trapped into a system based only on logic; they ground their arguments on premises taken from their opponents which they seem compelled to admit by taqlīd (blind acceptance or belief), or by a communal consensus or by a bare acceptance of the Qur’ān and Tradition. Their primary energy seems devoted to make explicit the contradictions of those they opposed and criticizing them in respect of the logical consequences of what they admitted. For Imām al-Ghazālī this would have no effect in answering those who admitted nothing at all except explicit logic to establish truth. 27

Furthermore, ‘Ilm al-Kalām does not reach the perfect understanding required by Imām al-Ghazālī, because to him ‘Ilm al-Kalām is an achievement which could help the reason to understand the practical knowledge deeply and clearly. However, he mentions that the belief must be built up in children from an early age. In this way they can firmly believe in the religion and protect it from doubts. It is not the way to confirm and strengthen their belief that they should

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.
know the knowledge of jadal (disputation) or ‘Ilm al-Kalām, but this faith can be achieved by reading the Qur'ān with the commentary, understanding the Tradition and also by performing the worship. All these will help to confirm and strengthen their belief with support from the Qur'ān and traditional evidence.

We can see that Imām al-Ghazālī was satisfied with the traditional proofs and claimed that this was a safe method for children and ordinary people. He also warned them not to engage in any discussion and arguments on faith, because these can create more confusion than truth.

He explains the disadvantages of ‘Ilm al-Kalām: it can confuse and place firm belief into doubt by referring to the inconcrete evidence which can cause the true believers to disagree among themselves; it could also help the heretics strengthen their belief by referring to their fanatical understanding of religion which was gained from discussion.28 Concerning the advantage of ‘Ilm al-Kalām he explains that it can discover the truths and know them and it also protects the true faith from the doubts which were created by the heresies.29

28Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā’, vol. 1, p. 96.
29Ibid.
'Ilm al-Kalām to Imām al-Ghazālī is not enough to bring someone to the stage of perfect belief because the clarification which was discovered by 'Ilm al-Kalām was already clear and can be known without any need to be deeply involved in it. This was the reason why he says: "'Ilm al-Kalam can attain its own aim, but for me this is inadequate."30

He attacks the theologians who accused the ordinary people of being unbelievers because of their ignorance of the general knowledge of shari'ah. He says: "The people who go too far are the theologians who accuse the ordinary Muslims of being unbelievers when they claim that those who do not follow their steps in understanding kalām and the shari'ah are unbelievers."31

He gives an example: 'Ilm al-Kalām is like a medicine which can cure some of the soul's disease. There are different types of medicine which can be used to cure disease, some of them suitable to some people and some not. It is same with 'Ilm al-Kalām. He then divides the people into four groups:

The first group are those who believe in God and His messenger with the firm belief and practise religious duties regularly without questioning them.

30Al-Ghazālī, Munqidh, p. 96.
31Al-Ghazālī, Faysal, p. 150.
They follow the companions' way, believe what was brought by the prophet and avoid discussion among themselves.

The second group are those who deviate from the true belief such as the unbelievers, heretics and misleaders. Some of them have a weak understanding, a dogmatic blind belief and have grown up with these deviant beliefs. This group does not accept any proof from the Qur'ān and ḥadīth.

The third group are those who believe blindly though God has given them intelligence. They use their intelligence to create doubt in their own belief. Diplomacy is needed in order to bring them back to the true faith and save them from doubt and confusion in their minds. To convince them, they need strong evidence such as verses from the Qur'ān, ḥadīth, or the teaching of the famous men among them.

The fourth group are those led astray who have intelligence and are willing to accept the true belief if the right way is used to convince them. This group needs diplomacy to influence them to the true belief.32

32Al-Ghazālī, Iqtiṣād, p. 10.
Imām al-Ghazālī also explains that the people are of different types. Some of them can accept 'Ilm al-Kalām and benefit from it, while others cannot; sometimes it can harm them. To him the basis of true belief is the Qur'ān and ḥadīth and purity of heart, as he says: "Whoever worships God with real piety, renounces pleasure in worldly things and always remembers God, will be honoured by the light of knowledge. Such knowledge cannot be known by ordinary people. That is the real knowledge which cannot be achieved except by overcoming the difficulty of believing and accepting God's light in the heart."33

He says again: "Whoever thinks that the achievement of faith depends on 'Ilm al-Kalām and proof, is a heretic because faith is the light of God which is given to the heart of His servant in various ways. Sometimes it is given internally which cannot be seen, sometimes through dreams, and sometimes through witnessing a pious man by accompanying him and studying under him".34 As God says:

"Those whom God (in His plan) willeth to guide, He openeth their breast to Islam."35

33Al-Ghazālī, Fāṣal, p. 152.
34Ibid., p. 151.
35The Qur'ān, 6 : 125.
In another verse God Says:

"Is one whose heart God has opened to Islam, so that he has received Enlightenment from God."36

Once when the prophet was asked the meaning of 'the opened heart', he replied: "Enlightenment which will anvelope the believers' hearts." He was asked again what was its sign, to which he replied: "Withdrawal from the mansion of deception and a return to the mansion of eternity."37

From this it is clear to us that Imām al-Ghazālī was following the Šūfi way like his master Imām al-Juwaynī to achieve the truth. As he says: "I learnt with certainty that it is above all the mystics who walk on the road of God; their life is the best life, their method the soundest method, their character the purest character; indeed, were the intellect of the intellectuals and the learning of the learned and the scholarship of the scholars, who are versed in the profundities of revealed truth, brought together in the attempt to improve the life and character of the mystics, they would find no way of doing so; for to the mystics all movement and all rest, whether external or internal, brings illumination from the light of the

36The Qur'ān, 39 : 22.
37Al-Ghazālī, Faysal, p. 153.
lamp of prophetic revelation; and behind the light of prophetic revelation there is no other light on the face of the earth from which illumination may be received."38

Imâm al-Ghazālī holds that the eyewitness is always the best evidence. He later compared the belief of the ordinary people and the ahl al-kalām, he found that the beliefs of the ordinary people were better than those of the ahl al-kalām. He says: "Compare the belief of the pious ordinary people and the belief of the ahl al-kalām. You will find the belief of the pious ordinary people has firmness like the high mountain which can not be destroyed and shaken while the belief of the ahl al-kalām is not consistent. It is like a string on the air which can be blown to the right and left following the wind's direction."39

He prefers the blind belief to the belief gained through debate because the pure belief should be protected from uncertain and sceptical discussion. At the same time he preferred evidence to blind belief because in Islam belief is supported by evidence, as God Says:

"Can there be another god besides God?
say, bring forth your argument, if

38Al-Ghazālī, Munqīdh, p. 145.
39Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā", vol. 1, p. 94.
you are telling the truth."40

He also says: "If the people want the enlightenment of God in their hearts, to be well behaved, to gain success, always to be pious, to protect their souls, control desire and receive guidance from God in discovering the truth of the faith, they have to strive to please Him, as He says:

"And those who strive in our(cause), we will certainly guide them to our paths. For verily God is with those who do right."41

According to Imām al-Ghazālī, the way to erase any doubts, to discover the truth and to know the secret of faith is through the soul's striving, restraining desire, paying total attention to God and keeping the mind clear from sinful discussion. This is the mercy of God, who grants subsistence to those of good repute according to the degree of their belief, acceptance and cleaniness of heart.42 Imām al-Ghazālī encourages the people to strive towards achieving purification of the soul and complete happiness.43

40 The Qur'ān, 26 : 64.
41 The Qur'ān, 29 : 69.
42 Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā', vol. 1, p. 99.
From the previous discussion we can point out some of the important facts as follows:

- Imam al-Juwayni and Imam al-Ghazali both used 'Ilm al-kalām in their works and wrote many books on it.

- Imam al-Ghazali has taken his master's view, mentioning that 'Ilm al-Kalām is not suitable for all people. Imam al-Juwayni says: "It is the duty of an imām (leader) to unite the people and guide them into the way of the Salaf. If this can be done, that is the safer way for them." 44 Imam al-Ghazali also says: "There must be a person in every century who has deep knowledge of 'Ilm al-Kalām to protect the people from the heresies, but it is not right to teach this knowledge openly to the public like teaching other subjects such as tafsīr and fiqh." 45

- Imam al-Juwayni turned away from 'Ilm al-Kalām to the Sufi way before the end of his life. This influenced his student Imam al-Ghazali when he also turned away from 'Ilm al-Kalām when he found it did not satisfy him to the Sufi way as he says: "'Ilm al-Kalām can attain its own aim, but for him this was inadequate." 46

---

44 Al-Ghazālī, Ghiyāth, p. 25.
46 Al-Ghazālī, Munqidh, p. 96.
found that he sometimes attacks 'Ilm al-Kalām and at other times he defends it.

- As we have discussed earlier, in the time of the two Imāms, the growing intellectual discussions were spread widely. The conflict between sects such as the Sunnite, Muʿtazilite and others created intellectual discussions at that particular time. The Ashʿarite followers such as Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī have left to the people argued proof to protect their belief and religion by using the traditional proofs from the Qurʾān, ḥadīth and the statements of the salaf. They also used rational proof, philosophical method and logic to face the enemy who used the same methods to fight the Muslims.

- 'Ilm al-Kalām at that time was used as a weapon or method by the scholars and the preachers to achieve their objective. They used it in the proper way and finally gained victory over the religion's enemies. Regarding the two Imāms' turning away from 'Ilm al-Kalām, it does not mean that this knowledge collapsed but it gives confirmation that this knowledge was used only as a weapon and method in the intellectual discussions. To satisfy their souls, they needed the pure religious belief, clear and firm faith, without need of any logical proof or philosophical explanation.
- It was clear from the previous discussions that Imām al-Ghazālī claimed that the only way to achieve the true belief was the Ṣūfī way: by the soul's striving and the abandoning of disputes and discussion to gain God's enlightenment.

- The inclination of Imām al-Ghazālī to Taṣawwuf was due to his life in his father's house and because he became a pupil of Imām al-Juwaynī. As mentioned earlier he was with Imām al-Juwaynī until the end of his teacher's life in 487/1094 Imām al-Juwaynī had turned away from ʿIlm al-Kalām, as he says: "Now I have turned back to the true words, you should follow the belief of the elders. If I am not awakened by the truth, I will be in trouble." He also explains that this possible difficulty was "the result of my involvement with ʿIlm al-Kalām, so beware of it." There was no doubt that Imām al-Ghazālī himself had witnessed and heard this statement from Imām al-Juwaynī and this influenced his soul and life.

- Abū al-Wafā' al-Taftāzānī mentions that the elders mentioned by Imām al-Juwaynī were Sunnite Ṣūfis and it

48Ibid.
is their view which was strongly defended by Imām al-Ghazāli.49

2.5 The views of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazāli on the problem of rational and tradition proof (‘aql and naql)

The question of rational and tradition proofs is one of the dominant problems in Islamic intellectual history. Theologians have discussed the relation between rational and tradition proofs and the strength of one over the other and which is more reliable and how far the rational proofs can be considered. The Qurʾān itself told people to think about the world and to use reason to study its verses in order to gain belief. As God Says in the following verses:

"Men who celebrate the praises of God, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with the thought): "our Lord! not for naught hast thou created (all) this! glory to thee! give us salvation from the penalty of the fire."50

- "The likeness of the life of the present is as the rain which We Send

50The Qurʾān, 3 : 191.
down from the skies: by its mingling arises the produce of the earth which provides food for man and animals: (it grows) till the earth is clad with its golden ornaments and is decked out (in beauty): the people to whom it belongs think they have all powers of disposal over it: There reaches it our command by night or by day, and We make it like a harvest clean-mown, as if it had not flourished only the day before! thus do We explain the signs in detail for those who reflect."51

- "And it is He Who spread out the earth, and set thereon mountains standing firm, and (flowing) rivers: and fruit of every kind He made in pairs, two and two: He draweth the night as a veil o'er the day. Behold, verily in these things there are signs for those who consider."52

- "Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind in the rain which God sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth;(here) indeed are signs for a people that are wise."53

When we discuss the views of the theologians on the problem of rational and tradition proofs, we find that there were three different views as illustrated below:

51The Qur'ān, 10 : 24.
52The Qur'ān, 13 : 3.
53The Qur'ān, 2 : 164.
First: That of the Zāhiriyyah\textsuperscript{54} and those who were like them. They rely on the Sharī'ah on its own, and do not use reason.

Second: The Muʿtazilah\textsuperscript{55} who claimed that reason is superior to the Shar'\textsuperscript{c}.

Third: The Ashʿariyyah and the Ahl al-Sunnah (traditionalists).\textsuperscript{56} Their views take the middle path. Sometimes they argued that the Shar'\textsuperscript{c} was superior to reason and sometimes they said reason was the way to understand the Shar'\textsuperscript{c}. Thus they confirmed that both reason and the Shar'\textsuperscript{c} were connected to each other.

\textsuperscript{54}A school of Law, which would derive the Law only from the literal text (Zāhir) of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. It is also known as Dāʿūdī after its founder Dāʿūd b. Khalaf. See "al-Zāhiriyah", E.I.1, iv, p. 1192.

\textsuperscript{55}This group was founded by Wāṣil b. ʿAṭāʾ (d.131/748) in the first half of the 2nd/8th century. This group are called the followers of divine justice and unity. They are also known as the Qadarīyah and ʿAdlīyah. See "Muʿtazila", E.I.1, vii, p. 783.

\textsuperscript{56}This group are those who refrain from deviating from dogma and practice. See "Sunna", E.I.1, iv, p. 555.
As Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī were the followers of al-Ashʿarī, we shall examine their views on the problems of the rational and tradition proofs and examine the influence of the rational on tradition proof.

The views of Imām al-Juwaynī on the use of reason were different from those of the Muʿtazilites and the philosophers because he does not build his notion of knowledge on reason alone, nor does he deny rational evidence. For him it was one way of attaining the truth of the Sharīʿah. But if reason is not illuminated by the light of the Sharīʿah, it will not be guided to righteousness because reason alone is weak and restricted.

He does not deny that reason can discover proof. He held that if the content of the Sharīʿah was found contrary to reason it should be rejected totally because Sharīʿah should not be contrary to reason.57 He also disagreed with those who claimed that reason must be examined with religious knowledge; he held that the soul needed awakening; and this awakening does not come internally but it comes from force. Sharīʿah awakens the negligent soul and rouses it from confusion to make it think about God's powers. The ability of reason is

57Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 36.
limited, so it is necessary to discuss religious matters in order to gain an original religious knowledge.\textsuperscript{58} He held that at times reason could not provide an understanding except by recourse to \textit{Sharīʿa}. This meant that reason is obedient to \textit{Sharīʿa}.\textsuperscript{59}

Concerning faith, he had the view that the right method was reliance on the rational and tradition proofs by pairing them together. Therefore, he divided the proofs into rational and tradition (\textit{samʿī}).\textsuperscript{60} He was of the opinion that the rational proof carried its own truth because to him reason was a natural science: it was there at birth and one could not study to obtain it. That was called natural knowledge which cannot be obtain by someone, but comes naturally. Human beings put faith in the strong evidence which is based on reason in order to convince their hearts and to make their souls peaceful. Īmām al-Juwaynī holds that the servants of God do not have the ability to doubt the science of reason. Because this knowledge is almost axiomatic, belief in it is clear.\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid., p. 9.
\textsuperscript{59}Ibid. p. 143.
\textsuperscript{60}Ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{61}Al-Juwaynī, \textit{Burhān}, vol. 1, p. 136.
As for the tradition (sam‘ī) proof, it relies on the information or command of God, the Qur’ān and Sunnah, which are full of information and commands of God which are compulsory. All the contents of the Qur’ān and Sunnah of the prophet Muḥammad are true information which it is compulsory to believe for a Muslim.

Imām al-Juwaynī had confidence in reason and proof and this he has mentioned in the introduction to his book al-Irshād. He felt compelled to write the book to add rational argumentation and positive evidence because rejectors would not believe anything other than rational proof. They recognized only it and obeyed its rules. As he said: "We have to follow the way which contains positive evidence and intellectual argument which are higher than others and recognize that other earlier writing may not contain these qualities."62 He did not mean to devalue the writers before him. However, he used this method of necessity as an argument to oppose the rejectors and thus disprove their views by using the same method.

Imām al-Juwaynī divided the acquisition of knowledge into three categories:

---

62 Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 23.
The first category: What is conceived by reason alone such as the reality of things, the impossibility of the impossible, the possibility of the possible and the necessity of what is necessary.63

The second category: What is conceived by tradition is the occurrence of possible things, and their disappearance. The possibilities which are created by God, if declared by a truthful person, can be believed.64

The third category: What is conceived by reason and tradition simultaneously. This comes from the traditional and does not appeal to the reason, and the reason has to ascertain its validity.65

Therefore, reason to Imām al-Juwaynī had its value with regard to the usūl al-dīn. It endows this science with a degree of certainty which appeases the soul. Reason alone is sometimes unable to urge people to think about God’s attributes and His grace in this world, it must be guided and supported by the Sharʾ.

From the above it is clear that Imām al-Juwaynī held that:

64 Ibid., p. 137.
65 Ibid.
- Reason was the necessary science which leads to natural knowledge and which brings certainty and leaves no one in doubt.

- He used rational evidences in his writing to refute the rejector.

- No matter how certain reason is, it still fails to reach some forms of knowledge and still needs guidance. Because of this he divided the acquisition of knowledge into three categories.

- He held that reason and the Share' should go together to prevent people doubting their beliefs and enable people not to become blind followers but be convinced in their own minds.

As for his influence on his student (Imām al-Ghazālī), we shall first present the views of Imām al-Ghazālī on the rational and tradition proofs.

Imām al-Ghazālī has explained his views concerning rational and tradition proofs in his book al-Iqtisād fī al-Ī'tiqād. He wages a very severe
campaign against the Ḥashwiyyah66 for their acceptance of a naive belief in the matter of the doctrines of faith, and for their adherence to the literal meaning of the religious texts (al-nuṣūṣ al-sharʿiyyah). He also directs an attack against the philosophers and the extremists amongst the Muʿtazilites for their having exaggerated the power and authority of the mind and its freedom, so that thereby they put reason in opposition to scriptural proofs (gawāṭiʿ al-sharʿiʿah). Imām al-Ghazālī says:

The tendency of these is toward being remiss (tafriḍ) while the tendency of the others is towards extravagance (ifrāṭ); and both of them are far from wisdom and caution. But the essential purpose in the dogma of faith is adherence to moderation and the following of the rightful path; since both the extremes are abhorrent. And how can enlightenment prevail amongst those who are content with following the Traditions while denying the methods of speculation and ignoring the fact that the truth of the prophet is proved by reason?67

Imām al-Ghazālī further states that the tradition proofs may be conclusive and positive in their transmission (sanad) and text (matn) and show that what is proved by them must be believed. Where

---

66A contumacious term derived from ḥashw ("farce" and hence "prolix and useless discourse") and with the general meaning of "scholar" of little worth, particularly traditionists. See "Ḥashwiyya", E.I.2, iii, p. 269.

67Al-Ghazālī, Igtiṣād, p. 48.
doubt and suspicion about the text or transmission of these occur, then what is proved by them must not be believed.

He clarifies the above in another text in which he held that reason would not be guided except by the Sharīa, and the Sharīa would not be clear except by reason. Reason is like a foundation andSharīa is like a structure. The structure will not appear if it does not have the foundation and vice versa. He held that the reason is like sight and Sharīa is like a beam of light, the sight will be fruitless if there is no light beam. He held again that reason is like light and Sharīa is like oil which feeds the light; if there is no oil the light will not flame.68

He explained the unification between reason and tradition when he said: "Sharīa is reason from outside and reason is Sharīa from inside, they unite". He gave an example of when Sharīa is reason from outside as the instance when God uses the word "wisdom" in referring to the unbeliever in the Qur'ān:

Deaf, dumb, and blind they are
devoid of wisdom.69

68Al-Ghazālī, Ma‘ārij, p. 57.
69The Qur'ān, 2 : 171.
As an example of *Shar'i* from inside, God says:

God's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind no change (let there be) in the work (wrought) by God: that is the standard religion.\(^{70}\)

Reason was named religion in this verse because of it unification. God says again:

Light upon light.\(^{71}\)

The light in this verse means the light of reason and *Shar'i*.\(^{72}\)

Imām al-Ghazālī also explained the role of reason in religious knowledge. He held that the perfection of the heart is dependent on its freedom from disease because reason's knowledge does not give enough safety to the heart when it is needed. Reason is not enough to prevent disease in the body. It needs to know how to prevent it by learning from the doctors, but, when hearing from them, prevention cannot be understood except by use of reason. Therefore reason

\(^{70}\)The Qur'ān, 30 : 30.

\(^{71}\)The Qur'ān, 24 : 35.

\(^{72}\)Al-Ghazālī, *Ma'ārij*, p. 57.
and hearing cannot be separated, they are intertwined. He who follows blindly without using intelligence is illiterate and he who uses reason without guidance from the Qur'ān and Sunnah is led astray. Combining them together is the best way because reason's knowledge is like food and the Sharī'ah's knowledge is like medicine. The sick man whose illness is caused by food can be cured with medicine; it is the same with the soul's diseases which can be cured by practising the Sharī'ah, that is, worship as duty dictates, and following the acts of the prophets to improve the soul. He who does not cure his sick soul by practising the Sharī'ah and refers only to reason alone, his soul's diseases will not be cured. Whoever claimed that reason's knowledge is contrary to Sharī'ah knowledge, and that these cannot be united together, must be a blind man who cannot see the truth with his own eyes. 73

Imām Ghazālī holds the opinion that both of these are not contrary. On this he said: "It does not seem that the Sharī'ah is contrary to reason; they have a strong interrelationship; they cannot be separated." 74

73 Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā', vol. 3, p. 15.
74 Al-Ghazālī, Ma‘ārij, p. 58.
Imām al-Ghazālī has been greatly influenced by his teacher (Imām al-Juwaynī). The above statement, for example, is already mentioned by Imām al-Juwaynī:

If the content of the Sharī‘a which reached us were contrary to reason it should be rejected totally because the Sharī‘a is not contrary to reason.75

Imām al-Ghazālī uses the same explanation as his master when he explains that the acquisition of knowledge is divided into three categories. These are:

First: Propositions which can be known by reason without need of the evidence of the Sharī‘a.

Second: Propositions which can be known by the evidence of the Sharī‘a without recorse to reason.

Third: Propositions which can be known by both these means.76

Examples of the first category are propositions such as the creation of the world, the existence of the creator and His knowledge, power and will. Examples of the second category of theological propositions are the acceptance of beliefs which cannot

75Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 36.
76Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā‘, vol. 1, p. 27.
be proved such as the Resurrection, the Day of Judgment, the reward and punishment accorded in the Hereafter and similar propositions; the verification of the truth of these propositions cannot be known except through revelation from God. Examples of the third category are all propositions which fall within the sphere of reasoning but come second to the word of God in so far as matters of proof are concerned. These include questions of ru`ya (a vision of God) and the acceptance that God alone is the creator of all movement, accidents and other similar things. So, when taking tradition proof, it should be observed, if the mind states the possibility of believing in what is proved by the tradition proofs, it must be believed. Where doubt and suspicion about the matn (text) or sanad (transmission) of these tradition proofs occur, then what is proved by them must not be believed.77

Imām al-Ghazālī has views similar to his master's: that the rational evidence helps to strengthen the religious foundations. He held that the rational evidence should be believed, even though it may be open to interpretation. Often the belief which is built in the heart is taken from such evidence which may be interpreted in other ways such as the interpretation of some that human beings have the ability to create. The companions of the prophet

77Al-Ghazālī, Iqtisād, p. 132.
Muḥammad rejected this by referring to the following verse of God:

That is God, your Lord! There is no god but He, the Creator of all things: Then worship ye Him. 78

This verse is general and not absolutely clear in meaning, but it is also has specific meanings which can be known through research by using reason. 79 This was the same view of Imām al-Juwaynī when he said that rational discussion on the revealed knowledge should be undertaken to avoid doubt in the believers' minds. 80

For Imām al-Ghazālī the concept of intellectual knowledge insists on certainty. It is an idea of knowledge which reveals some object or religious position in a manner which cannot harbour doubt, questioning or the possibility of error or illusion. Intellectual knowledge or certain religious knowledge apprehended by the human intellect cannot entertain any supposition of error and it needs to be infallible. This last aspect is important because it ensures a security of faith which can withstand any attempt to prove it is false; religious knowledge which

78 The Qur'ān, 6 : 102.
79 Al-Ghazālī, Iqtīşād, p. 133.
80 Al-Juwaynī, 'Aqīdah, p. 77.
the intellect encounters and grasps as true defies attempts at doubt and denial, though such an attempt be made by someone who can conjure stone to gold or transform a rod into a snake.81

To achieve certain knowledge Imam al-Ghazālī doubts the knowledge which is gained by imitation, by senses and by primary knowledge. He does not accept any belief except that which God gave him as a light to his heart. Because God's light is the key to much knowledge, without it a person cannot save himself from doubt. This light is the key to certainty. If reason is not prepared to accept this light, doubt will remain. Therefore, reason is able to achieve the truth like the power of the sight on the eyes.82

The power of reason to Imām al-Ghazālī is like the power of sight. If the eyes were not prepared to see, the light of the sun would not be seen. There are two conditions to achieve this sight: the eyes and the light. In a similar way, knowledge is brought into the soul: by the preparation of the strong mind and the emanation of God's light on to it. We can divide the truth into two forms: first: that which needs outside assistance to know it, such as the truth of Divinity. Second: that which does not need such as necessary

81Al-Ghazālī, Munqidh, p. 90.
82Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyāʾ, vol. 3. p. 10.
knowledge; If reason needs assistance from outside to know the truth of necessary knowledge this assistance does not benefit but supports and confirms it. 83

Thus, some of the views of Imām al-Ghazālī concerning reason are similar to the views of Imām al-Ashʿarī who claimed that reason has the ability to understand the Sharīʿah and interpret it when necessary. But Imām al-Ghazālī is to be distinguished from other theologians because he set up a measure to test the deeper spiritual level by using the Šūfī way and making doubt a tool to reveal the truth. To him people have different stages in realizing the truth.

For Imām al-Ghazālī the choice of the way of the mystic encompasses both practical activity and intellectual belief. The intellectual aspect consists of ridding the self of obstacles, by stripping the self of its baser features and evil inclinations. In this manner the heart could achieve complete freedom from all that is not God and become in a state of constant recollection of Him. 84

A human being has three stages:

83Karīm Ṭāẓūl, al-ʾAql fī al-Islām, Beirut, 1946, p. 11.
84Al-Ghazālī, Mungidh, p. 139.
The first stage is al-ḥawās (senses)

The second stage is al-ʿaql (reason)

The third stage is al-qalb (heart)

or dhawq (literally tasting),

Imām al-Ghazālī wrote: "Man's information about the world comes by means of perception; and every perception of the perceptible is created so that thereby man may have some acquaintance with a world (or sphere) of the existent."85 By 'world (or sphere)' we simply mean 'classes of existents'. Imām al-Ghazālī then explains the creation of human faculties. At first came the sense of touch and by this tactile means people perceive certain classes of existents, such as heat and cold, things smooth or rough. Next reason or intellect was created in people and by this they apprehend things necessary or possible, which was not possible in the previous stage. Beyond the intellect there is yet another stage. Here, in a realm beyond sensory perception or intellectual reasoning, a symbolic eye is opened by which people may perceive the unseen or foresee things still to come and understand issues or things which are not able to be apprehended

---

85Ibid., p. 148.
by mere intellect, in the same way as objects of
discernment are beyond sensory understanding.86

We come to understand that Imām al-Ghazālī
was the first among the Ashʿarites to introduce the
Ṣūfī method for the realization of knowledge. This was
the result of the influence of his teacher, Imām al-
Juwaynī, on him. Imām al-Juwaynī achieved the
realization of knowledge by observation after
observation and at the same time kept his mind alert
and wary of negligence so that he could expound the
truth.87

Imām al-Ghazālī divided observation into two
forms:

First: the observation of philosophy.

Second: the observation of the Ṣūfī.

In the observation of philosophy he discussed
the reality of God and began to research the reality of
the human soul. Initially he confirmed their existence
with rational proof and thereafter with knowledge
derived from God.88

86Ibid., p. 149.
87Al-Juwaynī, Burhān, vol. 1, p. 155.
88Al-Ghazālī, Mungidh, p. 160.
In the Sufi observation on the discussion of reality he began by the purification of the soul, raising the moral self and purification of the heart by constant recollection of God. If one acts continuously in this way, he will reach high spiritual achievement.89

If we summarize the influence of Imām al-Juwaynī on Imām al-Ghazālī on the problem of the rational and tradition proofs we will find:

- Imām al-Ghazālī has adopted his teacher’s views that reason is the natural knowledge which brings certainty and that intellectual discussion on the revealed knowledge (al-sam‘iyyāt) must proceed to avoid any doubt in believing it.

- That certain knowledge is confirmed and is not destroyed by doubt. This can be illustrated in the life of Imām al-Ghazālī when he first started to doubt. During his studentship under Imām al-Juwaynī he began to investigate as he said: "Now that despair has come over me, there is no point in studying any problems except on the basis of what is self-evident, namely, necessary truth and the affirmations of the senses. I must first bring these to be judged in order that I may

89Ibid., p. 164.
be certain on this matter."90 Then he come to investigate, different groups, beginning with the theologians and following with philosophers and after that the Bāṭinites and last the Ṣufī way.91

Following this period he turned for the next ten years to the Ṣufī way of life. In this period of solitude and meditation he came to apprehend an immense number of things, many of them not fathomable by reason. He seems to have entered into the heart of the mysteries of the world and he said: "I learnt with certainty that it is the mystics who walk on the road of God."92

The view of Imām al-Juwaynī that certain knowledge is the real knowledge which can convince someone into firm belief had influenced Imām al-Ghazālī’s soul and encouraged him to research on this fact.

90Ibid., p. 91.
91Ibid., p. 95.
92Ibid., p. 145.
3.1 Introduction

The question of the origin of the world is one of the biggest debates in Islamic philosophy, creating significant discussion between theologians and philosophers. Central to this debate is the relation of the world and God, and for both Imāms the nature of the world directs one to an understanding of God. Though much of this chapter deals with the nature and origins of the world as presented by the Imāms, the central idea is the nature of God and what He has created.

The Qurʾān reveals many verses which show the origin of the universe, such as the following story of Abraham telling his people to worship one God:

When the night covered him over, he saw a star, he said:"This is my Lord." But when it set, he said:"I love not those that set." When he saw the moon rising in splendour, he said:"This is my Lord." But when the moon set, he said:"Unless my Lord Guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray." When he saw the sun rising in splendor, he
said: "This is my Lord; This is the greatest (of all)." But when the sun set, he said: "O my people! I am indeed free from your (guilt) of giving partners to God. For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him who created the heavens and the earth. And never shall I give partners to God." 1

Commentators hold that these verses show that Abraham tried to convince his people that there was only one God and thus bring them to perfect certainty. 2 He wanted to explain to them that they were mistaken in their faith and guided them to use observation and evidence for their faith. He then used the origin of the universe as evidence for proving the existence of God. The changes of the star, sun and moon from state to state prove that there must be an administrator who administrates them from state to state and governs them in every condition.

The question of the creation of the universe is important for Imām al-Juwaynī as he used this to prove the existence of God in this world. This method was later adopted by his student Imām al-Ghazālī also to prove the existence of God. Before examining their views on this subject, we shall define the two terms al-‘ālam and al-ḥudūth, which are significant for this discussion.

1The Qurʾān, 6: 76-79.

3.2 Definition of the words *al-‘ālam* and *al-ḥudūth*

3.2.1 *Al-‘ālam*

*Al-‘ālam* means all creatures except God, or all existents in time and place.³

According to the *salaf* *al-‘ālam* means "everything that exists, except God."⁴ The *khalaf* (later Muslims) define *al-‘ālam* as "the universe of substances and accidents".⁵

Al-Qurtubī quoted from Qatādah to explain the word *al-‘ālamīn* from the Qur’ānic verse *al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabb al-‘ālamīn*.⁶ The word *al-‘ālamīn* is the plural of *al-‘ālām*, that is, all that exists except God.⁷

According to al-Farrā' and Abū ‘Ubaydah the interpretation of *al-‘ālam* is those sentient beings capable of thought and reason. They are four: *al-Ins* ³Al-Jurjānī, *Ta’rīfāt*, p. 83.
⁴Al-Juwaynī, *Luma*⁵, p. 73.
⁵Ibid.
⁶The Qur’ān, 1:1.
(mankind), al-Jinn (invisible beings), al-Malā'ikah (angels), and al-Shayṭān (the devil). Animals cannot be called al-‘ālam because they cannot think.  

3.2.2 Al-ḥudūth

The general meaning of the verb ḥadatha is ‘it happened’ or ‘it was found’. It can also mean ‘it came into existence, began to be, had a beginning, began or originated, existed newly for the first time, not having been before.’ The verbal noun is ḥudūth. Ḥadath is a term applied by Sībawayh to the verbal noun. Al-ḥādīth is the event, the accident, that which is likely to happen. The opposite of the verb ḥadatha is qaduma. The opposite of al-ḥudūth is al-qudmah or al-qidām, and of al-ḥādīth is al-qādim.

According to the philosophers, the specialized meaning of ḥudūth is the determination of the existents from pure potentiality to actuality. They believe that the world is eternal. The existents do not spring from nothing; matter and time precede them. They believe that there is an eternal matter which exists with God. It has no form, and bears within itself the

---

10Ibid. p. 437.
potentiality of being. This potential suggests there are causes which lie in the world itself.11

These causes determine the existence of something at the moment it is created, for otherwise it would have remained in the state of pure potentiality in which it was before. But if there was something determining its existence, this determinant must have been determined by another determinant and so on. There is a series of causes. But there cannot be an infinite series of causes. There is a prime agent, a prime mover, which is God. According to Aristotle, the efficient cause lies in the souls of the stars. God is not an ultimate agent. God is the ultimate aim of desire which inspires the Heavens to action.12

According to the theologians existence sprang from nothingness. The Mutakallimūn divided the existent into al-Jawhar (substance) and al-‘Araq (accident), which are according to them created by God from nothing, and do not spring from a pre-existent matter. They then state four basic principles: The first one is the existence of the accident (thūbūt al-‘Araq) (by

11Ibn Ḥazm, al-Fīṣal fī Milāl wa al-Niḥal, Cairo, 1317 A.H., vol. 1, p. 9, 23, 24, 35;
12Ibid.
accidents is implied changable characteristics or transient features such as feelings, moods and states of mind. The debate about their precise meaning and the variety of accidents comes later in this chapter); the second is the originated character of accidents (ḫudūth al-‘Arāq); the third is the impossibility of substances being without accidents (istiḥālat taʿarrī al-Jawāhir ‘an al-‘Arāq); and the fourth, which is the impossibility of events without a beginning (istiḥālat ḥawādith lā awwala lahā) or a chain of events without a first link.13

To them, the act of originating is one of God's acts. This is, in general, their method of proving that the world is originated. But there are some differences between two of the most important sects of Mutakallimūn, the Muʿtazilites and the Ashʿarites, in what concerns the existent, the non-existent, substance, and accident. These differences are mentioned, not by the Muʿtazilites, but by their opponents, the Ashʿarites.14

The existent, according to the Ashʿarites, is the thing (al-shay'), the thing existing in the eternal world, which is the creation of God, the result of His will. The Ashʿarites hold that this is different from

13Al-Bāqillānī, Tamhīd, p. 44.
14Ibid. p. 40.
the Mu‘tazilites’ point of view. According to the *khalaf*, the thing is not what exists, but what is known (*al-ma‘lūm*). This leads to the view that the existent and non-existent are both things, because what is known may be existent or non-existent. If the thing is a thing both in non-existence and existence, there would not be anything for God to do, His power will have no effect because existence is already one characteristic of the non-existent thing. In this way the thing has existence without the interference of God’s will.15 And this is contrary to the Sunnites’ principles.

The Ash‘arites mention also that the substance, according to the Mu‘tazilites, is a combination of accidents (*al-a‘rād mujtami‘ah*). Therefore, if the accidents perish, the substance perishes too. The Ash‘arites find that the Mu‘tazilites have confused two species (*Jins*); the substance must be of a quite different species from the accident. This is one of the most important bases of the doctrine of the origin of the world.

But Ibn al-Amīr, who was a Sunnite, understands the Mu‘tazilites’ point of view about substance in a different way. He says, as a commentary upon the Ash‘arites’ explanation of the Mu‘tazilites’ opinion on substance, that if the Mu‘tazilites say that

substance perishes when the accidents perish, they do not mean that substances are not different from accidents; they simply mean that it is impossible to separate substances from accidents. Thus, their opinion is not contrary to that of the Ash'arites. 16

This leads to the view that the Mu'tazilites' rivals may have misunderstood them, and what is said about the Mu'tazilites in their opponents' books may give a wrong idea about their doctrines. So it can be asserted that the Mu'tazilites' doctrines are still unknown to us.

The Ash'arites have another way of proving the origin of the universe. It is given by al-Ash'arî. He said:

"The proof of that is that the completely mature man was originally semen, then a clot, then a small lump, then flesh and bone and blood. Now we know very well that he did not translate himself from state to state. For we see that at the peak of his physical and mental maturity he is unable to produce hearing and sight for himself, or to create a bodily member for himself. That proves that he is even more incapable of doing that when he is weak and imperfect." 17

16 Ibid., p. 12.

Al-Ash'arī then gives an example which proves the existence of God. He says:

"From seeing him a baby, then a youth, then a man in the prime of life, then an old man, we know very well that he does not translate himself from youth to old age and decrepitude. For even though a man strain to rid himself of old age and decrepitude, and to restore himself to this youthful condition, he cannot do it. So what we have said proves that he has a translator who translates him from state to state and governs his every condition; for his translation from state to state without a translator and governor is impossible."18

3.3 The origin of the world according to Imām al-Juwaynī.

Imam al-Juwaynī holds two doctrinal views on the origin of the universe. After this short introduction both these views will be discussed in detail.

The first view can be found in his books al-Irshād and al-Shāmil in which he divided the world into two; the substances (al-Jawāhir) and the accidents (al-Aʿrāq). He later explained four propositions to affirm the origin of the world.

First: That there are accidents.

18Ibid.
Second: That accidents are originated.
Third: That accidents cannot exist without a substance.
Fourth: That nothing existent (muhdath) has no beginning.

In the second doctrinal view, which can be found in his book al-‘Aqīdah al-Nizāmiyyah, he does not categorise the origin of the universe into substances and accidents.

3.3.1 The first doctrine

We shall begin with his first doctrine of the origin of the universe and its influence on Imām al-Ghazālī. Imām al-Juwaynī took the theologians' definition of substance as follows:

First: Substance is that which accepts the accident. He refutes this, because it defines substance by one of its characteristics.

Second: Substance is everything that occupies space, or has location. He does not refute this. He just replies to those who thought that

---

19 Al-Juwaynī, Shāmil, p. 142.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
occupying a place (al-tahayyuz) is unintelligible. According to him, it is intelligible.

Third: That substance is every Jîrm22 is accepted by him as being the best definition.23 It does not differ from the second definition, but it is clearer. In Irshâd, he just states that the substance is what has a location (mutahayyiz).

He then mentions the qualities of substance. He divides these qualities into essential or individual qualities (al-ṣifāt al-nafsiyyah) and abstract or relational qualities (al-ṣifāt al-ma‘nawiyyah). What he means by essential qualities are those without which substance cannot be conceived. He defines them as being necessary to the substance for its existence. They have no cause (‘illah) to be in the substance. They constitute itself.24 The essential qualities are the occupation of space and the acceptance of accidents.

The relational qualities differ from the essential. They do not constitute the self of the

---

22In general, Jîrm means body. But Imâm al-Juwaynî does not really mean "body". The term Jîrm used by him in this definition is equivalent to "every thing that occupies space or has location".

23Ibid.

24Al-Juwaynî, Irshâd, p. 51.
substance. They are in it by cause (‘illah), which is a
ma‘nā.

Imām al-Juwaynī discusses other qualities of
substance which are not the essential qualities. They
are what he calls relational, as follows:

(a) Substance is different from accident.
(b) That all substances are of
the same genus or are similar.
(c) Substances cannot penetrate one another.

Let us discuss the first quality, that
"substance is different from accident". According to
Imām al-Juwaynī this quality is conceived by the mind,
after the division of the existent into substance and
accident. For him, only the substance occupies a place,
and never the accident. That is why he refutes one of
the Mu‘tazilite definitions, which is that "substance
is a collection of accidents" because, if substance is
the result of a group of accidents, and nothing else,
this means that every accident occupies a place, which
is contrary to his principles.

To show how substance is different from the
accident, he says that, if life comes to the substance,
the substance becomes alive and feels pain, joy, and
other feelings. These accidents were not in the
substance. Thus they do not occupy a place, and are different from the substance.

The second quality is that substances are of the same genus (al-Jawāhir mutajānisah) or are similar. According to Imām al-Juwaynī tajānus means similarity. He explains what he means by similarity. He says that it is possible for two similars to be different from one another in one quality and for two dissimilars to have a common quality, provided it is not an "essential quality" in both cases.

In this way similarity lies in resemblance in essential qualities. In the case of substances the similarity, as has been previously said, lies in two essential qualities, location in space (taḥayyuz) and the acceptance of accidents (qubūl al-aʿrāḍ). Some theologians who do not accept the similarity as an essential quality of substances notice that the Ashʿarites and most of the Muʿtazilites who assert that all substances are similar have to introduce accidents in the structure of things to explain the differences between things. In other words, they say that they have to assert the acceptance of accidents as an essential quality of substance, and to affirm the impossibility

25Al-Juwaynī, Shāmil, p. 143.
26Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 56.
27Ibid.
of the separating of substance from accident. Accident makes the differences noticed in existents, for only accident and not substances are visible.

The third quality is that substances cannot penetrate one another, although they can be beside one another. If substances were interpenetrable, they would enter into a small space. In this way, the world would emerge from a small space without God's interference. But according to Imām al-Juwaynī every accident, every event in the world, every change is due to God's will.

Further, the interpenetrability of substances might lead to the interpenetrability of accidents, with the result that one accident might be found in more than one substance. This is contrary to the qualities of accidents.

Imām al-Juwaynī asks: "If the substances are penetrable, which one will penetrate, and which one will be penetrated, substances being spaces? How will they be one into another? How will the accidents, which are contrary, be together, like black and white, for example?" Thus Imām al-Juwaynī rejects the idea of any interpenetrability of substances.

28Al-Juwaynī, Shāmil, p. 143.
29Ibid.
Imām al-Juwaynī defines the accident as being variable. He mentions one verse from the Qurʾān to confirm the definition of accident as being variable. As God says:

"Ye look for the temporal goods of this world." 31

In this verse "the temporal goods" are accidents. The Mutakallimūn differ with each other on the definition of the accident, but Imām al-Juwaynī holds that the meaning is the same. Some of the Mutakallimūn offer this definition: "accident is that which is not stable." This definition has the same meaning as mentioned in the Qurʾān. The Ashʿarites also say that the accident is that which does not stay more than one instant of time. Other Mutakallimūn define it as being that which subsists in other than itself.

However, Imām al-Juwaynī prefers the one he gives, which is: "The accident is a happening which has no position and is to be found in the space of a substance." 35 This definition affirms clearly the difference between substance and accident.

---

30Ibid. p. 179.
31The Qurʾān, 8 : 67.
33Ibid.
34Ibid.
35Ibid.
The first principle of Imām al-Juwayni's doctrine of the origin of the universe is the existence of the accident. He attempts to prove the existence of the accident in three ways: the first based on intellectual principles, the second on the power of the senses, and the third on internal feelings. In each way, he tries to point out what is changeable in existents.

As to the first one, he asserts that substance can be conceived as being in other directions (jihāt) than it is. So he asserts the possibility of the substance to be anywhere. He then asks: "What is the reason for such a change?" He calls the reason a determinant (al-mugtadi) which produces such change to the substance. Is it the substance itself, by which he means its essence, which produces that, or some abstract property (ma'ānā) over and above the essence?.

He rejects the first supposition, because it is impossible for substance itself to produce such change, according to its qualities. Thus the determinant (muqtaḍī) should be other than the substance. It is the accident.

36Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p.40.
The second way he asserts is that many accidents are perceived by the senses. This knowledge is necessary. It does not need any argument. He has already stated that knowledge supplied by sense perception is necessary or immediate knowledge, which comes without any need for reflection.37

This knowledge includes colours, tastes and other feelings of the senses.38 These sense perceptions are not stable. Therefore they are different from substance which is stable. Thus accidents exist.

Imām al-Juwaynī also proves the existence of accidents by internal feelings as a sort of personal experience. He speaks of the internal feelings of pleasure, followed by a feeling of pain. The succession of such feelings proves the existence of something other than the "I" which is substance. Thus accidents exist.

By the study of substance, then of accident, Imām al-Juwaynī introduces us to his principles, by which he proves the origin of the universe. It has already been pointed out that he first divides real existents into substances and accidents, defines

37 Al-Juwaynī, Šāmil, p. 67.
38 Ibid.
substance, and studies it. Then he defines the accident and proves its existence.

The second principle is the origin of the accident, and to confirm this Imām al-Juwaynī depends on three points:

(a) The impossibility of the non-existence of the eternal (al-qadīm); because if it did not exist, it would not have been eternal.

(b) The impossibility of the existence of the accident by itself.

(c) The impossibility of the existence of an accident through another accident.39

Imām al-Juwaynī gives an example. He holds that if it is possible to conceive a substance at rest, then to conceive it in movement, this movement is new (ṯāriʿah) and the rest has disappeared. Thus rest is not eternal. Before going further, he answers those who explain the succession from movement to rest by affirming the idea of latency (kumūn). They assert that accidents are not new (ṯāriʿah). They are latent. The movement, for example, was latent in the substance. Then it appears, and the rest becomes latent.

According to him this is impossible, because the rest, and the movement are two contrary accidents.

39Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 41.
They cannot be at the same time in one substance. If rest and movement were in the substance and then appeared, this means that movement has an accident, which is appearance, and this is contrary to the qualities of accidents. 40

On the first point Imām al-Juwaynī says that the eternal never disappears, and that this too is immediate knowledge. Supposing that the eternal was nothingness, who can bring it into existence? Nothingness is absolute non-existence. It is also immediately known that the eternal can take away nothingness. 41

If the eternal disappears, this means that one of the conditions of its existence has disappeared, and this leads to nothingness, which is absolute non-existence, and for which there can be no creator. Thus it is impossible for the eternal to be in nothingness.

As to the second point, which is the impossibility of the existence of the accident by itself, Imām al-Juwaynī says that the accident needs a place, because it does not exist by itself, but exists in another existent. It produces in this existent the change noticed in it. It never stays more than one

40 Ibid.

41 Al-Juwaynī, Shāmil, p. 189.
instant in the substance. It is not transferred from one substance to another. It is the movement itself, because if it is said that it is transferred, it will need another accident to move it, and it becomes a place for the new accident, which is not acceptable, each place being substance. Thus the accident is never a place. It can never exist by itself.

As to the third point, it is the impossibility of the existence of an accident through another accident. Imām al-Juwaynī already mentioned that if an accident exists in another accident, the latter becomes a substance, because the acceptance of accidents is an essential quality of the substance (ṣifah nafsiyyah).

If these three points are affirmed, this helps to determine how that which is not eternal is originated.

The third basis or principle of Imām al-Juwaynī's doctrine of the origin of the universe is the impossibility of separating substance and accident from one another.

This principle is to be deduced from the essential quality given by Imām al-Juwaynī to substance, which is its acceptance of the accidents. As has been previously stated, this quality gives a real
and concrete existence to substance. It is impossible for substance, without this quality, to be found in the external world, or in other words, to be perceived. The third principle affirms this quality. Accidents are in substance. Each of them does not exist more than one moment and never exists with its contrary.

The fourth principle is the impossibility of a chain of events without a beginning, because the existents have a beginning. Imām al-Juwaynī holds that if anyone believes that there are events without a beginning, as being in continuous creation, since eternity, such as the movements in the firmament, each of these movements has a completion. So each has an end. If each has an end, the next must have a beginning. Thus there are no events without a beginning.

He also divides the real existent into substance and accident, and gives the four principles or bases to his doctrine on the origin of the universe. He also presents to us two parts of the real existent; one is stable; the other does not last more than one moment. But as the separation of these two parts is impossible, if one part is originated, the other should also be so, and existents or things are not eternal.
They are originated. In this way he proves the origin of the universe.

3.3.1.1 The origin of the world according to Imam al-Ghazali

If we examine the way used by Imam al-Ghazali to prove the origin of the universe, we would find that he follows exactly his master’s way step by step.

Like Imam al-Juwayni, he builds up his argument on the origin of the universe which consists of both substance and accident, and on the movement and immobility resulting from the transference of a substance from one place to another and its stabilization therein. Step by step he comes to prove the need for a maker of the existents and in so doing he argues for the proposition that "what has no beginning can have no end" in much the same way as did by Imam al-Juwayni.

Imam al-Ghazali tries to proves the origin of the universe in a syllogistic way by shifting the argument to say that by the world he means nothing but all bodies and substance. He said:

All that is not free from originated-changes (ḥawādith) is originated.

42Ibid.

43Al-Ghazali, Igtiṣād, p. 19.
All bodies are not free from originated changes. Therefore all bodies are originated.44

Imam al-Ghazālī said:

"Of everything there is a cause, and the world is an originated thing, so it necessarily has a cause. And we mean by the world every existent thing other than God, and by every existent thing other than God we mean all bodies and their accidents. Its detailed explanation is that we have no doubt in the origin of the existence, since we know that every existent either occupies space or not (mutaḥayyiyūn wa ghayr mutaḥayyiyūn). And if every existent which occupies space is not united with its body we call it an indivisible substance (al-jawhar al-fard), and if it is united with another we call it a body; and that which does not occupy a place will either necessitate for its existence a body in which it subsists, and we call it an accident; that which does not require anything for its existence, that is God. As for the bodies and their accidents, they are known by observation and no attention should be paid to the opponent who disputes about the accidents, as they are self-evident. If his arguments and disputations were not existent how could we busy ourself in answering and listening to his arguments? If they were existent, it is inevitable that they are something other than his (the arguer's) body, since his body was existent before and his arguments were not. Thus, you have known that bodies and accidents are perceived by observation. But the existent which is neither a body, nor a located substance, and which has no accident in it, cannot be so

44Ibid., p. 20.
perceived (known by sensations), and we claim that that existent is prior to everything, and that the world exists because of His power (that is God). And we understand this by proof and not by sensation.45

Imām al-Ghazālī goes on to verify the argument of his claim. He says that the opponent may dispute that everything originated has a cause and may pose the question: how did he know that? The answer will be that this question can be asked concerning that existence which is originated, and not concerning that existence which never ceases to exist. He who does not understand what is meant by the term 'originated-thing' and 'cause' is either ignorant, and there is no need to answer his questions, or if he understands them, then his reason would necessarily accept that there is a cause for everything originated. By "originated-thing," we mean, "what was non-existent and came into existence."46

With the origin of the world as a premise, Imām al-Ghazālī proceeds to prove that the world being originated must necessarily have a cause, by recourse

---

45Ibid; Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, pp. 39-42; and also al-Bāqillānī, Tamhīd, p. 45. Here Imām al-Ghazālī followed the same line as undertaken by Imām al-Juwaynī to prove the origin of the world.

46Al-Ghazālī, Iqtiṣād, p. 20.
to the so-called 'principle of determination'. In its barest form, this principle meant that since prior to the existence of the world it was equally possible for it to be or not to be, a 'determinant', whereby the possibility of existence could prevail over the possibility of non-existence, was required; and this 'determinant', he argued, was God.

He also proves that the substance is not free from originated changes, as he said: "Substance is not free from movement and rest, and both are originated. Movement and rest are from accident."47

He holds that no rational man can ever doubt the existence of accidents in himself such as pain, hunger, thirst, and other conditions, nor in their origination, as these characteristics are perceptible. Similarly, if one observes the bodies of the world, one cannot doubt the change of their conditions, and that these changes are originated.

This was the method Imām al-Ghazālī used to prove the origin of the universe with only a slight elaboration or addition to the details of his master, but we can see that he still follows his master's way by mentioning that substance is not free from accident. He then proved the existent and the origin of the

47Ibid.
accident and rejected the idea of latency (kumūn) and appearance (zuhūr). He further proved the impossibility of the existence of an accident through another accident and the impossibility of a chain of events without a beginning. All these are the same methods used by Imām al-Juwaynī to prove the origin of the world.

3.3.2 The second doctrine

In the second doctrine of Imām al-Juwaynī on the origin of the universe, he does not divide the existent of the universe into substances and accidents. According to his views in this second doctrine, the universe is composed of finite bodies, with various forms having accidents which are distinguishing characteristics, such as colours, shape and other qualities.48

The word accident used by him in this second doctrine does not have a special technical sense, as in the first one. He uses it here in its ordinary meaning of what is perceived by the senses. Knowledge acquired by the senses is necessary, as has been previously explained.

Imām al-Juwaynī then tries to ascertain the variability of accidents, and from this deduces the meaning of the possibility of things. He finds that things have unstable characteristics, these characteristics being perceptible by the senses or conceivable by the mind. One can perceive the sequence of the accident and can assert that things might always be of another shape than they are.

Thus, all existents are unstable. This leads to the conclusion that they are possible. Imām al-Juwaynī says: "It can be conceived by the reason that what is at rest (sukūn) might be at rest. What by chance is located in the highest position of the atmosphere can possibly be in the lowest, and what turns in a certain orbit can turn out of it."49

He concludes by such reasoning that things are possible. If things are possible, they are not necessary, and if they are not necessary, they are not eternal. For him the universe, with the existents it contains, is possible, and can assume another shape and order than it has. Thus if the universe is necessarily possible, it is impossible for it to be eternal.50

49Ibid., p. 11.
50Ibid.
Imām al-Juwaynī holds that if existents are possible, so they need a maker, for variability and instability of things cannot occur by themselves. They are originated.

This view had an influence on Imām al-Ghazālī in his opposition to philosophers who claimed that the universe is eternal. He used the same views as his master to reject one of the philosopher's arguments on the eternity of the world. He states that it is not logical to hold that the existent is impossible; for that which is impossible in itself, never exists at all. Again, it is not necessary in itself, for that which is necessary in itself is never deprived of existence. It follows that it must have been possible in itself.

To prove his argument, like his master, he points out that the world is composed of bodies, with various forms, having accidents which have distinguishing characteristics as colour, shape, and other qualities. He then tries to ascertain their variability, and from this deduces the meaning of the possibility of things. One finds that things have an unstable nature (this is perceptible by the senses as well as by the mind).

One can perceive the sequence of accidents and can assert that things might always be of another
shape than they are. Thus, all existents are unstable. This leads to the conclusion that they are possible. And their possible existence originates against their continued non-existence, which is equally possible. Then the mind posits intuitively and without recourse to rational proof that there must be a cause to bring an existent into existence from non-existence. Imam al-Ghazālī said:

The existence of the world is possible and we mean by this statement that it may exist or not. It was not in existence before, because its existence was not necessary; but, rather, its existence needs a 'determinant' so that its non-existence may be changed into existence. And by cause, we mean nothing but the 'determinant'.51

Imam al-Juwaynī had preceded Imam al-Ghazālī in rejecting the philosophers' views on the eternity of the universe. But he did not specify any particular group who rejected the idea of the origin of the world; he directed it to all groups who rejected this idea. This was slightly different to what was done by Imam al-Ghazālī; he specified only the theoretical philosophers. If we examine the evidences brought forward by Imam al-Ghazālī in his book "al-Iqtiṣād fī al-Iʿtiqād" to reject the philosophers' views on the eternity of the universe, we will find that he followed his master's way step by step.

51Al-Ghazālī, Iqtiṣād, p. 20.
3.4 The existence and one-ness of God according to Imām al-Juwaynī and his influence on Imām al-Ghazālī.

According to Imām al-Juwaynī, God, as the creator of the world, has known of the existence of the world since eternity. This knowledge is eternal like God's other attributes. Imām al-Juwaynī shows that the Maker is eternal, because if He was originated, He would need a Maker; so He would not be necessary and this is contrary to what He is. He is necessary and is the Maker and Creator of all the originated existents.

God brings about the world by His will and His choice, because according to Imām al-Juwaynī God is Murīd (all-willing) and Mukhtār (a free agent). If God could not exercise His will and His power of choice, he would not have been able to create the universe in this particular place in the void of space, and in that time.

For him the universe, with the existents it contains, is possible and can assume another shape and order than it has. Thus if the universe is necessarily possible, it is impossible for it to be eternal.52 He says that if existents are possible, they need a maker,

52Al-Juwaynī, Ḥādīth, p. 11.
for variability and instability of things cannot occur by themselves. They are originated.

This doctrine contains a philosophical thought which is the distinction between necessity and possibility in relation to existence. This philosophical idea is to be found in al-Farābī’s book. He held that there are two kinds of existents. One of them, if its essence is considered, is not necessary, and is called the possible. The second, if its essence is considered, is necessary and is called the necessary existent.

If the possible is supposed non-existent, this is not logically absurd. But it needs a cause. If it happens, it happens as a result of something. Possibilities should never have an infinite chain of causes. They should never happen regularly. They should always need a necessary existent, which is the first existent.

As to the necessary existent, it is absolutely absurd to suppose that it is non-existent. It has no cause. It never happens as a result of something other than itself. It is the first cause of all things. Its existence should be previous to all
other existents. It is the most perfect of all existents, and above causes.53

Ibn Sīnā also defines the necessary and the possible. He held that the necessary does not need a cause; the possible needs a cause.54

This idea of necessary and possible existents is in both doctrines of Imām al-Juwaynī, as has been mentioned. Imām al-Ghazālī has used the same method to prove the existence of God. He sets out the more popular proof for divine origin which is known as dalīl al-jawāz.55 He held that if the world is possible, it must need a cause to bring it into existence. Hence the next is that the cause of all possible existents or the bodies of the world is eternal, that there is no beginning to its existence. It should be the originator of everything, and that it has existed before everything, and He is God.

Here is the proof: were He Himself originated and not eternal, His own coming into existence would have required an originator, and his originator another and so on ad infinitum, without ultimately leading to

53Al-Fārābī, ḥuyūn al-masāʾīl, Leiden, 1895, p. 57.
54Ibn Sīnā, kitāb al-najāt, Cairo, 1331 A.H. p. 383.
55Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 35, where Imām al-Juwaynī develops the similar argument from temporality.
one pre-existent, first originator who is the object and whom we call the originator of the world. So Imām al-Ghazālī says that we should stop at the eternal cause; this is what we are aiming at and call it the originator of the world. It is evidently necessary to declare it eternal, and by 'eternal' he means nothing but that which is not preceded by non-existence, that is the statement of existence and denial of preceding non-existence.56

Imām al-Ghazālī held that the existence and non-existence of this originated world are possible. If its possible existence comes into existence, there must be a cause to bring it into existence. By the cause, he means, the 'determinant'. The question is, if the 'determinant' was and the world was not, who was the originator of the 'determinant' itself? Why does the world originate now, and not before? In analyzing the 'determinant', Imām al-Ghazālī considers two alternatives: (a) either it is a natural determinant or agent; or (b) it is a free agent (fāʿīl mukhtār).

This is similar to Imām al-Juwaynī’s view in his analysis of the 'determinant' where he considers two alternatives: (a) that it is a natural agent (ṭabīʿah) (b) that it is a free agent (fāʿīl mukhtār). He disproves that it is a natural agent, and concludes

56Al-Ghazālī, Iqtişād, p. 24.
that the 'determinant' is a free agent. "It is therefore established," he writes, "that the determinant of originated things creates them freely, choosing for them particular forms and times. This free agent is the creator of the universe, or God." 57

Like Imâm al-Juwaynî, Imâm al-Ghazâlî disproves that determinant is a natural agent, and concludes that it is all-powerful (gâdîr) and all-willing (murîd), or in other words He is a free agent. Imam al-Ghazâlî said:

The originator of the world is all-powerful and all-willing as regards His actions (murîdun li afcâlihi). He brings about the world according to His power and will. If the determinant or God could not exercise his power and will, he would not have been able to create the world in this particular place, and at a particular time. As to the world, all spaces and all instants of time are similar. The originator originated it in a space and time that best suited His power and will. He chooses the time and space as He wills. 58

Thus, according to Imâm al-Ghazâlî, the determinant is a free one who creates and originates through His will and power. Affirming the attribute of power, he says that it is the attribute by which action becomes possible. Among its special characteristics is

57 Al-Juwaynî, Irshâd, p. 41.
58 Al-Ghazâlî, Iqtişâd, p. 53.
that it is related to all things possible, and as these are infinite, there is no limit to the power of God.

Like Imām al-Juwaynī, Imām al-Ghazālī goes on further to prove the creation of the world with the one-ness of God as a premise. Like his master, he ascribes to it two meanings:

(a) That God is indivisible, for He has no quantity and what has no quantity cannot be divided.
(b) That God has no equal in degree and no opposite, i.e. He can have no associate.

That God has no opposite is evident since the opposite of a thing is that which alternates with it in the occupation of a place, and never shares it; whereas God is not limited by space, He therefore, can have no opposite. What is meant by the peerlessness (lā nidda jahu fī rutbatīhi)\(^{59}\) of God is that no being created by God can equal Him.

In proving this proposition Imām al-Ghazālī also makes use of (burhān al-tamānuʿ). Imām al-Juwaynī illustrated it with the conflict of wills, which he thus cast into the form of enumeration and division (al-sabr wa al-tagsīm) "If we assume the existence of

---

\(^{59}\)Ibid., p.35.
two gods and of one body, whichever of the gods wills to move and the other wills to keep still, then all the possible results will be rationally unacceptable:

(a) if the wills of both are carried out,

there will be motion and quiescence in the same body at the same time, and this is impossible.

(b) if the will of neither is carried out,

there will be:

(i) a body deprived of both motion and quiescence, and this is absurd;

(ii) two gods incapable of exercising their will, and this also is absurd.

(c) if the will of one is carried out to the detriment of the other's the second would be proved to be impotent.60

Now if an eternal being is impotent, his impotence must also be eternal and inherent, and this is absurd because impotence manifests itself in preventing an occurrence which is possible in itself, so that the creation of the possible universe is inconsistent with impotence.61

60 Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 70.
61 Ibid., pp. 69-71.
Imām al-Ghazālī also makes use of *burhān al-tamānuʿ*. But he draws his argument from the degrees of existence and excellence, instead of conflicts of wills.62 If God has an associate, then this associate must be one of these:

(a) either equal to God in degree;
(b) of higher degree than He;
(c) of lower degree.

Each of these alternatives can be shown to be absurd. In the first case, duality implies variation; this variation may be in the nature (movement and colour, for example, are two different natures, although they may exist in the same place and at the same time), or it may be a variation in place or time, the nature being the same (an illustration of this would be two blacknesses which cannot reside in one substance at one time).

Now if God's associate is His equal in every way, his existence becomes impossible, for they cannot differ in nature since they are both presupposed to be eternal, and they cannot differ in time or place since they are not bounded by time or place. Therefore, there can be no variation and no duality either, and the unity of God is established.

---

62Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥtiṣād*, pp. 35-36,
The second and third alternatives are equally absurd, for God is ex hypothesi the highest Being in existence; in either of the two cases therefore the higher form is God and the other is not God. 63

Like Imām al-Juwaynī, and with only slight elaboration of details, Imām al-Ghazālī then attacks the theory that there might be two gods, dividing between them the creation of the world, the dividing line being between the heavens and the earth, or animate and inanimate, or good and evil. He reduces this theory to two alternatives, either:

(a) the dividing line cuts through both substances and accidents, each of the gods creating some of the substances and some of the accidents, or

(b) one of them creates all the substances and the other all the accidents.

He then disproves both the alternatives in a manner that scarcely differs from the burhān al-tamānuʿ and from Imām al-Juwaynī’s argumentation, 64 except that his analysis and refutation of the hypothesis that one god may create solely good and the other solely evil

63Ibid., p. 36.
64Al-Ghazālī, Igtīṣād, pp. 36-37, -Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, pp. 69-70.
takes an unexpected form. "This amounts to folly," he writes of the hypothesis, "for evil is not evil in its essence; indeed in its essence it is equal and similar to good, and he who has the power to create one thing has the power to create its similitude."65

Imām al-Ghazālī concludes his argument with the same assertion his master made that the multiplicity of gods in any form would result in confusion, and he quotes the same verse from the Qurʾān:

"If there were in them other gods than Allāh, their order would have been disrupted".66

It will be observed that Imām al-Ghazālī expanded the meaning of the One-ness of God to include the denial of an opposite to God. This idea is implicit in Imām al-Juwaynī’s explanation of the true nature of the One-ness of God, especially in that he argued against the possibility of there being an associate of God; but Imām al-Ghazālī brought it out and expounded it in such detail that he had to devote a special proof to it.

65Ibid.
66The Qurʾān, 21 : 22.
CHAPTER FOUR

A Discussion of the Attributes of God According to Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī

Before discussing the attributes of God as explained by Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī it is necessary to define precisely what points of difference were raised among Muslim theologians with regard to this debate.

4.1 The views of the Muʿtazilah

The Muʿtazilah based their views on the attributes of God on one of their five usūl, namely that God is one. They tended to describe God by negatives and regarded statements about Him made in term of human qualities as being not applicable. They assert that God is not substance or accident but He is the creator of these things.

They reject utterly the ascribing of specific characteristics as being eternal qualities of God, holding rather that He is knowing, powerful, and living as part of His essence; not that knowledge, power and life are eternal attributes or personal subsistences (maʿāni) inherent in Him. For if these qualities should
partake of His eternity which is the exclusive description of His essence, they would partake of divinity. And this would be absurd for them.1

This was the method used by the Mu'tazilah in their proposition that God is one. They drew comparisons between the Creator and created creatures. The creators are not God, nor are there other creators besides Him. They hold that if God has life which is additional to His essence it would make Him accept the other eternal qualities as part of His being. This they disagreed with.

They reject the idea of the additional attributes of God to His essence because this would make God subsist in that something and destroy the unity of God. They believe that God is living, knowing, and powerful and that these are prior in His essence.2

4.2 The views of the Mushabbiyah

The Mushabbiha (anthropomorphists)3 assert

1Al-Shahrastānī, Milal, vol. 1, p. 44.
that God has attributes such as humans possess, except for His face. Among them some of the Shi‘ites even claim that their Lord has a body which can move from one place to another. 4

However, they (these Shi‘ites) have different view concerning the body of God. Some of them claim that God has a body like a human being, His power is similar to that of His creatures and His speech has sounds and words; others assert that God is like a strong young man. They followed the thinking of some of the Jewish anthropomorphists who claim that God is like a picture of their leader. 5

Some of them even believe that God can be seen in this world because He has a body, blood, head, tongue, eyes, ears, hands and legs though these are not as in an ordinary human body. 6

4.3 The views of the Ash‘ariyyah

The Ash‘ariyyah struck a middle path and vehemently denied that God has a body like His creations and they reject the views of the Mu‘tazilah who denied that God has any attribute in addition to

4Al-Baghdādi, Farg, p. 214.
5Ibid., p. 215.
His essence. The Ashʿariyyah hold that God's qualities are additional to His essence but the Attributes cannot be said to be either the essence itself or other than the essence.

Interesting though it would be to discuss these conflicting opinions, our concern here is only with the views of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī on the subject.

4.4 The Attributes of God according to Imām al-Juwaynī

In discussing the attributes of God Imām al-Juwaynī divides them into three categories:

4.4.1 First: The "Impossible Attributes" of God

Imām al-Juwaynī asserts that all the attributes of creatures show that they were fashioned by one originator who created them in this world. It is impossible for God to have been created because if God were an originated being, then He would need an originator, and His originator, another originator and so on ad infinitum. So we would come necessarily to a circular argument or an infinite sequence and both of these are absurd.7

---

Imām al-Juwayī bases his argument on this issue by differentiating the attributes of God from those of His creatures, because the creatures' attributes indicate that they are created and governed by someone. If this happens to God, He would need someone who governs Him and this matter will continue without end.

He mentions that the attributes of creatures are possible and they need an originator, while God's attributes are eternal and everlasting. He places God in a higher and more truly perfect degree than if extraneous attributes were ascribed to Him.

Imām al-Juwaynī denies that God occupies space by using a rational argument; all that occupies space is originated and those who occupy space have bodies, and those who have bodies are tangible and all things that can be touched are originated.8

He rejects the idea presented by the Karrāmiyyah9 who claim that God is similar to His creatures in body, movement, direction and so on. The Karrāmiyyah use Qur'anic verses to support their views, such as the verse:

8Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 58.
9They are the followers of Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad b. Karrām. See Shahrastānī, Milāl, vol. 1, p. 159.
All Merciful settled on the Throne.10

The Karrāmiyyah also claim that when people raise their hands and head towards the sky during prayer, this shows that God is in the sky. They used a ḥadīth which was narrated by al-Jariyah to show that God is in the sky. When she asked the prophet, "Where is God?" the prophet directed her towards the sky.11

Imām al-Juwaynī vehemently rejects the interpretation given by the Karrāmiyyah of the Qur'ānic verse which seems to treat God's attributes as being similar to those of His creatures. He interprets "God's settling on the Throne" as meaning one of two things:

1. God's possession and control of the throne.
2. His direction of a purpose (qaṣd) towards it.

He bases his interpretation on the verse which says "nothing is similar to Him"12 which proves that God is unlike any of His creatures and the impossibility of God's occupation of space, because to affirm it would be inconsistent with His eternity.

10The Qur'ān, 20:5.
12The Qur'ān, 42:11.
4.4.1.1 The "Impossible Attributes" of God according to Imām al-Ghazālī

In dealing with the same topic Imām al-Ghazālī asserts that by denying the similarity of God's attributes to His creatures, it would be possible to deny that God occupies space in any direction even in the sky, because if one claims that God has direction it would mean that He occupies space and has a body.

All that occupies space has direction such as left, right, down and up. All these are created; if God occupied space He would also be one of the created things which would need a creator, which is impossible according to rational argument. 13

This was the same argument given by Imām al-Juwaynī in denying that God occupies space. He rejected the evidence given by the Karrāmiyyah to show that God is in the sky by explaining that all these references in the Qur'ān and hadīth are symbolic and only supplied to strengthen one's faith in God. 14

Here Imām al-Ghazālī gives a more detailed explanation than his master concerning these

13Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā', vol. 1, p. 105.
14Al-Juwaynī, Shāmil, p. 563.
statements, and holds that when someone raises their hands and heads toward the sky during prayer, it does not mean that God is in the sky, but it is some kind of symbolic direction for prayer as in the case when one turns toward the Ka'ba when praying. It also serves to show that God is so lofty as not to be describable by His creatures.15

Imām al-Juwaynī then argues the impossibility of God being substance, because being substance He would accept the substances' qualities and occupy space and possess the features of accidents. These cannot be predicated of God because His quality cannot be thought of as being that of the created thing and for Him to have these features or characteristics would mean that He also is a created being.16

If then we compare these views of Imām al-Juwaynī with those of Imām al-Ghazālī on this matter we find that Imām al-Ghazālī uses the same argumentation when he holds that all substance is not free from movement and rest; and all that is not free from

\[15\] Al-Ghazālī, Iqtiṣād, p. 31., Here Imām al-Ghazālī uses exactly same argument with his teacher in dealing with the same problem. See al-Juwaynī, Shāmil, p. 565.

\[16\] Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 64.
movement and rest is created; therefore substance is created.17

Concerning the claim of the Karrāmiyyah that God has a body and location, Imām al-Ghazālī uses a similar rejection to that of his teacher when he holds that all bodies are substance; if it is impossible for God to be substance it would also be impossible for Him to have a body.18

To prove the impossibility of God having a body, Imām al-Juwaynī argues that if God has a body, His body, as any specific located body, would have a limited ability. It would therefore appear logical that limited things are at best perceived as being equal to other limited beings. Therefore, they need a creator to process their attributes.19 This argument becomes clearer with Imām al-Ghazālī, as can be seen in the next paragraph.

Imām al-Ghazālī also uses the same view to prove the impossibility of God’s having a body since he holds that if God has a body then it could be easily identified. By reasoning one can say that there must be

17Al-Ghazālī, Ḳiyā', vol. 1., p. 106.,
19Al-Juwaynī, Shāmil, p. 412.
in this case smaller and bigger objects, one object should not be felt superior to the others unless there is a creator who has the power to layout its particular dimensions. In other words, the body or its attributes require a creator to carefully manage them i.e. to limit their boundaries. Therefore, the object is creature not creator.20

4.4.2 Second: The "Necessary Attributes" of God.

Imām al-Juwaynī divides the necessary attributes of God into:

a. Personal attributes (ṣifāt al-nafsiyyāt)

b. Qualitative attributes (ṣifāt al-ma‘āni)

He describes the personal attributes as affirmative attributes which indicate the essence itself and have no cause.21 These are existence (wujūd), eternity (qidām), self-dependence (qiyyāmuḥu binafsihi), dissimilarity to the accidents (mukhālafatuhu lil ḥawādīth), and His unity (waḥdāniyyatihi).

20Al-Ghazālī, Iqtiṣād, p. 29.
21Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 51.
The qualitative attribute on the other hand is an additional meaning over and above the essence and created by a cause. These are living (hayy), knowing (‘ālim), powerful (qādir), willing (murīd), speaking (mutakallim), seeing (baṣīr), and hearing (sāmi'). He then gives a brief indication of the rational proofs that God is knowing, living and powerful, and this is clear from the fact that He is the producer of well-wrought works (al-af’āl al-muḥkamāt, or al-ḥakamiyya).

Since He is living, He must also be hearing seeing and speaking; otherwise He would have to be qualified, and eternally qualified, by the contrary defects of dumbness, blindness and deafness.

If we look at Imām al-Juwaynī’s work in al-Irshād and al-Shāmil we find that he discusses the aḥwāl (states) and explains them in the same way as Abū Ḥāshim al-Jabā’ī. The ḥāl (state) is a quality which something which exists has: it is neither characterised by existence nor by non-existence.

He then divides these states into two:

---

22Ibid.
23Abd al-Jabbār, Khamsah, p. 158.
24Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 92.
1. What is both ascribable to the essence and caused by it. This is any characteristic ascribed to the essence as a result of a quality inherent in it; thus the fact that a being is living or powerful confers upon it the attribute of life or power.

2. What is ascribable to the essence, but not caused by it. This is any feature of an existent being which is neither existent by itself nor is caused by another existent being; an example of this is the occupation of space by a substance.

To prove the ahwāl (states) Imām al-Juwaynī argues that if a person knew of the existence of a substance but not of its occupation of space, and then came to know that the substance occupied space, he would then have acquired new knowledge about a thing already known, and he would then be in possession of two distinct items of knowledge - knowledge of existence, and knowledge of occupation of space. Now the object of the second item of knowledge is either identical with the object of the first, or else it is distinct from and additional to it; it cannot be identical with the object of the first item of knowledge, for it is self-evident to any rational being who has acquired this second item of knowledge that he knows something he did not know before. It is therefore established that the occupation of space is distinct
from the existence of a substance, and that power is additional to the essence of the potent being. 25

Imām al-Juwaynī then discusses the problem of God's speech (kalām Allah) and rejects the views of the Mu'tazilah who claim that the Qur'ān is a created manifestation. He held that the Qur'ān is the word of God and is not created in the sense of a text conceived and written in a specific time. He maintains that the utterance of God, the almighty, is the eternal word which does not have a beginning. 26

Imām al-Juwaynī reviews and discusses all the different attempts to define this attribute, for instance those of the Mu'tazilah who claim that speech is created and those of the Karrāmiyyah who claim that it is eternal. The Mu'tazilah defined speech as ordered letters and intermittent sounds denoting definite aims and being conceived and uttered at specific moments. Imām al-Juwaynī defined speech as notions residing in the soul and made recognizable by expression and by conventionally agreed signs. 27

The Mu'tazilah denied the inward speech (kalām al-nafs) as posited by Imām al-Juwaynī. In

25 Ibid., p. 93.
26 Ibid., p. 105.
27 Ibid., p. 106.
asserting the notion of inward speech Imām al-Juwaynī based his argument on linguistic usage. The Arabs used the word kalām to include notions in the minds, as in the expressions kāna fī nafsī kalāmun (there was a thought in my mind) and zawwartu fī nafsī qawlan (I entertain ideas in my mind) indeed a verse by al-Akḥṭal runs as follows:

\[
\text{inna l-kalāma la-fī l-fu'ādi wa innamā}
\text{ju'ila l-lisānu 'alā l-fu'ādi dalīlā.}^{28}
\]

Speech is in the heart, and the tongue was made solely to be the interpreter of the heart.

This shows that the word kalām had a wider significance then the spoken word, and in fact included inward speech (kalām al-nafs).

Imām al-Juwaynī also rejects the views of the Karrāmiyyah who claim that the Qur'ān is eternal and the expressed words and sounds are eternal. They also believe that the voice of the reciter of the Qur'ān is God's speech itself.\(^{29}\)

\(^{28}\)Ibid., p. 111.

\(^{29}\)Ibid., p. 125.
The Karrāmiyyah believe that God's speech is eternal, an integral part of His being and is not separate from the essence of God. They held that this notion of God implies that God is of a human form, and therefore God's speech is as human speech is. Imām al-Juwaynī, however, explains his view that God's words are an attribute rather than the essence of God. This eternal attribute finds expression in the specific context composed of letters which is called the Qur'ān.

This is similar to any one of us who whenever he commands, prohibits, or narrates finds within himself an idea and then indicates it by an expression or by writing or by a gesture.

Here Imām al-Juwaynī proceeds to explain that the writing indicates the expression, the expression indicates what is in the mind, and this in turn indicates what is in the substance. So whenever the Qur'ān is described as one of the things inseparably connected with the eternal, as when we say that the Qur'ān is eternal and uncreated, the meaning is that it is true eternal essence manifest in an external reality.

He then holds that the Glorious Expressions are created and written on the Preserved Tablet (al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz); Jibrīl revealed them to the prophet
after they had been brought down in the night of Decree.30

Imām al-Juwaynī maintains that what was brought down to the prophet was expression and meaning. Some claim that only the meaning was brought down to him. There is a conflict of opinion on this; some say that the prophet clothed the meaning with expressions of his own, and others, that it was Jibrīl who clothed the meaning. However, Islamic scholars accept that it was sent down both in fixed expression and meaning.31

Whatever the debate between the theologians regarding the doctrine of the Qur'ān on the question of whether or not it was created, it has been accepted by Muslims that the Qur'ān, at any rate, is a speech of God, and it appeared in time.32

4.4.2.1 The qualitative attributes according to Imām al-Ghazālī

If we look at the way of Imām al-Ghazālī in affirming the necessary attributes of God, we would

30Ibid., p. 130.
certainly find that it is in substance the same as that of Imám al-Juwaynī and as will be seen, differs from it only in better organization and greater clarity and detail.

In discussing the qualitative attributes, like his master Imám al-Ghazālī divides them into seven; these are power (qudrah), knowledge (‘ilm), life (ḥayāh), will (irādah), speech (kalām), sight (baṣar), and hearing (sam‘).

Imám al-Ghazālī begins his discussion in this field with the attribute of power, where he held that God has a power which has no limit and can do anything according to His will. To prove the power of God, Imám al-Ghazālī bases his view on the creation of this world; the order and the most fitting and proper plan are proof that its maker is powerful and exercises choice. The order and pattern in the universe, the systematic functioning of the human body and the manifest yet regulated diversity in the world point to the power of the creator.

He also uses the human body to prove that God is powerful; he maintains that if one were to look to his body he would certainly notice that there must be someone who created it because it is very remarkable and works in a complex order. All these show that the creator must be powerful. Here Imám al-Ghazālī presents
his case in a systematic way so that the reader can understand it easily.

In discussing the attribute of knowledge, Imām al-Ghazālī, like Imām al-Juwaynī, held that God is knowing of His attribute and of other things by virtue of His essence and His knowledge is an eternal attribute which is connected with all the three type of beings: the essential, the possible and the absurd or impossible in a comprehensive way, as they are, without any ignorance preceding it.33

In dealing with the attribute of life, Imām al-Ghazālī held that it is intellectually and religiously essential for God to possess the attribute of life. To prove this, Imām al-Ghazālī held that God is attributed with power, intention and knowledge. All those who possess these must necessarily have life.34 In this point Imām al-Ghazālī keeps his discussion almost as brief as that of Imām al-Juwaynī.

In discussing the attribute of God’s will, Imām al-Ghazālī holds that it is God’s will that determines whether a possible thing shall exist or not. This will of God cannot be dispensed with even where there is knowledge, because knowledge is dependent upon

33Al-Ghazālī, Iqtīṣād, p. 64.
34Ibid., p. 65.
the thing known, related to it in its actual form, and it is no part of the function of knowledge to alter or influence it.

The will of God is involved in every act of origination because every originated thing is created by the power of God, and everything created by the power presupposes a will to direct power to the object of power. Thus every object of power is willed, and every originated thing is an object of power; therefore every originated thing is willed.

Now among originated things are disbelievers, sins, and acts of disobedience. In this connection, Imam al-Ghazālī investigates several awkward questions: How can God command what He does not will?; how can He will a thing which He prohibits?; and how can He will abominations, acts of disobedience, injustices, and evils; can we consider Him who wills such things as being debased?

Like others among Ahl al-Sunnah, Imam al-Ghazālī settled these questions by differentiating between command and will and by defining duty, good and evil. He also reviewed and criticized, along the same lines as his predecessors, other opinions on the

35Ibid.
subject. It is interesting to note that the discussion introduced by Imām al-Ghazālī also presents completely new material on this subject which is not to be found in the same discussion by Imām al-Juwaynī.

In dealing with the attribute of Hearing and Seeing, Imām al-Ghazālī based his argument on the Qur'ān and rational argument. To prove that God is Hearing and Seeing, he uses the verse: "He is a Hearer and Seer," and also the words of Abraham: "O my father! why worship that which heareth not and seeth not and can profit thee nothing".

For the rational argument, he holds that the creator possesses greater perfection than the created. It is known that the one who sees is more perfect than the one who does not see, and the hearer is more perfect than the one who does not hear, and it is therefore, absurd to attribute perfection to the created and not to the creator.

Imām al-Ghazālī enumerates all the objections that may be raised to the premises on which he has built his argument, and he refutes these objections to

36Ibid., p. 70.
37The Qur'ān, 42:11.
38The Qur'ān, 19:42.
39Al-Ghazālī, Iqtiṣād, p. 72.
his own satisfaction. He also considers the other senses such as tasting and smelling and concludes, like his master Imām al-Juwaynī, that it is impossible to ascribe them to God.40

In discussing the attribute of Speech, Imām al-Ghazālī like his master, held that the God’s Speech is a primordial attribute of God which stands in the essence of God and which does not have any letter nor any sound and which is pure from being precedent or subsequent (i.e. no part of it is precedent or subsequent to the other parts, as our speech is).41

Imām al-Ghazālī follows his master’s analysis in dividing speech into two sections. First: sounds and letters which are originated and second: the inward speech which does not consist of letters and sounds; it is an eternal quality, subsisting in God’s essence. The sounds and letters show that the inward speech is eternal like the created universe shows that the creator is eternal.

As his master did, Imām al-Ghazālī argues that God’s Speech is inward Speech and denies the views of the Karrāmites who claim that the Speech of God consists of letters and sounds which are consecutive.

40Ibid., p. 73.
41Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā’, vol. 1, p. 91.
and ordered. And they thought that the letters and sounds are eternal.

Some of them went to the extent of thinking that the letters which we read out of the Qur'ān and the writing, too, are eternal. The intellectual narrowness of some of them led them beyond this to consider even the covers of the copies of the Qur'ān as being eternal.

As for the Muʿtazilites, they were of the opinion that the Speech of God was made up of accidental letters and sounds which do not reside in the essence of God. Therefore, according to them "God's being a Speaker" means that He creates the speech in some bodies, because, they think that there can be no speech without letters and sounds.

In order to deny these claims, Imām al-Ghazālī, like his master, uses linguistic arguments to support his view. He uses exactly the same words as did by his master before him, by saying:

\[
\text{inna l-kalāma la-fī l-fuʿādi wa innamā juʿila l-lisānu 'alā l-fuʿādi dalīlā.}
\]

speech is in the heart, and the tongue was made solely to be the interpreter of
the heart. 42

Imām al-Ghazālī holds that the term Speech of God is applied to indicate the eternal inward speech, meaning that it is an attribute which stands in the essence of God, and is applied to indicate verbal speech, meaning that He created it and there is no possibility of alteration for anyone in the make-up of its origin.

Despite the fact that the words or utterances which we read are only accidents, it is not permissible to say that the Qur'ān is an accident, because the term Qur'ān is applied to indicate the attribute which stands in the essence of God.

In order to make the discussion more vivid, Imām al-Ghazālī sometimes presents his points differently from Imām al-Juwaynī, in a question and answer style. An example of this is his treatment of the question of how Moses heard the Speech of God. The question arises of how can Moses be said to have heard God's Speech if God's Speech does not consist of sounds and letters, because the normal speech we hear consists of sounds and letters.

42Ibid., p. 109.,
-Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 111.
To answer this question Imām al-Ghazālī argues that "how?" can be asked only of things which have a mode of entity, and not of what has no such mode. When one asks, "how is it?", what one means is, "which of the things we know is it like?". And if the object of the question has no analogy, there can be no answer to the question. It is therefore, impossible to answer this question except by making the questioner hear God's Speech.43

The impossibility of answering this question does not prove that God's Speech does not exist. Rather, writes Imām al-Ghazālī, "It is necessary to believe that God's Speech is an eternal attribute with which there is nothing that can be compared, even as His essence is eternal and has no comparision; and even as His essence can be seen in a way which differs from the visibility of bodies and accidents and has no similarity with it, so is His Speech is heard in a way which differs from letters and sounds and has no similarity with them."44 Here Imām al-Ghazālī re-elaborates in greater detail the points which are discussed by Imām al-Juwaynī.

Imām al-Ghazālī also uses the claim of his master that God's Speech is written in copies of the

43Ibid., p. 78.
44Ibid.
Qur'ān, retained in memories, recited by tongues, while the reciting, the memories and the writing are all originated. 45

Like Imam al-Juwaynī, Imam al-Ghazālī then holds that these seven qualitative attributes are additional to the essence of God. Thus God is Knowing by virtue of knowledge, Living by virtue of life, Potent by virtue of power, Willing by virtue of will, Hearing by virtue of hearing, Seeing by virtue of sight and Speaking by virtue of speech. All these attributes are primordial and eternal to God.

4.4.3 Third: The "Possible Attributes" of God

In dealing with the possible attributes of God Imam al-Juwaynī began his discussion with the possible vision of God. He held that it is possible to see God in the abode of the next world. He demonstrated the possibility of the vision in two ways, one based on rational argument and the other based on traditional argument.

In establishing the rational argument, he divides this into two:

45Ibid., p. 79.

-Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 128.
First: he maintains that God is existent; all that is existent is capable of being seen; therefore, God is capable of being seen in the next world. But that is without quality (i.e. without the seen taking any of the qualities of the accidents such as "being possible to the seer", being in any direction to the seer, occupying any location and so on.)

Second: he bases his argument on the power of God who can create anything He likes. Imam al-Juwaynī intends to answer the doubt expressed by the Mu'tazilites on the basis of the intellectual evidences when they said that the vision of God is an absurdity. For them this was as follows: if God could be seen He ought to be in front of the seer by necessity. In that case He would be in a direction and in a location; and this is absurd.

This argument of the Mu'tazilah was refuted by Imam al-Juwaynī when he held that the claim made by the Mu'tazilah that God ought to be in front of the seer by necessity is false. Therefore, the necessity of direction and location, too, is false, because "the vision" is a power God endows in His creatures and neither the seen being in front of the seer nor His being in any direction nor His occupying any location

\[46\text{Al-Juwaynī, } Irshād, p. 171.\]
and so on has been made a necessary condition here. For these are merely customary necessities and not intellectual necessities in the discussion in which a great many intellectuals took part.47

In establishing the traditional argument Imām al-Juwaynī using the following verse:

"On that day will some faces beam
looking towards their lord"48

Here Imām al-Juwaynī interprets the word "looking" as indicating the "beauty and brightness" of God. However he endeavours to refute the Muʿtazilites' argument that the word "looking" in the verse suggests that the faces look with "expectation" or "hope"; they took the preposition "toward" to indicate a searching for "bounty" or "favour".

Therefore, according to them this verse means: "On that day will some faces beam (in brightness and beauty), expecting or hoping the 'bounty' or 'favour' of their Lord."49

48The Qurʾān, 75:22.
Imām al-Juwaynī refuted the claim of the Mu’tazilah who said that the verse meant seeking expectation for reward by saying that God could not mean a sense of expectation in the context of the verse since there is an explicit connection with "face".

The verse, therefore, must mean the vision of the eyes. And it is not correct to say "towards" with reference to a regard of expectation, since the regard of expectation does not become transitive by the preposition "towards".50

Imām al-Juwaynī then proceeds to refute the Mu’tazilah who used the verse to deny the vision of God, to which they clung in saying that this vision is an absurdity. They quoted the saying of God:

"vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision. He is the subtle, the aware".51

The Mu’tazilah hold that the vision of God is impossible since the reality of God cannot be attained by "vision". On the other hand, "vision" cannot be used to comprehend Him. The heart of the difficulty,

50Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 169.
51The Qur’ān, 6:103.
perhaps, is in the meaning of "vision" itself, of which the Mu‘tazilah had their own interpretation.

They define vision as a subtle substance which is conveyed by God only to the sense of sight by which all the seen things can be comprehended. Hence their definition seems to be restricted only to temporal matters. Since God is neither accident nor body, they argue that vision could not be used to comprehend Him.  

Imām al-Juwayni intended to answer this doubt expressed by the Mu‘tazilah and held that he could not accept that "the perception through the eye" is the general vision. For him this is a particular aspect of vision. It is that which happens in a manner in which the seen becomes bracketed by limitations and boundaries.

Therefore, the perception which is denied in this verse is more particular than "the vision". And the denial of the particular does not necessitate the denial of the universal. Consequently, God can be seen without His taking any qualities which are taken into account in the visibility of the physical things and without being limited with limitations of physical things.

To illustrate his point Imām al-Juwaynī provides this understanding. The servant will be perplexed in respect of His Greatness and Mightiness so that he will not know his name and will not sense those creatures around him, because the intellect will become unable here to understand and all things will become nothing by the side of the Greatness of God.53

Imām al-Juwaynī proceeds to prove the vision of God by mentioning the request of Moses for a vision: "O my Lord, make me see, let me look unto Thee".54 He argues that the vision of God is an intellectually possible thing, because if it were impossible, Moses' request would be ignorant and worthless. Moreover the prophets are far removed from any such defect especially about their knowledge of God. And Moses would know better than most what is impossible and possible in relation to Him. So Moses cannot have asked his God that which was impossible; hence the vision is possible.55

4.4.3.1 Vision of God according to Imām al-Ghazālī

In discussing the vision of God Imām al-Ghazālī follows exactly his master's way to prove the

53Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 169.
54The Qurʾān, 7:143.
55Al-Juwaynī, 'Aqīdah, p. 49.
vision of God in two ways, the first based on rational argument and the second based on traditional argument.

Following on Imām al-Juwaynī, Imām al-Ghazālī refutes the Mu‘tazilah’s claim that it is impossible to see God, because their argument runs if He can be seen, He would need a location and all that needs a location must be either accident or substance, and this is absurd in the case of God.

To answer this claim, Imām al-Ghazālī held that the eye is only an organ, and has no other purpose than to be the location for the forms of the visible things. If it were the essence of vision, then whenever a form occupied the eye completely the whole of vision would be fulfilled.

Again, if we know something with our heart or head, we can say, "we know with our heart and head," and if we know anything through our heart or head or eye we can also say, "we see with our heart or head or eye." Thus the eye is not identical with vision. Vision, therefore, is an abstraction independent of either organ or object of vision.56

In the second point, Imām al-Ghazālī defines vision as part of perception (idrāk) which impresses

56Al-Ghazālī, Igtiṣād, p. 44.
upon the mind the form of visible things more clearly than does imagination (at-takhayyul).\textsuperscript{57}

In other words, the forms which we derive from the vision are clearer and more perfect than those which we derive from imagination. Vision is therefore, a degree of perception and it follows that there are things which we can perceive but cannot imagine; such are the essence and the attributes of God.

Concerning the statement of proof from the second standpoint, that is from traditional, to show that God can be seen in the next world, Imām al-Ghazālī exactly quotes the same verse and gives the same explanation as did his master when he held that Moses requested a vision, saying, "0 my Lord, make me see, let me look unto Thee".\textsuperscript{58} This verse is strong evidence that it is possible for God to be seen.

If it were not possible to see God, this request of Moses would seem like ignorance on his part as to what is permissible and not permissible in regard to the essence of God, or it would have been some sort of foolishness, or trifling, or a request for the impossible; and these defects cannot be acceptable for the prophet.

\textsuperscript{57}Ibid., p. 45.
\textsuperscript{58}The Qur'ān, 7:143.
Imâm al-Ghazâlî examined and refuted the arguments by which the Muʿtazilah sought to nullify the implication of Moses' pleas. Thus he makes out that God's answer to Moses, "You shall not see Me,"\(^ {59}\) and again the verse, "Sight cannot see Him, "\(^ {60}\) refer only to natural vision as known in this life. It is quite clear from a close scrutiny of both views that Imâm al-Ghazâlî has leaned heavily on his predecessor on this subject.

However, Imâm al-Ghazâlî still felt the insufficiency of his definition of vision, and he finally revealed his şûfî inclination when he said of the vision of God that this experience may be described by any convenient term such as meeting or seeing God, the actual word used being immaterial.\(^ {61}\)

Imâm al-Ghazâlî, seems to have waded deeper than Imâm al-Juwaynî into an investigation of vision and finding the rational possibilities not entirely satisfactory, introduced a şûfî bias into his explanation.

\(^ {59}\)Ibid.  
\(^ {60}\)Ibid.  
\(^ {61}\)Al-Ghazâlî, Iḥyā', vol. 1, p. 90.
As already suggested at various points in this section, generally speaking, Imām al-Ghazālī's method is more organized and systematic than that of Imām al-Juwaynī. He presents the subject in a way in which the reader can understand what sifāt Allah (the attributes of God) are. The material is dealt with systematically and not in the scattered, disordered way in which it is treated in Imām al-Juwaynī's writings.
CHAPTER FIVE

The Question of Human Actions and Free Will

Theologians have differences of opinion concerning human acts; some of them assert that a human being is the creator of his own actions and this is due to the reward or punishment which God promised. Some of them hold that a human being is under a compulsion in all his actions whether they are intentional or not, and he is like a feather hung up in the air being twisted and turned by the winds as they like.

Some of them maintain that a human being has a responsibility in the initiation of his voluntary actions in the aspect of acquisition (kasb), by virtue of the fact that he has been addressed with the sharī'ah. All of the theologians were unified in the opinion that the necessary acts of a human being are created by God. However, they differed in their opinions in respect of human free action. The question arises whether these actions are created by God or the individual person himself.

Before we discuss the views of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī on this issue, it is necessary to present the views of theologians such as
the Jabriyyah, the Mu'tazilah, and the Ahl al-Sunnah regarding the analysis of human action.

5.1 The analysis of human action according to the Jabriyyah

According to the Jabriyyah\(^1\) God created everything and a human being does not have power over anything, nor can he be said to have a capacity to act. A person is absolutely determined in his deeds. He has neither power, nor will, nor choice. God creates deeds in humans just as He produces actions in all inanimate objects, and the possibility of action is only metaphorical in human beings, as it is with inanimate objects.

There is no distinction between human beings and inanimate objects except in outward appearance only. A person seems outwardly to have choices in his action, but in fact, he is compelled by God in the same manner as are the inanimate objects.

\(^1\)This group was founded by Yahm b. Šafwān (d.128/745) in the days of the Umayyad Caliphate. They were called after "Jabr" (compulsion) because of their doctrine which denies that a deed is in reality to be attributed to a human agent, and ascribes it to God. See Shahrastānī, Milal, vol. 1, p. 112.
The Jabriyyah deny human free action and attribute it only to God. All human actions are necessary acts over which people do not have power or choice. They claim that human action is merely a disguise or cover for divine action. They believe that action resides only in the eternal power which cannot be associated with a created power, which is what human beings are.

Therefore, it is God's will whether He wants to blame and punish His creatures, whether to retain them in Hell or reward them with Heaven without looking at their previous actions, because all actions belong in God's power.²

Al-Baghdādī explained the Jabriyyah's view concerning human action and held that they believed that a human being has no acts in reality except as ascribed by God alone, and a person has the acts ascribed to him only by way of metaphor. This is similar to saying that the sun sets, that the wind circulates.³

²Al-Taftāzānī, Sharḥ al-‘Agā'īd al-Nasafiyyah, Cairo, 1939, p. 353.
³-'Abd al-Jabbār, Khamsah, p. 324.
The Jabriyyah believed that a human being has no volition whatsoever in his action. Therefore, he is under compulsion esoterically and exoterically because the occurrence of the action has been inevitably in the knowledge of God.

5.2 The analysis of human action according to the Mu'tazilah

According to the Mu'tazilah a human being creates his own voluntary actions, which means that a person is endowed by God with the power to act freely. This, with the agreement of punishment, reward, promise and threat by God, shows that a human being is responsible for his own actions.

Here the Mu'tazilah reject the views of the Jabriyyah who claim that all human actions are created by God and not by human volition. Thus the Mu'tazilah hold that whoever says that God is responsible for human action makes a big mistake, because this action is related to human beings only and it is not right to attribute it to the essence of God. It is impossible or

4 'Abd al-Jabbār, Mughnī, vol. 8, p. 3.
illogical that one thing should be the object of power of two possessors of that power.

They believe that human actions are created by a human being himself and are the product of his own free will. That power with which a person is endowed by God cannot be taken away from him even by God; the implication being that for God to deprive a human being of the power to act with which He Himself has endowed him is an impossibility, because God does not act unjustly or deceitfully.

It would be unjust on the part of God if He were to decide in advance the fate of every human in the hereafter and to ordain that one will be saved and other damned, without either having merited this by his own actions.

The Mu‘tazilah hold that a human being is free to choose his own future, whether to believe or not to believe, or to follow the law or disavow it. God does not determine faith or disbelief in human beings, because if He were to do this He would be unjust to His creatures.

The voluntary human act to them is produced by human desire and power and a person has control over his acts. This can be seen through one who has the power to do a thing, and who can equally do it well or
not do it. In other words, every power is equally the power of an act and of its opposite.

Then they give these examples when someone is asked to stand up, he could respond by obeying or not obliging. Similarly, even when hungry, someone could decide to eat or not eat when offered food. All these show that the notion of power is linked to that of human free choice or human volition.

They hold that the act which is produced by a human being is a reality and not metaphysical. They reject the views of the Jabriyyah who claim that all human actions are created by God. The Muʿtazilah clearly deny this view with their statement: "if we are asked, ‘do you ascribe to a human being production of his act as a reality?,’ we would say to them ‘yes’." The Muʿtazilah maintain that physical actions and sensations such as movement, work, pain and voice are all within human ability and a person controls them completely as he does his mental ability such as thinking, willing, and hearing confidence.

---

5Ibid., vol. 7, p. 48., and vol. 8, p. 16.
6ʿAbd al-Jabbār, Khamsah, pp. 336-337.
8Ibid., vol. 9, p. 13.
Al-Baghdādī has explained the views of the Muʿtazilah concerning human action where he ascribes to them the view that God is not the creator of the acquisitions (aksāb) of humans, or the action of animals. It is a human being who determines his own acquisitions (aksāb). 9

Al-Shahrastānī has also explained the view of the Muʿtazilah when he said: "the Muʿtazilah believe that a human being creates his action, his goodness and wickedness; his nobleness and baseness belong to a human being's acquisitions (aksāb) and he is deserving of what he has done in terms of reward or punishment in the next world. God is exempt from any evil act and injustice because if He created these He would be unjust." 10

The Muʿtazilah used the following verses of the Qurʾān to support their claim that a person has the attributes of creating his deeds.

"And you invent falsehood" 11

"Is there a creator, other than God" 12

11 The Qurʾān, 29:17.
12 Ibid., 35:3.
"Is then He who creates like one that creates not"\textsuperscript{13}

"And God the best of creators is blessed"\textsuperscript{14}

They claim that these verses show that the human creates his own destiny. The text cannot be interpreted with another meaning (\textit{`ibārah}) but should be interpreted correctly. This explains that a human being has the power to create according to his ability.

Then they explain the secret of using the word "Creator" (\textit{khalīq}) as a reference to God and not to humans. It is just for the recognition of the might of God that the word "rabb" is used to name to God. But this does not mean that this word cannot be used for other than God. The reason of using this word for God is to show His greatness and power. According to them the meaning of the word "creation" (\textit{khalq}) is an action of production by one who has power and a human being has power to do an action such as the act of movement and of acquisition (\textit{kasb}). Though God created the initial necessary conditions, human beings are responsible for their own actions. \textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., 16:17.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., 23:14.

\textsuperscript{15}\textsuperscript{15}`Abd al-Jabbār, \textit{Mughnī}, vol. 8, p. 283.
Therefore, the Muʿtazilah believe that every action produced by a human being is created by himself, but the degree of creation is not at the same level of God's creation.

Yaḥyā b. Ḥusayn had explained the attribute of creation by human beings by comparing it with the attribute of creation by God. He gives the example of God creating human bodily instruments such as legs to work, but it is the human being who uses them for work; ears to hear, and the human being who uses them for hearing; He creates a nose to smell and eyes to see. Everything that a human being gains from these instruments come from human action not from divine intervention. God created all these instruments in the human body and it is human responsibility to use them according to humans' own desires. 16

5.3 The analysis of human action according to Ahl al-Sunnah

It is clear from the previous discussion that the Jabriyyah believe that God created all human actions and a person does not have any power or choice

over his own action. The Mu'tazilah, however, maintain that a human being creates his own free action with the power which God endowed upon him and God does not direct human free action.

The Ash'ariyyah and Maturidiyyah are the followers of Ahl al-Sunnah, their views are between those of the Jabriyyah and the Mu'tazilah. They oppose the views of the Jabriyyah who do not differentiate between the necessary actions and free actions. They also reject the views of the Mu'tazilah who link human action with the attribute of creation and who do not know the reality of the creation of action. They argue that if we ask a human being about the movement and power he produces when he moves his hand, he could not give an adequate answer.

The Ahl al-Sunnah argue that to move the hands needs a perfect action, this kind of action can only be done by one who has the attribute of perfection who can control all kinds of actions, and who knows everything about the movements. A human being does not know all about the movement of his hands. Therefore, he is not the ultimate creator of his own movement.

They maintain that all human actions done with intention (i.e. free actions) are initiated by both God and humans in the sense that God initiates the actions in the aspect of creation (khalq) and a human
being initiates the actions in the aspect of acquisition (kasb).

They then divide action into three forms: the first creation of the action, second: the power to implement the action, and third: the intention.

God perfected human action and endowed a person with the secondary power and with this, God completed His actions on humans. However, a human being has only the possibility of intention of action, not the initial forming of the possibility. They called God's action here that of a creator and initiator while human action is acquisition (kasb).

What the Ahl al-Sunnah mean here is that God created human action and accidental power and it is human responsibility to use this action whether to do good or evil and it is upon one's own, initiative to gain reward or punishment. Here they called the human role in his own action the acquisition (kasb) in accordance to the Qur'anic verse:

"Yet is each individual in pledge for his deeds".18

17Al-Shahrastānī, Nihāyat, pp. 74-75.
18The Qur'ān, 52:21.
They base this view on the clear distinction between human free action and action in inanimate objects, because if one looks at an inanimate object one will notice that it does not have choice and acquisition over its action.

They also base this view on the differences between the movement in the act of seizing a thing and the movement in the act of the trembling of agedness. They believe that God is the creator of the actions but a human being has an acquisition in the intentional ones, and that any one thing can come under two distinct powers in two different aspects.

Therefore, the intentional human action will come under the power of God in its aspect of being created and under human power in the aspect of being wrought.

Al-Ash'arī, one of the Ahl al-Sunnah, maintains that the necessary movements and free actions are created by God but they are distinguished in the aspect of acquisition.19 He illustrates the necessary movements as the trembling from palsy and the shivering from fever, and the free actions by such movements as going, approaching and receding.

19Al-Juwaynī, Lumaq, p. 77.
Here al-Ash'arī claims that all human actions are created by God and acquisition is by human beings. So what is the definition of acquisition to al-Ash'arī and his followers?.

If al-Ash'arī claims that all human actions are created by God, so what is the human role in these actions? In answer to this question, he explains that the human being has acquisition and choice, but the acquisition is dependent on the power and intention of action by the human being. This action is created by God, because human beings do not have power to create their own action. God created in a person the accidental power to enable him to fulfill his intention and acquisition.20

Here it seem to us that the views of al-Ash'arī are that a human being has no effect or control whatsoever in his action. Therefore, he is under compulsion esoterically and has choice exoterically. If it is claimed that there is no meaning in the human possessing exoteric choice if he is esoterically under compulsion, the occurrence of the action has been inevitably in the knowledge of God because He has created in the human the power to do that action.

There is only a slight difference between the views of the al-Ash'arî and the Jabriyyah on the human action. This can be seen in al-Ash'arî's views when he holds that a human being has the agency of initiation in voluntary actions in the aspect of acquisition but a human being is neither under perfect compulsion nor does he have perfect freedom of choice.

This is a clear refutation of the stand taken by the Jabriyyah that a person is under compulsion and has no choice at all in the initiation of all his actions, irrespective of whether voluntary or involuntary.

Here what is meant by choice is the mastery over action and abstinence. This mastery is certainly different from acquisition except that it clings to it. Therefore, whoever establishes "acquisition" establishes the exoteric choice and whoever denies "acquisition" denies the exoteric choice, as do the Jabriyyah. They hold that the human is like a feather hung in the air, being turned about by the winds, left and right.

In fact, the view of al-Ash'arî on God who simultaneously creates in humans the power to acquire as well as the act of acquiring is not very much different from the view of the Jabriyyah. Al-Ash'arî believes that a human being has no control over work
and action that has an influence upon existent things, and by this he means that both the act of acquiring and the object acquired are created by God.21

Here al-Ash‘arī seem to create a question intended to puzzle by using the word "acquisition" which still does not have clear definition. The theologians therefore, claim that al-Ash‘arī still could not solve the problem and deny the Jabriyyah. Due to this they called al-Ash‘arī the medial Jabriyyah.22

Ibn Taymiyyah also claims that al-Ash‘arī is completely the same as the Jabriyyah.23 This is because al-Ash‘arī claims that the acquisition goes with the action which is created by God and the human choice does not have any influence on the acquisition. Therefore, the acquisition is like the action which is created by God and the human does not deserve any reward or any punishment. Due to this Ibn al-Nadīm

22ʿAbbās Maḥmūd, al-Falsafah al-Qur'āniyyah, Cairo, n.d. p. 150.
23Ibn Taymiyyah, Minhāj al-Sunnah fī Naqḍ Kalām al-Shīʿah wa al-Qadariyyah, Cairo, 1321 A.H. vol. 1, p. 326.
claims that al-Ash’arī carries the Jabriyyah’s opinions.

Since God alone is the creator of the actions of humans irrespective of whether they are voluntary or involuntary and since they have no part, even in their intentional (voluntary) actions, except that of the aspect of acquisition, there arises the question: Then why should the humans be subjected to reward or punishment, as has been clearly stated in the Qur’ān, for they do not deserve any reward or any punishment?.

This question was answered by the Ash‘ariyyah who hold that if God rewards a human being it is purely by His Grace and if He punishes him it is purely by His Justice. Here what is meant by the term "Grace of God" is His grant on the basis of perfect choice that is not on the basis of anyone or anything imposing it as a duty on Him. Therefore, God’s actions are independent from human action.

The school of the Ash‘ariyyah therefore, holds that God rewards human purely by His Grace without it being tainted with anybody or anything making it a duty on Him or it becoming an essentiality.

---

24Ibn al-Nadīm, Fihrist, Cairo, 1929, p. 257.
After having discussed the views of the theologians on human action, we shall assess how Imām al-Juwaynī offered a solution to the difficulty in the Ash'ariyyah's views of this problem and how far Imām al-Ghazālī has been influenced by his master on this subject.

5.4 The analysis of human action according to Imām al-Juwaynī

In discussing human actions, Imām al-Juwaynī bases his method on intellectual premises and abstract reasoning. He opens his discussion with the broad yet complex statement: "All created things are created by the power (qudrah) of God, without any distinction between those with which human power is connected and those over which the Lord is alone in His power."25

Imām al-Juwaynī then explains that God created all events whether of good or evil by His will and according to His desire.26 To explain that God is the only one who brings things into existence, Imām al-Juwaynī goes on to analyze and compare these two types of actions. He attempts to show how God's creations show that He is knowledgable about every thing He

26 Al-Juwaynī, Luma'ī, p. 97.
created, while a human being does not have knowledge about his own action. This shows that human beings do not have the power to create their own actions.\textsuperscript{27}

He then provides a further explanation that such purposeful and well-directed actions denote the knowledge of their creator. But as the human being in that state would not be aware of the exact nature of the actions which he produces, it must be deduced that such actions as he then produces must be animated or created by the one who is aware of their nature, namely, God the Almighty.\textsuperscript{28}

Imām al-Juwaynī believes that all created thing must be governed and controlled by someone; if a human being created his own action, that would mean he governs and controls himself. This argument or line of reasoning equates God and human beings in their power. Imām al-Juwaynī does not agree with this association, because in his view the created power (i.e. the power of a human being) could not be equivalent to God's power.\textsuperscript{29}

This does not meant that a human being is under a compulsion in his action, but rather that he

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., pp. 106-107.

\textsuperscript{28}Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 175.

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., p. 189.
has power over his acquisition. This can be seen in the human knowledge of the distinction between the trembling of the hands and the intentional movement of the hands; that is to say, a human being knows this intuitively.

If in Imām al-Juwaynī's view, as has been seen, it is impossible that human beings should possess the exclusive power to produce actions which lie within the power of God, what, it may be asked, does Imām al-Juwaynī seek to establish by this argument? Does he intend to prove that the power of God operates by itself to produce the action, so that the power of human being would have no influence upon that action, or does he intend to prove that human beings are not solely responsible for the production of the action, but that the action is produced by the simultaneous operation of the two powers (i.e. the power of human beings and the power of God)? The first presumption is made likely by his definition of the meaning of "acquisition" (kasb).

Here Imām al-Juwaynī embarks on a discussion of the reality of "acquisition" (kasb). This concept was resorted to by the Jabriyyah who deny the power of the human being to create his actions, as a means of explaining the relationship between the universal and comprehensive pre-eternal power and the created power. The Muʿtazilah on the other hand sought to make a
subject capable of being commanded to do certain things and not to do other things and capable of being rewarded and punished in such a way that the human being was made accountable for all behavior and actions produced by him. If the actions of the human being were dependent on the power of God and not by the power of the human being concerned, then why should the individual be held responsible for his conduct? And how would the recompense and chastisement be just?.

To this the upright reply, according to Imām al-Juwaynī, that there is some kind of connection between the power of the human being and his actions, not in the sense that the actions are created or produced by the human being, for that is dependent only on the power of God, but in the sense that there is some kind of influence upon the action known as "the acquisition".

Imām al-Juwaynī proceeds to explain this acquisition and holds that it is impossible to attribute the difference between necessary human motion and human motion by choice simply to the one who apparently performs the motion, without the addition of some other thing, which he goes on to explain, is a "power" created within the apparent performer of the motion as something distinct from him.30

30Ibid., p.188.
Here Imam al-Juwaynī justifies the use of the term "power" by arguing as follow: "It is not a necessary condition for the connection which an attribute has with an object that the attribute should influence the object connected with it, for, in the case of knowledge, its connection with an object of knowledge is indisputable, even though it has no influence upon the object of knowledge, and by the same token, the human will, though connected with the act of man, has no influence upon the act". 31

What Imam al-Juwaynī means by the term "power" here is not in the sense of a power to acquire but in the sense of a power to will to acquire, and to will in relation to its object is analogous to knowledge in relation to its object.

Imām al-Juwaynī goes further to explain his teleological views. He holds that a human being knows within himself that he has power, but that, that power does not enable him to create independently, all by himself, the existence of something; a human being's action depends for its existence upon his power, which acts as its immediate cause; this power of a human being depends for its existence upon another cause,

31Ibid., p. 189.
which is one in a series of causes; this series of causes culminates in God, the uncaused cause.32

God, the uncaused cause, is the creator of the causes and the caused ones, by which is meant that God is the remote cause or creator of each caused cause in the series of which the immediate cause is its immediately preceding caused cause in the series; every caused cause in the series is to be considered as independent with respect to its being the cause of that which follows it, but it is to be considered as dependent with respect to its being caused by that which precedes it, whereas the creator is the Absolute Independent one (al-ghanī al-mutlaq).33

Shahrastānī commented on this view of Imām al-Juwaynī and holds that what Imām al-Juwaynī did was to take a principle from the metaphysical philosophers and dress it up in the garb of the kalām in order to avoid the utter folly of compulsion.34

Shahrastānī argues that the philosophic principle of causality drawn upon by Imām al-Juwaynī as an explanation of human action is not restricted by its original exponents to human action. It is applied by

33Ibid.
34Ibid.
them to every process of coming into being. The underlying meaning of this principle, he says, is the conception of an order of nature throughout which there is a concatenation of cause and effect. But such a conception of causality, he concludes, is not what is believed by Muslims.35

However, the views and interpretation of Imām al-Juwaynī are supported by many scholars such as Muḥammad ʿAbduh who argues that those who dismiss or deny the validity of Imām al-Juwaynī’s views fail to understand him.36

Imām al-Juwaynī expounds the reality of acquisition that it is only one manner of correlation and affinity between the power of the human being and his action, and that it does not create or originate the action.

From the above, we see that Imām al-Juwaynī was not in fact able to present us with a sufficiently clear or satisfactory exposition of the nature of acquisition, and that he was not able to explain its true purpose, which is the determination of a subject capable of religious responsibility.

36Muḥammad ʿAbdūh, Risālat al-Tawḥīd, Cairo, n.d. p. 70.
5.5 The analysis of human action according to Imām al-Ghazālī

In discussing human action, Imām al-Ghazālī does not produce any new theory. What he does is to reproduce the view of his teacher Imām al-Juwaynī.

Like Imām al-Juwaynī, Imām al-Ghazālī rejects the Muʿtazilah's views and disproves their claim that a human being is endowed by God with the power to act freely and of that power he cannot be deprived even by God Himself. To counter this, Imām al-Ghazālī reproduces Imām al-Juwaynī's questioning of how could the human being's movement be the creation of the human being, when he does not encompass the knowledge of the different constituent parts of the acquired movements and their numbers.37

Imām al-Ghazālī uses exactly the same argumentation as his master to prove that God is the creator of the human actions, as supported by the verse: "God is the creator of all things, and He is the guardian and disposer of all affairs".38

37Al-Ghazālī, Ḥyā', vol. 1, p. 111., see also al-Juwaynī, Irshād, pp. 175-176.
38The Qurʾān, 39:62.
explanation follows that God's power is perfect and unrestricted and human action is dependent upon the power of God and God alone is responsible for the creation of the human movements, though this does not exclude these from being objects of human power by way of acquisition (iktisāb). 39

Imām al-Ghazālī thereby defines the meaning of what he calls "acquisition". In his view, God created at once the power (qudrah) and the object of power (magdūr) and He created at once the choice (ikhtiyār) and the object of choice (mukhtār). 40

From Imām al-Ghazālī's subsequent statements it becomes clear that God creates movement in the hand of the human being without that movement itself being under the personal control of the individual. Thus God creates the power of the individual and likewise creates the object to be governed by the power of the individual; and God in this manner reserves unto Himself the exclusive power of creating the power of the human being and the object which is governed by that power of the human being.

Imām al-Ghazālī rejects the views of the Muʿtazilah that it was impossible to prove that one

39Al-Ghazālī, Ḥiyā', vol. 1, p. 111.
40Ibid.
object of power could belong to two powers (i.e. that one thing can at one and the same time be the product of two different powers). He then gives his view on this and holds that the right view is to correlate the two powers to the same action and to hold the view in favour of an originated thing being related to two powers of origination, 41 the original creation and the subsequent creation-in-use.

What remains then of the opposition view would be the improbability of the joint operation of the two powers upon the same action; but this becomes improbable only if the correlation of the two powers is in the same mode or deemed as equivalent. But if the two powers differ and the mode of their correlation also differs, then the operation of the two powers upon the same thing would not be impossible. 42

To prove the above Imām al-Ghazālä holds that the movement of voluntary shaking is different from the movement of the shaking with fright, in that the human being has to undertake the former but not the latter, and that the power of God attaches to every possible thing; that every originated thing is a possible thing; that the action of a human being is an originated thing; and that therefore, it is impossible that the

41Al-Ghazālä, Igtišād, p. 59.
42Ibid.
power of God should not attach to that thing. It may be noted that the same argument had been used by Imām al-Ghazālī's teacher, Imām al-Juwaynī in his refutation of the Muʿtazilah.

Imām al-Ghazālī anticipates the following objection; how could acquisition justify the description of a human act as an object of human power, when human acquisition itself is said to be created by God and as such quite evidently has no influence upon a human's actions? It will be recalled that the same objection to the theory of acquisition is mentioned by his master Imām al-Juwaynī.

His answer to this objection is similar to that provided by Imām al-Juwaynī, except for the change of Imām al-Juwaynī's analogy of human knowledge for the analogy of God's eternal power. Imām al-Juwaynī tried to show that just as human knowledge of something existent does not influence that existent, human power to will to acquire something does not have to influence that something acquired.

---

43Ibid., p. 60.
44Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, pp. 174-175.
45Al-Ghazālī, Iqtiṣād, p. 57.
46Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 189.
Imām al-Ghazālī similarly tries to show that just as God had from eternity the power to create the world, without the world having been created from eternity, that is to say, without there having been from eternity an object influenced by that power, so also human power to will to acquire something does not have to influence that something acquired. So much of Imām al-Ghazālī’s treatment of the problem of acquisition here is to be reproduce Imām al-Juwaynī’s views.

However, Imām al-Ghazālī sometimes differs slightly from his master by displaying his ṣūfī view; this can be seen in his conception of human actions when he refers to all the human actions as remaining dependent upon God’s power. Everything is due to the creation of God, for the choice itself is also due to the creation of God and a human being is forced into the choice which he makes.47

His explanation of this point is exemplified by a detailed analysis of the process of eating. This process is shown by him to involve a number of things created by God, of which he mentions the following: hands by which human being can handle food; the food; a feeling of hunger; a knowledge that food will appease the hunger; a sense of precautionary inquiry as to

47Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā’, vol. 4, p. 5.
whether the food is fit for eating; a knowledge that
the food in question is fit for eating; the decision
(injizām) of the will (irādah) to take the food; the
movement of the hand in the direction of the food. It
is the "decision of the will," he says, that is called
"choice" (ikhtiyār) and this like all the other steps
in the process of eating is created by God.48

From this conception of continuous creation
Imām al-Ghazālī clearly shows that human choice is not
created by a human being himself but it is created by
God through His custom (‘ādhah) who creates things
continuously in the same order of succession. The human
is only the abode or substratum for this procedure.

Then, after stating that this manner of the
succession of continuously created things is according
to the fixed and immutable order predetermined by God's
generosity and His eternal power, he goes on to show
that human actions are subject to the same procedure of
divine ordainment and divine decree that govern all the
so-called natural events in the world.49 He supports
this view with the verse of the Qur'ān:

"Verily, all things have We created
in proportion and measure".50

48Ibid., p. 6.
49Ibid.
50The Qur'ān, 54:49.
Imām al-Ghazālī then illustrates this by showing how the human act of writing is created by God, by His creating in the human being who has a desire to write "four things", namely, 1) by His creating in the soul of the human being a knowledge (‘ilm) of that toward which he has a desire, a knowledge called comprehension (idrāk) and cognition (ma‘rifah); 2) by His creating, again in the soul of the human being a will (irādah), that is, a strong and decisive inclination (mayl qawī jāzim) called intention (qasād); 3) by His creating in the hand of the human being an appropriate attribute called power (qudrah), that is to say, a power to write; and 4) by His creating, again, in the hand of the human being a movement (harakah), that is to say, the act of writing.51

With the implication that, as he has said before, these "four things" are not each successively produced as an effect by that which precedes it as its cause but rather that, in the human being as the abode, each of these "four things" follows the one preceding it as something conditioned follows that which precedes it as a condition. Such an explanation by Imām al-Ghazālī is not to be found in the relevant section of Imām al-Juwaynī.

51Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā’, vol. 4, p. 6.
However, it is quite clear from a close scrutiny of both works that Imām al-Ghazālī was influenced heavily by his predecessor in this section. This can be seen in Imām al-Ghazālī's answer to the question of how a human being could be described as simultaneously acting both under compulsion and with choice.\textsuperscript{52}

In answer to this question, Imām al-Ghazālī divides human action in three types: 1) action of choice, 2) volitional action; 3) natural action.\textsuperscript{53}

This threefold division of human actions, despite the difference of terminology in the description of the second and third types, is the same as the threefold division used by Imām al-Ghazālī's own teacher Imām al-Juwaynī. The first type, which Imām al-Ghazālī describes as "action of choice" and illustrates by the act of writing, is exactly like the first type in Imām al-Juwaynī, who illustrates it by the act of going and coming and by that of intentional movement.\textsuperscript{54}

The second type, which he describes as "volitional", a term which, he uses in the sense of "instinctive", corresponds to what which is described

\textsuperscript{52}Ibid., p. 254.
\textsuperscript{53}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{54}Al-Juwaynī, \textit{Irshād}, p. 195.
by Imām al-Juwaynī as "necessary" and is illustrated by the movements of trembling and shivering.55

The third type, which he describes as "natural", a term which quite evidently he uses here loosely in the sense of "customary", corresponds to what Imām al-Juwaynī refer to as generated effects, that is an action produced by a human being in something outside his own body.56

The doctrine of Imām al-Ghazālī on the subject of human action can on the whole be regarded as a true reflection or echo of the doctrine of Imām al-Juwaynī on this subject, from the point of view of the elements, proofs, manner of treatment and even of the examples employed for the purpose of expounding the doctrine.

55Ibid., p. 196.
56Ibid. p. 178.
CHAPTER SIX

The Views of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī on Prophethood and Messengership

Before we discuss the views of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī on this subject it is necessary to define the Islamic meanings of prophet and messenger.

6.1 The meanings of prophet and messenger

The Arabic for 'prophet' is the word nabīy and the root of the word nabīy with a hamza is naba', meaning information or announcement. Without a hamza the word is nabīy, meaning a prophet.1

A messenger (rasūl) means one who is sent a divine revelation (waḥy) from God. All the messengers are prophets, though not all the prophets are messengers.2 This is also the view of early

---

1 Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān al-‘Arab, Cairo, 1300 A.H. vol. 2, p. 156
Christianity.  

The difference between a messenger and a prophet is that the former was sent with a revealed law (sharī'ah) and a book special to him, whereas the latter was only to preach and utter warnings even though he may receive some revelations.  

According to `Abd al-Jabbār, there is no difference between the terms prophet and messenger. Similarly al-Ijī deals with these two words as synonymous because for him both of them are categories of the highest position given by God to his servant.  

In the Qur'ān the term prophet (nabīy) is only applied to men connected with the Judeo-Christian tradition, for the prophet Muḥammad was regarded as continuing and reforming that tradition.  

Theologians agree that prophecy is God's bringing into existence in a man a directed determination (ḥukm inshā'ī) pertaining to himself. An  

---

4Ibid.  
5`Abd al-Jabbār, Khamsah, p. 568.  
6Ijī, Mawāqif, p. 545.  
instance would be the Qur'ānic verse, "Recite in the name of your Lord". This was an enchargement (taklīf) pertaining to himself (i.e. prophet Muhammad) at that time, and was therefore, a prophecy.

However, when the verse declares "Rise and warn" , this is an instance of messengership (risāla), since this charge is related to others. Thus a prophet is charged with what pertains to himself, whereas a messenger is charged with that and with communicating to others. Therefore, a messenger is more particular than a prophet.

6.2 The Sending of Messengers

It is intellectually possible or rationally believable of God to have sent all the messengers, from Adam to Muḥammad. This doctrinal point is opposed to that of those who hold that it was intellectually essential and to that of those who hold that it was intellectually absurd.

Among those who hold that it was intellectually essential were the Muʿtazilites and a

---

8The Qurʾān, 9: 61.
9Ibid., 74: 2.
certain group of philosophers. These two groups agreed on the intellectual essentiality, but the philosophers added that it was a duty on God to send the messengers. The basis of the opinion shared by the Mu'tazilah was their belief of the obligation of God to care for the good of His servants.

They claim that the order which leads to general goodness in human life in this world and in the hereafter will not be perfect except by the sending of the messengers. And thus it is God's duty to care for people.

Those who hold that it was intellectually absurd for God to send messengers were the Barāhīm (from the Barāhīm of Somnat, a historical temple city of the Barāhīmah in the Kachch peninsula of India). They thought that the sending of messengers is a vain act on the part of God and it is not an act fit for a wise God because the presence of intellect in man renders it unnecessary. A man can do an action if it is good in the eyes of his intellect without a messenger bringing him a command and he can abstain from an action if it is bad in the eyes of his intellect though a messenger does not bring any prohibition. If it is neither good nor bad in the eyes of his intellect he

11Al-Shahrastānī, Nihāyat, p. 417.
will do it if he needs it and he will not do it if he
does not need it. This logic, according to the
Sumanites, renders messengers unnecessary and not
likely to be God's function.

6.3 The views of Imām al-Juwaynī on the notion of
Messenger

Imām al-Juwaynī begins his discussion on the
idea of a messenger by pointing out the specious
argument of the Barāhīm who claim that it is impossible
for God to send the messengers. He outlined the points
at issue and the three arguments he proffers against
the Barāhīm are as follows:

First: The Barāhīm claim that if the sending
of the messengers is to disregard the intellect, then
sending them serves no purposes and is useless.
Moreover if the sending of the messengers is contrary
to logic, it should be rejected because a thing can
only be accepted after the intellect proves it.13

Imām al-Juwaynī denies this view and holds
that the sending of messengers is possible for God. He
maintains that the sending of the messenger does not
provide any contradiction to the intellectual evidences
especially when the proof is derived only from

13Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 257.
intellectual evidence. We cannot claim that other than this kind of evidence is useless; this would be a circular argument and hence invalid. Furthermore before God sends the messengers, He knows that there will be a fine combination between the messengers and the intellectual reasoning and thinking people would be pleased by the sending of the messengers. Therefore, the claim made by the Barähim is invalid.14

Imām al-Juwaynī then gives an analogy of men’s need for messengers. This is likened to a patient’s need of a doctor. When he asks the doctor what kind of medicine he needs to cure his disease, the patient knows that medication in general can cure his illness but he does not know what specific medication he needs. In this case he needs a doctor to show him the suitable medication to cure him. The same applies to human beings. Before God’s sending of the messengers, human beings do not know the purpose of their creation and their task in this world. They need guidance from messengers of God to explain these to them.15

Reason alone would been an insufficient guide and this can be shown by a comparison. Reason may not always discern unhealthy or poisoned food. However, if

14Ibid., p. 258.
15Ibid.
reason was told that certain foods are unhealthy it will avoid them and choose the wholesome ones. 16

Second: The Barāhīm claim that reason would have difficulty in accepting that the prophet has attributes against the customary mode of the occurrence of things (i.e. against the law of nature), such as the ability to turn silver to gold. They could not believe that the prophet could know hidden and secret matters. 17

Imām al-Juwaynī answers this claim by holding that this group seems to deny the messenger from the beginning because they seem to view all things not usually natural as being false. He then goes to explain that we naturally know that it is not in the power of human beings to return life to bones after they are destroyed, to cure the leper or to cause a stick to become alive, and this is in order to show the falsehood of the magician. These special attributes were only given to the messenger to prove that he is truly God’s messenger. 18 The point Imām al-Juwaynī is making is that messengers are able to transcend what is usually considered natural or possible, they break the limitations of nature.

16Ibid.

17Ibid., p. 263.

18Ibid., p. 264.
Third: The Barāḥim claim that if the messenger can distinguish between miracle, magic and treachery, one needs to ask what would be the source of this discerning ability. For the Barāḥim it seems that God wants to lead us astray and entrap us into believing in the prophet because all his words promise benefit. God seems want to bring us to destruction and trap us with His prophet's words, because it is not impossible for God to do that.19

To oppose this view Imām al-Juwaynī holds that the miracles which appear coming from the one who claims to be a messenger are intended as an affirmation of truthfulness.20

To illustrate his point, he provides this comparison. The king sits on his throne and there is a big assembly of people present who are not allowed to speak to the king even though they have important matters to ask. Then the claimant, who is a commoner, stands before the assembly and says: "0, people, you know that the king will not speak and meet all of you face to face. I as his messenger will bear with you in your problem and this action I take with the pleasure of the king. For the sign of the truth of my claim the

19Al-Ghazālī, Iḥtiṣād, p. 122.
20Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 262.
king will make a movement if I ask him for it."21

Then he says: "O, king, if I am truthful in
my claim to your messengership, please make a movement
against your custom by standing up and sitting down", and the king performs that movement immediately. Then
it will be known, certainly by means of the context of
the condition, that the king through his action of
moving intended to verify the truthfulness of the
claimant, and he substituted the verbal verification
with a movement which is against his normal custom. And
none from the assembly doubts that the matter is in
accordance with the claim of the claimant.22

This is similar to the instance when the
prophet said: "O, people, you know that to return life
to a dead person or cause a stick to become alive is
God's attribute. O, Lord, If I am truly your prophet,
cause this stick to be alive, so I can turn it when I
need it." This was to show and confirm that the prophet
is truly the messenger of God and so accepted by
reason.23

22Ibid.
23Ibid.
6.4 The views of Imâm al-Ghazâlî on the notion of messenger

Like his master, Imâm al-Ghazâlî holds that the sending of messengers is possible for God though not compulsory, as claimed by the Mu'ūtazilah, nor impossible as claimed by the Barâhim.

Imâm al-Ghazâlî began his discussion on the messengers in his book *al-Ightîşād fî al-I'tiqād* in exactly the same way as did his teacher Imâm al-Juwaynî by pointing out the arguments of the Barâhim and opposing them systematically by using the same argument of his master, not only in the meaning but also in his method and words.

The first argument of the Barâhim is their claim that if the sending of the messenger by God is to perform what is already within human reason, that sending of the messenger is useless and thus impossible for God. Moreover if the sending is found to be contrary to reason, it is impossible to accept or believe.24

In rejecting this claim Imâm al-Ghazâlî uses exactly the same argument as his master when he argues that the prophet Muḥammad rejects the limited use of

reason because reason alone does not guide one to be useful or prevent harm by wrongful action, speech or behaviour; reason alone cannot lead one to faith. Nor does reason enable one to differentiate between hardship and happiness. However, and this is the main argument, reason can be educated to lead to greater understanding, as illustrated by the patient benefiting from the doctor's information about illness and medicine. The point is that messengers, far from being useless, provide this essential extra guidance.25

The second argument is it is impossible for God to send a messenger because it would be impossible for people to know the truth of the sending. If a servant of God respects and believes in God, God will speak to him directly without the need of a messenger. If the servant does not revere God, the way to show his "truth" would be by practising against the law of nature. There is no distinction between what he does with magic and wondrous things; all of them would be against the law of nature to those who do not know them.26

If we look at Imām al-Ghazālī's rejection of this claim we would find that it is not different to

25Ibid., p. 123.
26Ibid., p. 122.
his master's view in rejecting this claim. Imām al-
Ghazālī holds that this claim does not differentiate
between miracle, magic and fantasy. No one of
intelligence would agree that the magician can return
life to a dead person; turn a stick into a snake; split
the moon; or cleave the sea and cure the leper.

If they claim that magic can do whatever God
does, this claim is impossible because if we look at
human attributes and abilities we would notice that the
messenger is not a magician, and his miracles cannot be
 gained by magic. These miracles are given by God to His
messenger.27

The third argument is that the Barāhim claim
that one cannot know how the messenger differentiates
between miracles and magic; what would be the source of
his claim of truth. They claim that God intended to
destroy them with belief in the prophet’s words and
this word only bring them to disaster and lead them
astray.28

To oppose this claim Imām al-Ghazālī does not
produce any new arguments, he reemphasizes his master’s
views when he presented this illustration of a king
imposing on his subjects to obey his messenger, a

27 Ibid., p. 123.
28 Ibid., p. 122.
soldier, in dividing their wealth. The doubting people demanded that the soldier prove that he was the king's messenger. The king meanwhile remained silent though he was present. The messenger then said: "O, king, if I am truly your messenger, please confirm this by standing up from your throne three times, which is not your usual custom." Then the king immediately stood up thrice. With this evidence none of the people could deny the truth of the messenger's claim. 29

In order to reject the views of those who denied the sending of the messengers it seem to us that both of the Imāms had to differentiate between miracles, marvels and magic. In order to have clear understanding of them it is necessary to discuss more widely what distinguishes miracles, marvels and magic.

6.5 Miracles (mu'jīzāt)

The word for miracle (mu'jīza) has been derived from the word 'ajz (disability). 30 It literally means: a thing which renders someone unable. According to the theological terminology it is an event happening against the customary mode of occurrence (i.e. law of nature), in the hands of the claimant to prophethood or messengership, in the face of a challenge by his

---

29Ibid., p. 124.

30Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 260.
disapprovers, in a way rendering the disapprovers unable to do likewise.

Al-Ijī gives a complete definition of the term miracle (muʾjīza): it is a means to prove the sincerity of him who claims to be the messenger of God.31

The reality of a miracle (muʾjīza) is an act of God which is not something from eternity. God is the only one who has power over a miracle (muʾjīza) and a human being does not have power over it. However, some of the Ashʿariyyah32 and most of the Muʿtazilah divide the miracle (muʾjīza) into two forms.

In the first form God alone has power over the miracle (muʾjīza) and a human being does not have the same power, such as the creation of bodies. The second form includes the power of a human being, but this power could not be at the same level of that of God, such as the example of the eloquence of the Qurʾān. People can create eloquence but not in the same category as that of the Qurʾān. A miracle

31Al-Ijī, Mawāqīf, p. 547.
32Al-Bāqillānī, al-Bayān ʿan al-Farq bayn al-Muʾjīza wa al-Karāmāt, Beirut, 1377 A.H. pp. 8-14,
     -Al-Baghdādī, Uṣūl, p. 170,
     -Al-Ijī, Mawāqīf, p. 547.
(mu'jiza) can only exist in this world because everything that is against the nature of law in the hereafter will not be considered as miraculous (mu'jiza).

Imām al-Juwaynī posited six conditions for an event to be classed as a miracle (mu'jiza). These are:

First: it must be an act of God and it cannot be considered as an eternal attribute because if the miracle (mu'jiza) is an eternal attribute, the existent of God will be considered a miracle (mu'jiza). 33

Second: it should be against the customary mode of the occurrence of things (i.e. against the law of nature). 34 Therefore, if a claimant to prophethood says the sign of his truthfulness in his claim is to raise the sun from where it rises and to set it where it sets, this cannot be accepted, because, it is not against the customary mode of the occurrence of things.

Third: the event should happen in the hands of a claimant to prophethood or messengership. 35 Therefore, that which takes place though the hands of a person known for his piety and which is known as "the

---

33Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 261.
34Ibid., p. 262.
marvel of a saint" (karāma) should be excluded. And that which occurs through the hands of an ordinary man in order to save him from his difficulties and which is known as "ma'ūna " (succour) should also be excluded.

Fourth: it should accompany the claim to prophethood or messengership in reality, (i.e. together with his claim) or while he still maintains his claim. Therefore, that which occurred to such a claimant before he was made a prophet or messenger by way of preparation for it, and which is known as al-irhās (laying of foundation), such as the shading of the cloud for the prophet before he was even commissioned with prophethood, should also be excluded.

Fifth: it should be in agreement with his claim. Therefore, that which is in disagreement with his claim should be excluded.

Sixth: it should not falsify his claim. Therefore, that which falsifies his claim should be excluded. For example, if he says: "The sign of the truthfulness of my claim is the speech of my fingers" and then the fingers spoke that he is liar, this cannot be taken as a miracle (mu'jiza).

36Ibid.
37Ibid., p. 265.
38Ibid.
6.6 Marvels *(karāmāt)*

A marvel *(karāma)* means a thing or event occurring against the customary law (i.e. the law of nature) through the hands of a pious servant of God known as a saint *(walī)* who is aware of God and his attributes, is dedicated to obedience, turns away from disobedience, and avoids being absorbed by material pleasures and cravings.

A marvel *(karāma)* differs from a miracle *(mu`jīza)* although each involves a "breaking of the natural order of things". However, the miracle *(mu`jīza)* occurs in the hands of prophet preceeded by a "proclamation" *(da`wa)* and a challenge to others to perform likewise, thereby rendering them unable to produce the like. All of this is in order to prove the veracity of the claim to prophethood and the veracity of the attribution of the message brought from God.

Marvels *(karāmāt)* occur in the hands of a saint *(walī)* as a personal favour. It should be kept secret, and is in no way the sign of a prophetic mission. It is as a mark of respect for him so that he is held as a model for other people to follow in his

---

39 E.I., 6, p. 615.
40 Ibid.
deeds of piety and self purification through the cultivation of good manners, conducts and virtues.

Therefore, it should not be taken to mean that such a person may be free from all sins, because he is not impeccable (ma'ṣūm) like the prophets who are impeccable from infidelity and sins before and after the mission.41

Most Muslims agree that it is possible for marvels (karāmāt) to appear on the part of saints (awliyā').42 However, the Muʿtazilites denied the intellectual possibility of karāmāt to the awliyā'. They based their claim on the argument that if karāmāt were to occur through the hands of the awliyā', that will create a confusion as to who is a prophet and who is a waJī, and the number of such occurrences would become so great that they would not be considered miracles or supernatural happenings any more. According to Imām al-Juwaynī, al-Isfarāʾinī is close to this position.43

The scholars have inferred the possibility of karāmāt to the awliyā' from the fact that if one supposes its occurrence it is not an absurdity, and all

41Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddimah, p. 87.
42Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 266.
43Ibid.
such events are intellectually possible. Evidences of karāmāt having occurred from the hands of pious people who were non-prophets can be cited from the Qur'ān and the traditions. Some of such karāmāt are:

a) The story of Mary, mother of Jesus, as stated in the Qur'ān, God says:

He vouchsafed her a goodly growth and made Zakariyyah her guardian. Whenever Zakariyyah went into the sanctuary where she was, he found that she had food. He said: "O, Mary, whence cometh unto thee this? She answered: "It is from God". God giveth without stint to whom He wills.44

Her growth was unlike that of an ordinary childbearing. In a single day her growth was phenomenal. There was no one going to her place except Zakariyyah and every time he entered he found her with food, the summer fruits in the winter and winter fruits in summer.45

b) The story of the companions of the cave as narrated in the Qur'ān is another evidence.46 The companions of the cave were non-prophets. They were seven chieftains from the Roman Empire who were in fear of losing their faith because of the persecution by their king. Therefore, they left their country and

44 The Qur'ān, 3 : 37.
45 Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 269.
46 Ibid.
entered a cave. They spent 309 years without food and water, sleeping and without any danger.

c) The story of Āsaf as reported: He was the chief minister of prophet Solomon. He knew the great name of God. He said to prophet Solomon, "Look at the sky". And Āsaf supplicated to God with the great name of God to bring to Solomon the throne of Balqīs with her on it, and it was brought. Then prophet Solomon turned his look and found the throne before him.47

These extraordinary acts are not presages, because their aim was not the verification of a claim to prophecy, they are marvels.

6.7 Magic (sihr)

By magic is meant not mere trickeY but sorcery. This magic (sihr) is something extraordinary appearing from a mere appearance (khayāl) and uses the properties of substances such as the life of an animals to perform a ritual. This form of magic usually is meant to undermine people. There is an example of this magic stated in the Qur'ān which show that it happens and it is harmful to those at whom it is directed by the magician.48

47Al-Baghdādī, Uṣūl, pp. 174-175.
The Qur’ān and the traditions show that magic occurs although its premises are false or its intention often evil. The story of the two angels at Babel, Hārūt and Mārūt, who taught mankind magic, and the story of Moses and his contests with the magicians of Pharaoh are two references which occur in Qur’ānic verses.

The prophet Muḥammad, too, had spells cast upon him. A chapter of the Qur’ān speaks of "the evil of those who blow upon knots"49, and ‘A’ishah tells how those magic knots unloosed themselves, when this chapter was recited over them.50 The commentators agree that the reason of this chapter revealed by God was to cure the prophet Muḥammad from the magic of Labīd b. Aʿṣam.51

According to Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī the basic difference between miracles, marvels and magic are: miracles come from the hands of those who are proclaimed as prophets, marvels come from the

51 Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 271.
hands of saints, while magic comes from those who are godless.\textsuperscript{52}

According to the theologians the distinction between the miracle and magic is that a miracle is what is worked by a good man, for good objects and for purified souls, and by way of proof of the prophetic office. Magic is worked only by an evil man, for evil purposes and with evil results.\textsuperscript{53}

6.8 The proof of the messengership of the prophet Muḥammad according to Imām al-Juwaynī

Imām al-Juwaynī began his discussion on the proof of the messengership of the prophet Muḥammad by refuting the arguments of the two groups who denied his messengership.

The first group were those scholars of the Jewish faith who denied abrogation (\textit{naskh}) and claimed that there is no messenger after Moses.\textsuperscript{54} They produced these two arguments:

Firstly: they claim that abrogation (\textit{naskh})

\textsuperscript{52}Ibid., p. 271,
\textsuperscript{53}Macdonald, op., cit., p. 118.
\textsuperscript{54}Imām al-Juwaynī, \textit{Irshād}, p. 283.
is impossible because it shows changes and uncertainty, which is impossible for God.

Secondly: they assert that Moses said:
"As long as the earth and the sky exist you are in my revelation," and said again: "I am the seal of the messengers."55

The second group is the 'Isawiyyah,56 another group of Jewish scholars. This group confirmed the messengership of the prophet Muḥammad but restricted it to only Arab people.

6.8.1 Imām al-Juwaynī’s rejection of the Jewish reservations

Imām al-Juwaynī rejects the first argument (i.e. the impossibility of abrogation) of the first group by explaining the reality of abrogation. He holds that abrogation means that the expression of the new ruling shows the withdrawal or repeal of the earlier ruling by another ruling.57

55Ibid., p. 285,
-Al-Ghazālī, Iqtiṣād, p. 127.
56This group are named after Abū 'Isā Ishāq b. Ya'qūb al-Iṣbahānī; al-Shahrastānī, Milāl, vol. 2, p. 23.
57Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 283.
He then argues that if the meaning of abrogation is the withdrawal of a Divine law and replacing it with another Divine law in order to give more explanation and benefit, it does not imply that God is uncertain, because God knows everything that He creates for His creatures.58

In rejecting the second argument (i.e. the claim attributed to Moses) Imām al-Juwaynī argues that the Jewish claim is false in two aspects: the first aspect is: if their claim is true there would be no miracles at the hands of Jesus or Muḥammad. But when miracles happened to them it proved that the Jewish claim is false. Their claim that Moses said; "I am the seal of the prophets",59 is therefore not accurate.

Imām al-Juwaynī holds that with reference to the second aspect of who is the seal of the prophets, Muḥammad would be more entitled to this claim than Moses. It was believed that there was an attempt to deny the prophethood of Muḥammad and the reference to him in the Torah was altered. According to Imām al-Juwaynī if there was a wording in the Torah which could deny any abrogation against making permanent the revelation of Moses, there should have been a strong objection at the time of Jesus as there was at the time

58Ibid., p. 285.

59Ibid., p. 287.
of the prophet Muḥammad. That is because if there was an objection at that time, it would have shown their claim to be false. 60

6.8.2 Imām al-Ghazālī’s rejection of the Jewish reservations

If we look at Imām al-Ghazālī’s view on the same subject, we find that he follows exactly the same method as his master. This can be seen in his book Iḥtiṣād fi ʿl-ʾiṭiqād when he discusses the proof of the messengership of the prophet Muḥammad. He begins his discussion by pointing out the same groups identified by Imām al-Juwaynī. 61

However, Imām al-Ghazālī adds another group which is not included in Imām al-Juwaynī’s discussion. This group is those who accept abrogation yet deny the messengership of the prophet Muḥammad and the miracle of the Qurʾān. 62

To reject the first of the Jewish arguments, 63 like his master, Imām al-Ghazālī begins by

60Ibid.
61Al-Ghazālī, Iḥtiṣād, p. 127.
-Al-Juwaynī, ʾIrshād, p. 283.
62Ibid., p. 129.
63Ibid.
defining the reality of abrogation. He quotes the same definition as his master, that abrogation is the expression showing the repeal of a ruling with the condition of the continuance of that ruling until the new one is confirmed.64

Imām al-Ghazālī then provides an illustration of this point: the master asks his servant to stand up without informing him of the length of time he is required to do this or its advantage. The master knows that the standing is only for a specific time. The servant understands that he is being asked to stand up for an unrestricted time and it is obligatory for him to stand up continually unless his master orders him to sit down. Whenever his master asks him to sit down he will sit down and he does not have an erroneous impression that his master has wasted his time. In time the advantage and reason of his standing will appear to him. That is the way how the disagreement of the Divine law should be understood.65

He further argues that if the sending of the prophet is just for deputation and not for the abrogation of the Divine revelation before him, or just for the repeal of some aspect of the Divine Law rather

---

64Ibid., p. 128,

-Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 283.

65Ibid.
than the whole law, such as the changing of the direction of the qiblah, or making permissible some things earlier forbidden, there is no contradiction in these changes and replacement of the Divine law. These kinds of affairs are different according to the time and situation. The Jewish scholars however claimed that there was no Divine revelation from Adam till Moses, and thus denied the existence of the revelation of Noah and Abraham. The notion of the continuity of reports (tawātur) or a knowledge of it seems to be missing from their understanding. 66

In dealing with the second argument of the Jewish scholars, Imām al-Ghazālī follows his master's refutation by dividing his argument into two aspects: In the first aspect, if the Jewish claim about Moses is true there would be no miracles in the hands of Jesus. Imām al-Ghazālī argues how could God have granted miracles to one who is denied by the claim of Moses when these miracles are themselves proof of prophethood. It seems that they denied the existence of Jesus's miracles and especially denied such miracles of his as the instance when he returned life to a dead body as testament against those who challenged him. It seems that everything they rejected, they ascribed to

66Ibid.
Moses’s revelation and claimed them as Moses’s own word.67

The second aspect is that this argument was only claimed after prophet Muḥammad’s mission and death. If their claim was true they would take this as an argument to fight the prophet Muḥammad’s followers. The Prophet Muḥammad believed Moses to be a messenger of God with his revelation (i.e. the Torah). However, according to Imam al-Juwaynī the Jewish scholars did not use the argument of Moses being the seal of prophethood to support their claim because they knew that if they used it there would be no support for its authenticity and explanation for the continuity of reports. If they accepted Jesus, it would also confirm the messengership of the prophet Muḥammad.68

In refuting the second group (i.e. the ‘Isawiyyah), who claim that the prophet Muḥammad is only for Arab people, Imam al-Juwaynī does not provide any discussion of this group because, to him, their claim is clearly untrue and there is no need for him to argue this.69

---

67Ibid.
68Ibid., p. 129.
69Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 283.
However, Imām al-Ghazālī holds a different view to his master. He rejects this group and holds that they are clearly false, but he goes on to discuss this. They confirm the messengership of the prophet Muḥammad and should have been aware that the prophet did not lie in his life. The prophet always asserted that he is the messenger to all human beings and he sent his messengers to all nations as proof that his mission was not only for the Arabs but for all. This is confirmed by authentic evidence. Therefore, the claim of the ‘Isawiyyah is impossible and contradictory.70

6.9 Discussion of the proof of the miraculousness of the Qur'ān according to Imām al-Juwaynī

For Muslims the Qur'ān is the best of all the miracles of the prophet Muḥammad, for it has rendered all creatures unable to imitate the prophet Muḥammad in such a way. This is clearly spelt out through the challenge:

"Say: if the entire mankind and the Jinns were to gather together in order to bring a like of the Qur'ān they would never bring its like even if some of them lend assistance to the others."71

Here mankind and Jinns are specifically mentioned because they are the only two kinds of

70Al-Ghazālī, Igtiṣād, p. 127.
71The Qur'ān, 17 : 88.
creatures for whom the effort of imitation can be envisaged. All other creatures are considered unable to produce the like of the Qur’ān.

Al-Bāqillānī said that we should give full attention to understand the aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur’ān because the messengership of the prophet Muḥammad was proved by this as well as by other miracles.72

Islamic scholars have argued various aspects of the miraculousness of the Quʾān as follows:

First: from the aspect of its writing and unusual style which is a deterrent from imitation even by an excellent poet. None could write anything like it in his own words. Thus the Quʾān’s eloquence (faṣāha) is a miracle.73

Second: from its highest standard of rhetorical excellence. If an expert in rhetoric were to study the Qurʾān he would find that it contains many arts of eloquence which no one could repeat or imitate.

-Ṣāliḥ Sharaf, Muḥāḍarāt fī Māddat al-Tawḥīd, Cairo, 1980, p. 22.
even though he may spend all his life attempting that.74

Third: another aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur'ān is the prophesies it contains which are only possible with a knowledge of the unseen world. The best-known such prophecy concerns the historical victory of the Byzantine Romans over the Persians. Shortly after the Romans had been defeated by the Persians this prophecy was fulfilled during the prophet's lifetime, when the enemies of Islam could themselves be witnesses to it:

"The Roman Empire has been defeated in a land close by; but they (even) after (this) defeat of theirs will soon be victorious within a few years."75

Fourth: from the aspect of its content. The Qur'ān contains details of the science of the divinity, rules of devotion, and the foundation of a political structure and social civilization which are suitable for every period of time and place.76

74Ibid.
6.10 The aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur'ān according to Imām al-Juwaynī

According to Imām al-Juwaynī the miraculousness of the Qur'ān is the combination of the eloquence and unusual word-patterns. They cannot be separated from one another. If one claims the virtue of the miracle of the Qur'ān is only its eloquence, other eloquent Arab poets could claim likewise. Similarly if the claim were to be based only on the unusual word-patterns, the poet Musaylima with his unusual word-patterns could claim likewise. Therefore, the eloquence and the word-patterns should be combined together; they cannot be separated because masters of eloquence could imitate either one separately.77

Imām al-Juwaynī then mentions two aspects of the miraculousness which are not eloquence or unusual word-patterns:

First: the information about the earlier prophets, earlier scriptures and earlier events. We are aware that the prophet Muḥammad could not even read or write, yet he proclaimed the Qur'ān and recited its many chapters and verses in which he informed about earlier events, all in spite of his belonging to an

77Al-Juwaynī, Irshād, p. 292.
uneducated people. In this range of knowledge is one of the aspects of the miraculousness of the Qur'ān. 78

Second: the Qur'ān describes an unseen world such as in chapter 30:2-3. In this case there is a forecast of the Byzantine Roman Empire's defeat by the Persians.

These are the aspects of the miraculousness of the Qur'ān mentioned by Imām al-Juwaynī in his book al-Irshād. However, there is another aspect which he mentions in his book al-`Aqīdah al-Nizāmiyyah, that is a deterrence (ṣarfa). The Arabs were certainly able to imitate words and short phrases as used by the Qur'ān, but God deterred them by removing their ability to compose likewise. 79

Imām al-Juwaynī then holds that the prophet Muḥammad challenges masters of Arabic eloquence to produce some work like the Qur'ān. This is mentioned in the Qur'ān:

"Say: "If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of the Qur'ān, they could not produce the like thereof." 80

This challenge was posed by the prophet Muḥammad to the Arabs and has never been met. The

78Ibid., p. 295.
79Al-Juwaynī, 'Aqīdah, p. 73.
80The Qur'ān, 17: 88.
Qur'ān is their language and its eloquence and word-patterns are not too different for them, yet they still could not produce work like it, even though there have been many masters of poetic eloquence and prose writers in the Arabic language. However, God removed their ability to imitated the Qur'ān.  

This view of Imam al-Juwaynī is similar to that of the Mu'tazilah who suggested that the miraculousness of the Qur'ān is a deterrence (ṣarfa), that is, the Arabs could have resisted and imitated the Qur'ān, but God prevented this by removing either their power or their motive, or the necessary knowledge.

Some scholars have disagreed with this, saying that this contradicts the view of holding the Qur'ān itself to be a miracle. Ahmad Hijāzī comments on this view of Imam al-Juwaynī by saying that Imam al-Juwaynī is not right in his view that the miraculousness of the Qur'ān is God's deterrence of imitation. The correct view is that the miraculousness of the Qur'ān is its word-patterns and meaning, not

81Al-Juwaynī, 'Aqīdah, pp. 73-74.
82'Abd al-Jabbār, Khamsah, p. 586.
only for the Arabs but for all nations and all periods of time.84

However, in our view there is no objection to a deterrence (ṣarfa) as an aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur’ān, beside other aspects of miraculousness as mentioned before. What is important here is whether Imām al-Juwaynī’s view on the aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur’ān influenced his student Imām al-Ghazālī.

6.10.1 The aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur’ān according to Imām al-Ghazālī

There is no doubt about this last point. If we look at Imām al-Ghazālī’s view on this subject, we find that he follows exactly his master’s view when he holds that the aspect of the miraculousness of the Qur’ān is its eloquence and unusual word-patterns.85

Imām al-Ghazālī then claims that the combination of both of them is a miracle which cannot be imitated by human beings. Perhaps some Arabic poems and speeches have eloquence and some of them wanted to imitate the word-patterns of the Qur’ān after studying

85Al-Ghazālī, Igtisād, pp. 129-130.
it, as has been done by Musaylima. Yet it still is not the same. As for the eloquence of the Qurʾān, all the Arabs writers admired and took notice of the excellent word-patterns and eloquence of the Qurʾān. All of this proves that the combination of both of them is the miracle of the Qurʾān.86

Imām al-Ghazālī also claimed, like his master, that the deterrence (ṣarfa) is regarded as one aspect of the miraculousness of the Qurʾān. God prevented the Arabs from imitating the Qurʾān and His deterrence is itself a great miracle.87

Here, Imām al-Ghazālī follows his master's view that the miraculousness of the Qurʾān is its joining together of the eloquence and unusual word-patterns and his claim of a deterrent (ṣarfa). Imām al-Juwaynī's explanations of the miraculousness of the Qurʾān from the aspect of eloquence and unusual word-patterns can be found in his book al-Irshād ilā Qawāṭiʿ al-Adillah fī Uṣūl al-ʿIʿtiqād, whereas his view on the deterrent (ṣarfa) is in his book al-ʿAqīdah al-Nizāmiyyah. However, Imām al-Ghazālī summarizes all

86Ibid.
87Ibid.
these views in his book *al-Iqtisād fī al-Iʿtiqād*. There is strong evidence to show that Imām al-Ghazālī’s view on this subject was influenced by his master Imām al-Juwaynī.
6.11 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The evidence presented in the foregoing chapters makes it clear that there was a great influence of Imām al-Juwaynī on Imām al-Ghazālī’s ideas on theological discussion. Imām al-Juwaynī uses *Iīm al-kālām* to solve theological problems by using logical argument in defence of the articles of faith and in refuting innovators who deviate from the principles of the dogma. Later, before the end of his life, he turned to the šūfi’s way. This route of first using rational debate and then seeking the mystical way was followed by Imām al-Ghazālī. He also uses logical proofs in his discussion of theological problems and later when he feels that it does not satisfy him, he turns to the ways of the šūfi.

Imām al-Juwaynī was the first Ashʿarite scholar to introduce philosophy to the *Iīm al-kālām* and he was also the first of the Ashʿarites who used this new theological approach to reject the philosophers. This method was adopted by Imām al-Ghazālī. The claim made by Ibn Khaldūn in his *Muqaddimah* that Imām al-Ghazālī was the first Ashʿarite scholar to introduce philosophy to *Iīm al-kālām* is therefore untrue. Evidence for this has been

---

given in Chapter Three, which illustrates that Imām al-Juwaynī's influence upon Imām al-Ghazālī on this subject was profound.

To prove the existence of God, Imām al-Juwaynī made use of the syllogism (qiyās) in his discussion. Imām al-Ghazālī also uses the same method of his master. However, sometime Imām al-Ghazālī displayed his ṣūfī inclination in his discussion in order to achieve the perfect belief in the existence of God. It should be noted that Imām al-Ghazālī's position is that of a thinker who, taking over the doctrines of his predecessors, systematized them and gave them clearness and precision.

The influence of Imām al-Juwaynī on Imām al-Ghazālī can be traced not only in the latter's ideas and discussion of identical problems, but the words and phrases he employs are similar to those of his teacher. Because of the popularity of Imām al-Ghazālī and the comparative obscurity of Imām al-Juwaynī, many of the views of the latter have been credited to the former and the teacher's writings have been overlooked. This study, in part, addresses this oversight in Islamic scholarship.
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES


_________, al-Mughnī fī Abwāb al-Tawḥīd, ed. Tawfīq al-Ṭawīl, Cairo, n.d.


Al-ʿAsqalānī, Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Ḥajar, Lisān al-Mizān, 6 vols., Hyderabad, 1331 A.H.

Al-Asnawi, Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Rahīm b. Ḥasan, Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiyyah, ed. ʿAbdullāh al-Ḥaywī, Baghdad, 1390 A.H.


_________, Istiḥsān al-Khawq fī ʿIlm al-Kalām, Hyderabad, 1344 A.H.


Al-Bājūrī, Ḥāshiyya ʿalā Jawharat al-Tawḥīd, Cairo, n.d.


Al-Baghdādī, Abū Bakr Ahmad al-Khāṭīb, Tārīkh Baghdād, 14 vols., Cairo, 1931.


Al-Bayān 'ān al-Fārāq bayn al-Muṣjāt wa al-Karāmāt, Beirut, 1377 A.H.
Al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ʿalā al-Mulḥihād al-
Muʿaṭṭilah wa al-Qarāmiṭah wa al-Khawārij
wa al-Muʿtazilah, Cairo, 1947.

Al-Bayḍāwī, Abū Saʿād ʿAbdullah b. ʿUmar, Anwār al-
. 4. Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Taʾwil, ed. H.O. Fleischer
Leipzig, 1846.

Al-Bayhaqī, Abū Bakr b. Ḥusayn, Al-ʿIṭiqād ʿalā Madhhab
al-Salaf Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah, ed.
Ahmad Mursī, Cairo, 1961.

Al-Asmūʿ wa al-Sifāt, Beirut, n.d.

Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn, al-ʿIbar fī Khabar Man
Ghabar, 4 vols., Kuwait, 1960.

Al-Faḍālī, Muḥammad, Kifāyat al-ʿAwāmm fī ʿIlm al-Kalām,
with a commentary by Ibrāhīm al-Bayjūrī,
Cairo, 1328 A.H.

Al-Farrāʾ, Muḥammad b. Abū Yaʿlā, al-Muʿtamaḍ fī

Al-Fārābī, Abū Naṣr Muḥammad, Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿulūm, ed.
ʿUṯmān Amīn, Cairo, n.d.

Al-Ghazalī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad, Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-Dīn,
4 vols., Cairo, 1968.


Tahāfut al-Falāsifah, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, Cairo, 1980.


Al-Ḥikmah fī Makhlūqāt Allāh ‘Azza wa Jall, Cairo, 1970.


Al-Qistiṣās al-Mustaqīm, Cairo, 1970.

Qawā‘id al-‘Aqāʿid fī al-Tawḥīd, Cairo, 1970.

Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, Cairo, 1961.

Maʿārij al-Quds fī Madārij al-Maʿrifah, Cairo, 1927.

Mi'rāj al-Sālikīn, ed. Muḥammad Najīb, Cairo, 1924.


Al-Ḥamawī, Shīhāb al-Dīn Abū ʿAbdullāh b. Yāqūt, Muʿjam al-Buldān, n.p. 1323 A.H.


Al-Jāwī, Muḥammad Nawawī b. ʿUmar b. ʿArabī, Sharḥ Marāqī al-ʿUbūdiyyah, Cairo, 1881.

Al-Jundārī, Aḥmad b. ʿAbdullāh, Tarājim al-Rijāl, Cairo 1322 A.H.
Al-Jurjānī, al-Sayyid al-Sharīf, Al-Ta'rifāt, Beirut, n.d.


_________, Ghiyāth al-Umm fī Ilṭiyyāth al-Ẓujām, ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīm Dīb, Cairo, 1401 A.H.


Al-Māturīdī, Abū Mašūr, Al-Tawḥīd, Beirut, n.d.

Al-Nabhanī, Yūsuf b. Ismā‘īl, Jāmi‘ Karāmāt al-Awliyā‘

Al-Nasafi, Abū al-Mu‘īn, Bahr al-Kalām, Cairo, 1329 A.H

Al-Nawawī, Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū Zakariyyah Yahyā, Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Beirut, n.d.


Al-Qushayrī, Abū Qāsim ‘Abd al-Karīm, Al-Risālah fī ‘Ilm al-Taṣawwuf, Cairo, 1346 A.H.

Kitāb al-Arba‘īn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn, Hyderabad 1353 A.H.

Al-Sanūsī, Muḥammad, Sharḥ Umm al-Barāḥīn, with super-commentary by Muḥammad al-Dasūqī, Cairo, 1330 A.H.


Nihāyat al-Iqādām fī ‘Ilm al-Kalām, Cairo, n.d.


Ṣawn al-Mantiq wa ‘Ilm al-Kalām, Cairo, n.d.


Al-Taftāzānī, Sa‘ad al-Dīn, Sharḥ al-‘Aqā‘id al-Nasafiyyah, Cairo, 1932.


Āsim, Maḥmūd, Madhhab al-Ghazālī fī al-ʿAqīl wa al-Taqlīd, Cairo, 1967.

Istanbul, 1941.


________, Al-Lubāb fī Tahdhib al-Ansāb, Baghdād, n.d.

Ibn al-ʿImād, Abū al-Falāḥ, Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhābār Men Dhahab, 8 vols., Cairo, 1350 A.H.


________, Talbīs al-Iblīs, Cairo, n.d.

Ibn al-Nadīm, Muḥammad b. Ishāq, Fihrist, Cairo, 1929.


Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Musnad, Beirut, n.d.


Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Karīm, Cairo, 1952.


Ibn Manẓūr, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad, Lisān al-‘Arab, 10 vols., Cairo, 1300 A.H.

Ibn Nabātah, Sharḥ al-‘uṣūn fī Sharḥ Risālat Ibn Zaydūn, Cairo, 1321 A.H.


_________, al-Najāt, Cairo, 1331 A.H.

Ibn Taghrī Birdī, Jamāluddīn Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf, al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah, Cairo, n.d.


_________, Naqī al-Manṭiq, ed. Muḥammad ʿHaḍīd al-Faqī, Cairo, 1370 A. H.

_________, al-Furgūn bayna Awliyā’ al-Raḥmān wa Awliyā’ al-Shayṭān, Cairo, 1980.

_________, Minhāj al-Sunnah fī Naqī Kalām al-Shī‘ah wa al-Qadariyyah, Cairo, 1321 A. H.

_________, Kitāb an-Nabuwwāt, Cairo, 1346 A. H.


SECONDARY SOURCES

`Abd al-‘Alīm, Ṣalāḥ, al-‘Aqīdah fī Ḍaw' al-Qurʿān, Cairo, 1982.

`Abduh, `Abd al-Salām, al-‘Aqīdah al-Islāmiyyah bayn al-‘Aql wa al-Naql, Cairo, n.d.


Abū Zahrah, Tārikh al-Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyah, Cairo, n.d.


_______, Al-Ghazālī falsafatuh al-Akhlaqīyyah wa al-Ṣūfīyyah, Cairo, 1981.

Amin, Ahmad, ḏuḥā al-İslām, Cairo, 1946.


ʿAzgūl, Karīm, al-ʿAqī fī al-İslām, Beirut, 1946.


Brockelmann, C., Geschichte Der Arabischen Litteratur, Leyden, 1934.


Dayf, Shawqi, *‘Aṣr al-Duwal wa al-Imārāt*, Cairo, 1980.


Hijazi, Ahmad, Ta’liq fi al-‘Aqîdah al-Niçamiyyah li al-Juwayni, Cairo.


Husayn, Fawqiyyah, al-Juwayni Imâm al-Ḥaramayn, Cairo, n.d.


Huwaydi, Yahyä, Muḥādarât fî al-Falsafah al-Islâmiyyah, Cairo, 1966.


Jabre, Farid, La Notion de la Ma‘rifa chez Ghazali, Beirut, 1958.


278

Laṭīf, Sāmī Naṣr, Namādhij min falsafat al-Islāmiyyah, Cairo, n.d.


_______, Religious Attitude and Life in Islam, Chicago 1909.

Madkūr, Ibrāhīm, Fi al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah Manhaj wa taṭbīqat, Cairo, 1983.


Mubārak, Zakī, *al-Akhlāq ʿinda al-Ghazālī*, Cairo, 1391 A.H.


280


Smith, Margaret, *Al-Ğazālī the Mystic*, London, 1944.


_________, *Bell's Introduction to the Qur'ān*, Edinburgh, 1970.


APPENDIX

In 1953, M.A.R. Bisar carried out a study of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī as theologians. His unpublished Ph.D thesis *al-Juwaynī and al-Ghazālī as theologians with special reference to al-Irshād and al-Iqtiṣād* makes a comparison between Imām al-Juwaynī’s and Imām al-Ghazālī’s theological views. However, his thesis refers only to al-Juwaynī’s *al-Irshād* and al-Ghazālī’s *Iqtiṣād*. Bisar commences his discussion by comparing the theological methods of Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī. In this section Bisar argues that there are many differences between Imām al-Juwaynī and Imām al-Ghazālī in this respect.

In the second chapter of his thesis, Bisar discusses the nature of God and the difficulty of its definition. He then goes on to discuss the attributes of God and their special characteristics. In chapter four Bisar discusses Imām al-Juwaynī’s and Imām al-Ghazālī’s treatment of God’s sitting on the throne and the vision of God. It seem that Bisar tries to show that Imām al-Ghazālī is more advanced compared to Imām al-Juwaynī.

---

Finally in chapter five of his thesis, he discusses their views on free-will and predestination. Bisar again argues that Imām al-Ghazālī’s views on this subject differed from those of Imām al-Juwaynī.