

IMAM MOTURIDI'S VIEWS ON MUTASHABIH VERSES AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

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Abstract:

The article analyzes the views of Abu Mansur Maturidi, the founder of the Maturidi doctrine, on the parallel verses and their interpretation. It also shows the scholar's method of refuting erroneous doctrinal trends and his role in preserving the foundations of sound faith.

Keywords: Maturidi, belief, doctrine, muhkam, mutashabih, verse, names and attributes of Allah.

Introduction

The word mutashabih is derived from the Arabic language, and in the dictionary, it means "The similarity of two things to each other, the similarity of two things to each other in a way that is assumed, similar to each other to the extent that it is difficult to distinguish, unclear, closed, not clear." It is a word that comes from the infinitive of the root verb "ش-ب-ه" tashabuh, which means "The similarity of two things to each other, the Furthermore, it is very difficult for the human mind to distinguish between them because of this similarity. This situation is called ishtibah, that is, mixed similarity [3:101]. In general, the word mutashabih in Arabic refers to things that are not directly distinguished, are mixed, and resemble each other. "Mutashabih verses are those that are not easily understood, that have several possible meanings, and for which a proof is needed to choose one of them, that are not immediately apparent, that are not clear and unambiguous in their meaning, that are clear in their nature and existence, but whose structure, that is, their clarity, is not known, and whose meaning has not been firmly established" [1:112].

With this, it is not necessary to understand mutashabih as meaningless and meaningless words. Because the meanings of mutashabih are known, it seems that it is not possible to determine a specific purpose due to the multitude of their meanings. Therefore, this concept encompasses all forms of explanation such as irony, allegory, metaphor, truth, investigation, explicit, apparent. As a result, scholars have expressed it with the expression "al-Ma'lum al-Majhul" that is, "The Unknown Known" [9:153-154].

Therefore, depending on the place of a phrase in a mutashabih verse, it can appear in other verses with different meanings, but the meanings are similar to each other in terms of the purpose of each, so it is not clear which meaning is intended. Muhkam, which is the opposite of Mutashabih, is a message with a clear meaning and a clear content with no other possibility.

Also, in the Qur'an there are concepts such as ahad, wahid, tawheed, istivo, arsh, kursi, kalam, nuzul, ityan, majiy, qurb, bud, ma'iy, janb, wajh, nur, ayn, shahadah, yad and kabz, which are related adjectives in the Qur'an. Verbs are divided into adjectives. All scholars of the word belonging to different schools agreed that the adjectives should be interpreted on the basis of language rules and intellectual knowledge. Accordingly, yad is interpreted as "Power", wajh is interpreted as "The Essence", ayn is interpreted as "Knowledge", istiva is interpreted as "Dominion", nuzul is interpreted as "Mercy", and ityan is interpreted as "Divine Command". In general, the scholars of the Salaf accept that these types of attributes should be equated with the meaning of "Bi-la kayf" (unknown), without explaining their lexical meanings, without discussing their essence, without subjecting them to interpretation, and without resorting to similes. According to this view, the khabari attributes have meanings specific to the status of divinity, and only Allah knows their essence. Imam Maturidi also stated that the essences of divine attributes cannot be known, and emphasized that the knowledge acquired as a human being is based on the world of feelings, while human essences are irrelevant in divine attributes [5:146-152].

The number of mutashabih verses has been a subject of debate among commentators and scholars. It is clear from history that there is no consensus among Islamic scholars on this issue. Therefore, it is not possible to give a definite number about the number of mutashabih verses. Similarly, there were those who claimed that the entire Quran was muhkam, and there were also those who said that all of it was mutashabih [2:134-136]. In particular, the words muhkam and mutashabih in verse 7 of Surah Al-Imran have been interpreted with different explanations, and various disputes have arisen about their number and meaning. The analysis of mutashabih verses, their interpretation and commentary are the most important issues of this topic.

According to Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), mutashabih verses are verses at the beginning of the surahs whose letters are muqatta'at and whose verses have been abrogated [4:43].

According to Abu al-Hajjaj Mujahid ibn Jabr, the muhkam verses are those related to halal and haram, and those outside of these are considered mutashabih [6:248].

Qadi Abdul Jabbar also did not comment on the number of mutashabih verses, but only focused on the nature of muhkam and mutashabih verses. According to him, muhkam are verses that are understood from the apparent meaning of the intended meaning. Mutashabih are verses that are not understood from the apparent meaning of the intended meaning and require some conjecture. In mutashabih verses, the intended meaning is known and they also receive the ruling of muhkam verses. [8:598-601].

Al-Maturidi defined mutashabih as: "Something that has a similarity to something other than itself." The scholar was in favor of taking an independent path in understanding verses that have similarities. According to him, "Allah gave man the mind to understand the Qur'an. Almighty Allah has commanded people to understand the Quran, saying: "If you use your intellect, We have made clear to you Our verses. Only those with intellect will understand." [5:27-33] Al-Maturidi says: "Understanding whether something is good or bad is possible with the intellect, and understanding the Quran requires reasoning, reflection, and meditation."

[11:23] Imam Al-Maturidi divides those who conduct research on mutashabih verses into two groups:

1. Those who conduct research with bad intentions and with the aim of causing mischief and corruption in their hearts. They are those who are in disbelief. These are the people described in the Holy Quran as “Those in whose hearts is a deviation follow those who are similar in order to cause mischief.”

2. Interpretations made with good intentions and in accordance with the principles of the religion. We may not see them in all schools of thought,” said Al-Maturidi. By this, the scholar expresses that the Quran allows such research [5:15-17].

However, Imam Al-Maturidi emphasized that interpreting the similar verses in a way that divides the religion into different groups, hinders the unity and harmony of Muslims, and gives priority to one’s own school of thought and views is objectionable and will become an insoluble problem. Al-Maturidi strongly objected to interpreting the mutashabih verses in a way that would divide the religion into different groups, hinder the unity and harmony of Muslims, and give priority to his own school of thought and views, and said that this would lead to insoluble problems. According to Al-Maturidi, the servants cannot know all the meanings contained in the mutashabih verses, but the understanding, explanation, and immutability of the Quran are elements inherent in reason, and he argued that the essence of the mutashabih verses can be understood by using the method of reason and narration. As can be seen, Islamic scholars have put forward different views and classifications according to their own points of view in analyzing the mutashabih verses. Although these classifications are different, it can be observed that they are all based on the knowledge or lack of knowledge of the meaning of the verse. Some of these explanations show that the mutashabih of the verses is continuous, some of them are temporary, and the meaning of the mutashabih remains unclear over time, and when their circumstances become clear, they cease to be mutashabih. Also, the change of mutashabih from one person to another is observed.

Imam Maturidi, in addition to interpreting the concepts of mutashabih (reported) attributes such as Ahad, wahid, tawhid, istiva, arsh, kursi, qalam, nuzul, ityan, majiy, qurb, bud, ma’iya, janb, wajh, nur, ayn, shahadah, yad and kabz, also specifically mentioned that Allah is free from the attributes of the creatures He created in the subject of divine attributes. In particular, Maturidi interpreted Allah's istiva not in the sense of place or location, but in three senses: becoming a ruler, exalting, or reaching perfection.

The Mutashabih verses, while proving the limitlessness and all-encompassing nature of Allah's knowledge, also prove that humanity, despite its scientific and technological advancement, is in need of His knowledge and that knowledge can only be acquired to the extent that He wills. As an unparalleled example of the miraculous address of the Quran, the Mutashabih verses offer each interlocutor the opportunity to understand according to the capabilities of his intellect and worldview.

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