



Why Am I a Muslim? Investigating the Truth of Faith Based on Ghazālī's al-Munqidh Min Al-Ḍalāl

Akbar Sajedi¹; Ali Nemati²; Mohammad Dargahzadeh³

¹ Member of the Center for The Development of Interdisciplinary Research in Islamic Sciences and Health Sciences, Associate Professor, Department of Islamic Education, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Iran

² Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, Kharazmi University, Iran

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Education, University of Bonab, Iran

Corresponding Author: Mohammad Dargahzadeh

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Abstract

It should be acknowledged that the man's beliefs are often based on their prejudices. Probably, some people have not even asked themselves "which religion do I believe in? and why?", let alone attempt to find answers to them. However, there are some who delve into these questions and strive to find convincing answers. Ghazālī was one of the thinkers who asked such questions when he was a teenager, and suffered from the resulting skepticism for a while. In *Al-Munqidh Min Al-Ḍalāl*, Ghazālī reports how he came across these questions and how he overcame the crisis of the skepticism. He criticizes those saying: "I am Muslim because I was born in a Muslim family", and presents a basis for the true faith, which is based on resorting to mysticism and abandoning the philosophical reasoning. Ghazālī does not view the true faith as the result of the combination of the major and minor premises, rather considers it merely as the Divine Illumination and providence. Using analytical-logical method, the present study examined the basis presented by Ghazālī and concluded that considering the Illumination as the basis of faith, and abandoning the philosophical reasoning may lead to some consequences which cannot be ignored. For example, in explaining the faith, by abandoning the philosophical reasoning, one cannot distinguish between the true faith and the false faith originating from the satanic temptations.

Keywords: Ghazālī; The Truth of Faith; Illumination; Fideism; *Al-Munqidh Min Al-Dalāl*

A. Introduction

For the creative minds, questioning is like the blood for the veins. Questions are the generators of the answers, and the research is the result of insatiable thoughts. Lots of apples had ever fallen from the trees, but the question "why did the apple fall down?" arose only in the mind of a teenager named Newton (Holton, Rutherford, & Watson, 1992, p. 96). By Answering to this seemingly apparent and simple question, Newton transformed the course of the science. Questioning is not specific to the natural and

sensory issues, rather covers the supernatural issues as well. Questions on the belief and the faith can also arise in the creative minds searching for the truth. The question "what do I believe in? and Why do I believe in it?" are definitely arisen for those having a creative and truth-seeker minds.

Ghazālī was one of those people. The most fundamental questions had come in his mind not only during his adulthood and middle age, but also in his childhood and teen years. Ghazālī considered the classification of men into the believers and unbelievers inaccurate, but viewed the categorization of belief into the true and the false right. According to Ghazālī, without such a precise and rigorous view, all beliefs would optimistically be considered right, since no believer thinks that his belief is wrong.

The present study attempted to investigate the truth of the faith from Imam Ghazālī's point of view. The main question concerned here was "in Ghazālī's point of view, what is faith and on what bases it is based?" In *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl*, Ghazālī describes how the question "why am I a Muslim?" was arisen for him, and presents the true faith as a Divine illumination-based truth. The author argues that Ghazālī has failed to answer the question and, such, gone astray. The main purpose of the present study was to analyze the answer Ghazālī provided for this question.

B. Basics and Preliminaries

Learned and Common Faith

The faith of the believers can be simply divided in two categories: the learned and common Faith. The learned faith occurs based on knowledge. It is, first, according to the fact and, second, justifiable and provable. However, the common faith is not based on knowledge, rather is merely based on a sincere belief.

Knowledge has long been defined as "a justified sincere belief" (Sadeqi, 2003, p. 66). This triple definition has been the strongest definition of knowledge ever presented from Plato era up to this day, despite all the attempts to refute it. One can claim to know something when, first, he believes in it; second, his belief is sincere, that is, his belief is based on the fact; and third, his belief is justified, which is achieved either by reasoning or it being obvious (Sadeqi, 2003).

A Belief Documented by a Reason or a Cause

Belief must be documented by "a reason". Having a cause is not important, since any false proposition has a cause for its own. Thus, a proposition is only sincere when it is documented by a reason. Both Shi'a and Sunni scholars argue that principles of religion (*Usūl al-Dīn*) and the rules (*Aḥkām*) of belief are inimitable, and that "one should research and be assured about them" (Makārim Shīrāzī, 1427/2006, p. 508). Basically, everyone must have a reason for his faith according to his talent and knowledge. For example, the existence and oneness of God is the reason to send the messengers and the prophecy of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH), and the Resurrection (Makārim Shīrāzī, 1427/2006).

The statement "I believe in God, the prophecy of Muhammad, the Resurrection and ..." is the representation of the simple Islamic beliefs. If belief, whether as a subjective or reasonable proposition, is to be examined, it should be in form of reasonable proposition. It is possible that one holds a belief because he obeys his parents, but are the beliefs of the antecedents necessarily, right? Is the statement "everyone must follow the religion of his antecedents" a right or wrong supposition? To distinguish between the right and the wrong, Quran uses the water and mirage concepts: "... *their works are like a mirage in a plain, which the thirsty man supposes to be water. When he comes to it, he finds it to be*

nothing. ..." (Q, 24: 39). The truth is the water and the false is the mirage. The truth has a reason, and the false has a reason-like cause. "One cannot give reasons for false statements, using false statement. Only right statement can be the fruit of the truth. Therefore, false statements are absolutely unreasonable, and have some cause, while the true statements enjoy both the reason and the cause." (Suroush, 2005, p. 367) In any case, the reasonable form of the argument "I am Muslim because my family members are Muslims" is as follows: Minor premise: My parents are Muslims. Major premise: the children of the Muslims are Muslims. Result: I am Muslim.

Now, the fundamental question which any Muslim should ask himself is "what is my reason for being a Muslim? Why Am I a Muslim? Is my belief in Islam due to a cause, not a reason?! Is it possible that I have not selected Islam freely, and do I consider Islam as the best religion just because of my prejudice and prejudgments?"

A Belief Documented by a Thought or Imitation

In logical sense, thinking is to refer to two previous knowledges in order to acquire a third knowledge. Similarly, Ghazālī states "know that thinking is to refer to two knowledges in order to reach to a third knowledge" (Ghazālī, n.d., p. 390). For example, for someone who is interested in the world, but wants to know whether the world is better than the hereafter, there are two ways: first, he can imitate someone and acknowledge him, without gaining any insight on the truth. However, this can never be called knowledge. Second, he can refer to his previous knowledges; for example, the hereafter is more stable than the world, and that the more stable, the better. Accordingly, he comes to this conclusion that hereafter is better than the world. Here, there is no other way to reach to this conclusion than referring to the previous knowledges.

Robbers of the Thought

Self-Love and Self-Optimism

Men' optimism regarding the fact that they have found the truth has led many to deviate. Love and grudge are considered as the important barriers of free thinking. As long as thoughts deal with the interests and prejudices, they cannot find the truth;

People's disagreements in terms of religions and sects, and the religious leaders' conflicts are like a deep sea in which most people have been sunk, few people have been survived. Every sect considers itself as the savior and the felicitous (al-Mufliḥūn), since "*each party exulting in what it had*" (Q. 23: 53). (Ghazālī, 1972, p. 108).

Assumption in Certainty Clothing

Sometimes, man is suspicious about something, but he insists that he is certain about it. One thing which prevents men from accepting the right is that the boundary between certainty and suspicion is not important for him; he considers- or at least calls- his assumption as certainty:

In distinguishing the right from the wrong, there are many disagreements. I thought I wanted to attain the truth of things. Thus, I, first, needed to know the truth of the science. It became clear to me that the true knowledge is the one in which the findings are presented in such a way that there is no doubt about them for the researcher. (Ghazālī, 1972, p. 109)

C. Ghazālī and Writing the *al-Munqidh Min al-Ḍalāl*

Al-Munqidh Min Al-Ḍalāl (Deliverance from Error) is one of the last writings of Imam Ghazālī. In this book, Ghazālī narrates his own story. He, first, rejects theology, philosophy and esoteric religion, then, considers the path of Sufism the only way of salvation.

Ghazālī doesn't attempt to provide detailed reasons and arguments to reject the ideas of the philosophers, *Daharis*, and esoterist, as he did in his previous books, including *Tahafut al-Falasifa*, *al-Qiṣṣas al-mustaqīm*, *al-Mustazhiri*; rather, he uses a more rhetorical tone, and focuses on his perplexity, and inner states which transform his life and his understanding of theism. Interestingly, *Al-Munqidh Min Al-Ḍalāl* presents a kind of uncertainty and skepticism, which, today, is known by the name of such philosophers as Descartes. However, Ghazālī much long before Descartes had talked about the uncertainty and skepticism, and raised the issue of uncertainty-based certainty.

D. Answering the Question *Why Am I a Muslim?*

In *Al-Munqidh Min Al-Ḍalāl*, Ghazālī describes how the question "Why am I a Muslim?" was raised for him:

"The enthusiasm to understand the truth was with me since early youth. It was intrinsically and intuitively instilled into me by God such that it was out of my control and my desire. Finally, God freed me from shackles of imitation, and my inherited beliefs were broken up in my puberty, although I witnessed how the Christian teenagers had to grow up based on the inherited beliefs of Christianity, Jewish young adults' beliefs inevitably shaped by the traditional beliefs of Judaism, and so were Muslim teenagers. I heard a ḥadīth of the Prophet, saying: "every child is born in state of pure nature, but their parents bring them up as a Jewish, Christian, or Magi" (Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, n.d., v. 2, p. 315; Bukhārī, 1401/1981, v. 2, p. 97; Muslim Neishāburī, n.d., v. 8, p. 52). Deep down, I struggled to understand the truth of my nature and distinguish the intrinsic nature from the extrinsic one, shaped by the training of my parents and teachers, and recognize such imitations and indoctrinations. In distinguishing the right from the wrong, there are many disagreements. I thought "I want to understand the truth of the things. Thus, I first have to understand the truth of the science." It became clear that the true knowledge is the one in which there is no doubt about the findings for the researcher. Then, I started examining the knowledges I had learned, and I found out that none of them had the above-mentioned characteristics except for my perceptions and axioms. I thought "now that I am in despair, I have no other choice than resorting to the definite and valid facts to solve the problem, i.e., my perceptions and axioms. I have to know them very well to understand if my beliefs about the sensory facts and my immunity from making mistake in axioms are the same as the beliefs found in imitation, and equal to the same trust most people have in the opinions, or a kind of trust which is free from deceit. I examined the perceptions and axioms as carefully as possible. Looking at them, I thought if they were doubtful. I was too skeptic so that I even doubted such perceptions ... I tried to treat this pain, but it seemed difficult, since these suspicions could only be removed by reason, and presenting reason was possible only by synthesizing the previous knowledges. Since I was not certain about these knowledges, I was not able to deduce any reason. ... Until God healed my disease and restored my health and stability. The axioms of the reason occurred to me in an appropriate, firm and believable manner. This state was not resulted from the presenting the reason or arranging the words, but rather originated from the light God had cast within my heart, the light which is the key to most of the knowledges. Whoever thinks that he can discover his inner truth by using scientific reasons limits the far-reaching mercy of God. Once the Prophet (PBUH) was asked about the meaning of "al-Sharḥ" (open) in the verse *'Whomever Allah desires to guide, He opens his breast to Islam'* (Q. 6: 125). He

responded: "it is the light God casts on one's heart". It was asked: "what is its sign?" he answered: "renouncing this world and opening ones heart toward the hereafter"(Ḥākim Neishābūrī, n.d.; Ṭabarsī, 1993; al-Suyūṭī, 1404/1984). (Ghazālī, 1972, pp. 109-114)

E. Faith Is Illuminative

As mentioned above, faith is an illuminative truth which is obtained through the Divine inspiration. God does grant this illumination to everyone He wants and denies it from anyone He wants. Apart from the determination and free will which is beyond the scope of the present study; it is essential to answer the following questions: "can we present a criterion for the faith? Is the given criterion generalizable? Or is it based on personal experience? If presenting the major and minor premises is not effective, then how can one establish the accuracy of the man's beliefs? How can we say if someone is not deceived by the devil, and because of his optimism, he will suffer from his absolute ignorance and he will never get rid of it?"

F. Necessities of Illuminativeness of Faith

Indeed, if we link the criterion of the accuracy of the beliefs to internal, intuitive and innate matters, then we must be pluralistic and consider not only the worships of the Christians and the Jewish, but also the prayers of the Buddhists in the temples in the Himalayas, the dances of the African blacks, and the singings of the American Indians as rooting from the opening of their breast, which the Prophet (PBUH) mentioned in his interpretation! Of course, we are not able to understand the given tradition, since what he means is definitely not in consistent with the principles of pluralism.

The proponents of the *Akhbāryyah* (traditionalists) may say that it is the Prophet (PBUH) who flourished the intuitive nature of the man; therefore, whoever finds the heavenly cry of the man inconsistent with his nature should accept it wholeheartedly. Accordingly, he will not go astray.

Now, the question is which heavenly cry is the water of life, and which one is the mirage of death. Is it possible to distinguish between the water and the mirage without intervention of thought?

Rational and argumentative awareness and knowledge can guarantee that the intuitive and innate knowledge of God is valid, since without the support of the rational and argumentative knowledge, the mere innate knowledge of God may deviate, as the public awareness of morality, logic and language doesn't protect man from error. The reason why many people go astray and deviate from theism is that the innate knowledge is closed and synoptic. Rational analysis of the innate knowledge can to a large extent prevent man from such deviation. This is precisely why the eminent divine philosophers have long considered this issue and attempted to study the concept of God by solid rational arguments and learned insights and find strong proofs for the existence of God (Kiashemshaki, 2010, p. 108).

We claim that thought and reason are the criteria of the legitimacy or invalidity of the beliefs. Meanwhile, the freedom of thought is the best basis to do such evaluation. The beliefs originated from free thinking, and without imitation and other obstacle of freedom of thought, are based on the reason, while those created without freedom of thought rely mostly on the cause.

G. The Source of Monotheistic Belief: Inspiration and Illumination or Reason and Thinking?

There are many thinkers who view faith irrelevant to rational reasoning. According to them, thought and reason will never lead us to the faith and belief. Mackei (1982) in his book *the miracle of theism* presents faith as astonishing and miraculous. According to him, if we evaluate the evidence and proofs of the existence of God objectively, it would be wiser to dismiss the belief in God as false, rather than right (Peterson, Hasker, Reichenbach, & Basinger, 2004). Accordingly, there is a relationship between the faith and reason and thought, but are the various levels of reason and thought (from simple and ordinary to complex and philosophical) irrelevant to the faith, or is it merely the case for the complex philosophical reasoning?

Many people believe that religion can be evaluated rationally, while some firmly argue that the results of the philosophical research, whatever they are, have no effect on the strong religious belief. In the opening remarks of his comment (dated 23 November, 1654), Pascal distinguishes between "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob", on the one hand, and "the God of the philosophers and scholars", on the other hand (Peterson, et al., 2004, pp. 503-504). According to Pascal and many others, even if one can authentically deduce the existence of God from acceptable premises, this is only academically important. Those with dogmatic beliefs usually state that they have had a dynamic relationship with God in their lives, and, thus, consider "the rational reasoning and other related intellectual activities completely irrelevant" (Peterson, 2004, pp. 503-504).

The above statement mostly emphasizes the complex philosophical reasoning, but the last part is about intellectual activities. Anyway, such thinkers provide the following explanation to substantiate their claim:

This claim can be rationally developed in two ways. First, it is quite right that one should distinguish between philosophical activity and passionate religious faith. Philosophical affiliation to God is completely different from religious affiliation to God. They are man's two different activities. On the whole, it can be said that focusing on the arguments and very precise and complicated proofs and analysis is neither necessary nor sufficient condition for the authentic religious faith. It is not necessary since it is possible that one apparently has a religious conviction, but he may lack the mental capacity needed to engage in the complex intellectual discussions about the religion, and, for example, he cannot present a convincing proof for the existence of God. Second, it is possible that one is proficient in philosophical discussions, and, for example, is able to present valid proofs for the existence of God, but he basically has no religious faith. (Peterson, et al., 2004).

All the given arguments are about the complex philosophical activities; therefore, classification of men must be evaluated in this regard. In other words, for a philosopher, is the philosophical activity merely an academic activity, which satisfies his sense of curiosity, or does it strengthen his beliefs and faith as well? If the required classification is not done, then it may lead to fallacy, since the complex philosophical proofs are surely incomprehensible for the public, they will have no effect on their faith, or even have a negative effect on them and deviate them from what they already have!

The thinkers acknowledge that faith requires a minimum level of reasoning and thinking, which confirms the necessity of the aforementioned classification:

Although a careful philosophical evaluation of the religion is neither necessary nor sufficient condition of the religious faith, it should not be assumed that faith is completely independent and distinctive from rational reflection. Rather, it seems that the religious faith (i.e., trust in and

devotion to a divine being or the like) requires, at least to some extent, rational reflection. (Peterson, et al., 2004, p. 504)

In Muslim world and among the Muslim thinkers, particularly among the proponents of Ash'arite school of thought such as Imam Ghazālī, this thinking prevails. When asked "what is the decree of studying Theology?" Ghazālī declared it forbidden (ḥarām), just like a medicine which cannot be used except in the case of necessity:

If we speak without flattering and consideration of the other party, it must be acknowledged that studying and reflecting on theology is forbidden (ḥarām), since it may cause lots of harm, except for two groups of people: first, one whose heart is filled with suspicions which cannot be removed by preaching and relating traditions. Here, it is allowed to remove his suspicion by theological arguments, used as a "medicine". However, at this point, we should be careful not to allow those who are not in doubt to listen to such arguments, since it may weaken their true dogmatic beliefs; Second, a wise person who is steadfast and firm in the religion and acknowledges the light of certainty and attempts to cure the ideological diseases of Muslims by studying theology. Studying theology is a collective duty, if one has such an intention. In addition, learning theology to the extent that it removes the suspicions is considered imperative duty. All this is the case when studying theology is the only way out. (Ghazālī, 1416/1996, p. 250).

This group of Ash'arites argue that for realization of the faith, there is no need for proofs, rather having dogmatic belief in the objects of the faith is sufficient. They consider proof-based faith as weak and subject to decline. These scholars view the strong faith limited to the faith of the common people, which although, at first, is out of imitation, but, gradually, turns into intuition due to attendance to the remembrance of God:

Rather, the strong faith is merely the faith of the common people which has gradually been shaped in their heart since childhood because of frequency of hearing about it, or it may happen in puberty when the person finds indescribable evidences, and then, it is established in his heart due to continuous worship and remembrance of God. Whoever bends his back to worship, understands the truth of the piety, purifies himself of the impurities of the world, and perseverance in remembrance of God the lights of knowledge are manifested for him, and he can apparently observe the beliefs which he had taken out of imitation. This is the very truth of the knowledge which one cannot attain unless the knot of the beliefs get untied and one's breast is opened by the light of God. (Ghazālī, 1416/1996, p. 251)

This thinker argues that the truth of the knowledge is obtained when the person puts his prejudices aside and, in his words, "the knot of the beliefs get untied", and finally, his breast is opened. To prove his argument, he relies on the religious teachings:

When the Qur'ānic verse "*Whomever Allah desires to guide, He opens his breast to Islam*" (Q. 6: 125) was revealed, the companions asked Prophet (PBUH) the meaning of "*sharḥ ṣadr*" (open his breast). He responded: "it is the light God casts on the believer's heart". It was asked: "what is its sign?" he answered: "renouncing the house of vanity and turning to the house of eternity" ("(Hākīm Neishābūrī, n.d.; Ṭabarsī, 1993; al-Suyutī, 1404/1984). (Ghazālī, 1416/1995, p. 252)

Ghazālī identifies some factors affecting one's faith, including: 1. an inner evidence which cannot be described by words and phrases; 2. veridical dreams; 3. Companionship and communication with enlightened believers and the transmission of the light; and 4. Denoting proofs:

An Arab came to Prophet (PBUM) while strongly rejecting him. However, as soon as his eyes fell on the charming face of Prophet (PBUH), he saw the prophecy light emanating from him. He said: "I swear to God, this face is not the face of a liar!" then, he asked Prophet to present Islam to him, and finally he became Muslim. (Ghazālī, 1416/1995, p. 250)

Of course, Ghazālī does not deny that the intellectual activity can be one of the causes of the faith in some people, but not all of them:

Yes, I don't deny that the theologians' reasons may be one of the causes of the faith in some people, but it is not the mere cause of faith. Indeed, it rarely happens that the only cause of faith is the theologians' reasons. Rather, what is useful is to present the arguments in the form of preaching and advice, just as Qur'ān does. However, the theologians argue polemically to convince the common people, which doesn't present the truth and may even cause the listener to rebel. (Ghazālī, 1416/1995, p. 251)

H. Ghazālī's Apparent Conversion in Some of His Works

Although Ghazālī considers faith as illuminative, and criticizes the thought and reason-based faith, sometimes he apparently refers to philosophical arguments- which are invented by him, in my opinion- to prove the existence of God.

Using the Analogy of Priority to Prove the Existence of God

To explain his argument, Ghazālī uses an analogy. He says when we look at someone who is writing or sewing, his most obvious internal and external features are "life" and "power". By looking at a writer or a tailor, we cannot discern his esoteric features such as lust, anger, temper, health or disease. Even if we discern some of them from his exoteric features, we are doubtful about them. However, his "life", "power", and "will", among other features, are obvious for us, without witnessing them! Such attributes as "life", "power", and "will" are captured by the five senses, but since the person moves, we understand that he is alive and has the feature of "life". By looking at anything but the person and his movements, we cannot tell if he is alive or not, since we understand that he is alive just by looking at the movement of his hand. However, in case of God, although we are not able to see him, whatever we see, hear, and ... all are the signs of his existence. If the life of a writer or a tailor is his most obvious feature for us, while we have not seen anything but the movement of his hand, how God cannot be the most evident being, while the whole universe is His sign:

So how it is possible that we don't see the being whom everything in the universe, whether inside or outside us, is the sign of His existence and His Glory and Grandeur! Every particle of the universe cries out that its existence is not from itself, rather it needs a stimulus and a creator. (Ghazālī, n.d., p. 297)

It seems that Ghazālī is dealing with idea that "I would not believe the existence of God unless I see Him". He wants to show the reader that there are many intangible things that are acceptable. For example, although the "life" is not tangible, it certainly exists.

Hidden Out of the Intensity of Manifestation

Ghazālī argues that God is hidden because of the intensity of His manifestation:

So, God Almighty is the brightest being, and other things get their light from Him. If there are any inexistence, absence and changes for Him, then the Heavens and the earth would disintegrate, and his kingdom would collapse. You could understand the difference between the two states. If some things are, thus, created by Him, and some other things by another creator, some would manifest him and some would manifest another creator. However, all the being manifests Him whose manifestation is permanent in any state, and otherwise is impossible. Accordingly, He is hidden because of the intensity of His manifestation. Ghazālī, n.d., p. 297)

Of course, it is possible to use allegory to explain the intensity of the manifestation as the cause of God' being hidden. Bats can see at night, but are not able to see during the day. The reason why they cannot see during the day is not the darkness, rather it's the intensity of the daylight. Since its eyesight is weak, the sunlight makes it blind. So, the intensity of the sunlight, on the one hand, and the weak eyesight, on the other hand, cause the bat to be blind. Bat can only see when the light and darkness intermingle. Similarly, our intellects are weak and incapable, and the grace of God is at the highest level of intensity. Accordingly, we must not be surprised that the "intensity of the manifestation" results in His "hiddenness", since objects are basically illuminated by their opposites. If there were no darkness, then the light would not be understood. Similarly, since God almighty always exists, and His inexistence is not imaginable, the intensity of His manifestation causes Him to be hidden.

It follows from what has been said that first, God Almighty is the most manifested being on whom the manifestation of other beings depends. However, because of the intensity of His manifestation, God is hidden, if any. The hiddenness resulted from the intensity of the manifestation can be explained using analogy. However, given the rule saying "things can be known by their opposites", on the one hand, and the absence of something opposite to the existence, on the other hand, reinforces this analogy. Second, this hiddenness cannot justify the denial of God, since, in the philosophers' words, this hiddenness is the very "lack of understanding of the true nature of God", which, while being true, cannot be the ground on which one stops trying to know God:

Of course, the statement that by analogy, we can consider the intellect like the eyes of a bat and God like the sunlight is not argumentative, rather it is rhetorical, because, first, its premise is conventional, not axiomatic; second, analogy just gives an example, but it is not an evidence of the certainty. It may even not be considered rhetorical, rather viewed as one of the elements of poetry, since it contains an imaginary simile that affects people, and prevents them from understanding the truth. (Asadabadi, 1423/2002, p. 266).

Conclusion

In his book *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl*, Ghazālī tells the story of how a question occurred to him: "why am I a Muslim?" One interesting point about Ghazālī's life is that this Muslim thinker, long before such philosopher as Descartes, proposed the issue of skepticism, and based his intellectual foundation on it. For Ghazālī, faith is not based on argumentative reason, rather it results from the Divine light. Ghazālī also quotes a narration in which an Arab called the Prophet (PBUH) a liar, even though he had not met him before. According to the narration, as soon as seeing the radiant face of Prophet (PBUH), the man inadvertently uttered the truth, saying: "I swear to God, this face is not the face of a liar!" In this regard, Ghazālī associates the faith and belief with the veridical dreams and communicating with the true scholars

in childhood and teen years, and considers any kind of theological and philosophical reason as the robber of faith.

Considering the Divine illumination as the basis of faith has some consequences the most important of which is the possibility of deviation, since without any criteria to verify a basis and basing it on the spiritual and mystical states, there would be no standard to evaluate the beliefs. The author believes that although intuitive and mystical knowledges are valuable, they are not sufficient. Faith is based on both innate matters and philosophical reasoning, and that the existence of one doesn't negate the other one. Although criticizing the rational reasoning on the faith and beliefs, Ghazālī himself uses the philosophical reasoning to prove the existence of God. He considers the knowledge of God as a sign-based knowledge and proves the existence of God by using a beautiful argument and the analogy of priority. Ghazālī also uses the argument of "manifestation of God in the objects" to prove the existence of God. In fact, he explains that the hiddenness of God is due to the intensity of His manifestation.

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