



# Philosophical Approach to “the Brilliant Lights Interpretation”

Mohammad Montazerolmahdi

MSc, Department of Islamic Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Religions and Denominations, Qom, Iran.

**Abstract:** *The brilliant lights’ interpretation is a valuable work by Allameh Ayatollah Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani Najafi. According to the investigations of Allameh Najafi Hamadani’s interpretation, it was concluded in the present study that he has explicated the holy Quran’s verses in his interpretive work by the use of a philosophical principle and/or an intellectual axiom wherever it is deemed necessary and he has well defended the holy Quran’s intellectuality but there are not seen so many philosophical expressions in his work because he has possibly found himself not obliged to the use of such expressions rather he has dealt with figuring out the match between the intellect and the holy Quran’s verses. Of course, there are observed purely philosophical discussions and explanations in his interpretation that considerably assist the better interpretation of the verses. Considering the high value of the “brilliant lights” interpretation that has been neglected, it is necessary to make the researchers and thinkers acquainted with this interpretive work and its outstanding attributes.*

**Keywords:** *Brilliant Lights’ Interpretation, Philosophical Interpretation, Philosophy, Divine Characteristics, Resurrection.*

## INTRODUCTION

Ayatollah Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani was one of the greatest interpreters of the holy Quran and he has authored the “brilliant lights’ interpretation” in 18 volumes. According to the fact that the brilliant lights’ interpretation is amongst the valuable works that has not been adequately attended to by the readers, it is necessary to make the researchers and thinkers get familiar with this interpretation and its splendid features. The present article studies Allameh’s philosophical approach to the interpretation of the holy Quran.

Philosophical interpretation or the philosophical method of interpreting the holy Quran dates back to long ago and it is seen in the works by such philosophers as Kandi, Farabi, Avicenna, Khajeh Nasir Al-Din Tusi, Molla Sadra, Allameh Tabataba’ei and the other philosophers and speakers, as well. The current research paper aims at figuring out and recognizing Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini’s philosophical approach in interpreting the holy Quran and elaboration of his intellectual and philosophical proofs in explicating the holy Quran’s verses.

In this article, the philosophical interpretation is seminally explicated. Then, the value of philosophy, as viewed by Allameh, will be determined and the philosophical theological and eschatological discussions will be investigated for interpreting the brilliant lights. The great apostle’s ascension, as well, is amongst the important issues frequently dealt with in philosophy and the philosophers have come up with various ideas about it. Ayatollah Sayyed Mohammad Hosseini Hamadani, as well, deals with the intellectual explanation and exposition of the ascension based on verses and narrations as well as the intellectual and substantiative elucidation of the related issues under the interpretations of the verses related to the prophet’s ascension. These will be presented in the forthcoming sections of the present article. The article also thoroughly deals with such topics as the existence originality, necessary being, possible being and the

relationship between them in the world as opined by the high-ranking Ayatollah Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Najafi in “brilliant lights’ interpretation”.

In the section of the theology, such topics as the divine characteristics, divine knowledge as well as unity and singleness of the God will be dealt with; it will be shown that there is no conflict between the divine prior knowledge and human free will. Moreover, in the eschatological discussions, such issues as the manifestation of the actions on the judgment day and the important topic of the eternal entry into the heaven and everlasting punishment in hell will be dealt with as opined by Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Najafi in his work “brilliant lights’ interpretation”; the materials have been presented in a rather simplified manner so that the readers can perceive his ideas and notions.

### **Philosophical Interpretation:**

Philosophical interpretation is a method of rendering the holy Quran. There are discrepancies regarding this type of interpretation between the experts some of whom know it as moderating and interpreting the holy Quran’s verses for adjusting them with the philosophical notions while others are of the belief that the philosophical interpretation means the use of philosophy in understanding the verses. Generally, the following three meanings can be reached for this interpretation method:

- 1) Matching the philosophical regulations with the holy Quran’s verses for adapting philosophy and religion with one another that is also termed philosophical interpretation.
- 2) Matching the holy Quran’s verses with the philosophical rules that is called philosophization.
- 3) Application of utmost intellectual care for understanding the verses that is named philosophical method. (Dehghanpour, 2009)

The first interpretation method is seen in Allameh Najafi’s philosophical interpretation.

Many philosophers and speakers like Khajeh Nasir Al-Din Tusi, Farabi, Avicenna and Molla Sadra have utilized philosophical method in interpreting some of the holy Quran’s verses; amongst the foresaid persons, Molla Sadra has spent much more effort in philosophical interpretation of the holy Quran. (Nasiri, 2012).

Ayatollah Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani Najafi, as well, has case-specifically employed philosophical principles and/or intellectual axioms in interpreting the holy Quran and explaining the verses thereof. Some philosophers have endeavored to put a confirmatory stamp on their own philosophical opinions by their philosophical interpretation of the holy Quran but Ayatollah Hamadani has attempted through his philosophical interpretation of some verses to prove the intellectuality of the holy Quran’s verses via offering intellectual proofs and logical reasons and show that there is no conflict between intellect and holy Quran (Ayyazi, 2001).

### **The Position of Philosophy from the Perspective of Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani:**

Ayatollah Hamadani Najafi considered philosophy as having a lofty position. Under the interpretation of verse 49 of surah NISĀ’A, he expresses that philosophy is amongst the sciences by way of which human beings could gain some insights about the limitless secrets of the creation but by spending a lot of efforts hence philosophy can pave the way towards deliverance and eternal felicity (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

He believes that it is via reasoning and intellectual sciences that some truths can be attained; he also states that monotheism has been first acquired based on reasoning and that acquisitive intuition is also laid on the foundation of intellect and reasoning. Of course, under the interpretation of verse 51 of surah ANKABŪT, he asserts that justification of the creation’s truths and secrets through proof and reasoning is only doable by the believers who have reached the rank of truth acceptance and that it can be never accomplished by the antagonists who do not want to conceive any truth.

Alongside with giving too much value to philosophy and intellectual proofs, he does not know reasoning as a suitable method for discovering the internal truths; he also realizes the attainment of the heartfelt faith only through intuition as he states, under the interpretation of verse 37 of surah HAJJ, that the right claimant should have acquired faith through intuition and internally not externally and by reasoning. Elsewhere, he states that the prophet’s faith was of this same type.

### **Philosophical Interpretation of the verses in Brilliant Lights:**

Allameh Hosseini Hamadani has employed philosophical principles and intellectual proofs in every corner of the holy Quran wherever it is deemed necessary for interpreting the verses thereof. There are many notable points in his interpretations. Here, the theological and eschatological matters of his interpretations are explored.

- **Divine Characteristics:**

- ✓ **Recognition of the Divine Characteristics:**

Allameh believes that the mankind can never reach a real recognition of the God's characteristics and that the human beings can only come up with definitions of the divine characteristics as far as their intellects allow and realize all his characteristics as necessarily belonging to Him and consider Him as being clean of any defection and flaw.

Under the interpretation of verse 2 of surah HAMD, he orders that:

“The God has attached His purity to extolment or, better said, He has considered it superior and original because the mankind would never reach an insight over the necessary characteristics of the God hence he is eternally incapable of describing it the way He deserves” (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

Allameh also expresses that “the mankind has imagined and gained insight over whatever the thing he has succeeded to describe whereas the necessary characteristics of the God can never be discerned. So, the possible beings, humans, are not competent enough to describe His characteristics hence they are incumbently urged to purify his sacrosanct being of any flaw” (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

In explaining the fact that the divine characteristics are exactly parts of the God's essence and under the interpretation of verse 186 of surah Al-A'ARĀF, Ayatollah Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Najafi expresses that the God's names and perfection traits are exactly part of His essence and they are not additional to the essence and acquisitive like those of the mankind; also, he states that the essence of the “necessary being” is meant by the word “Allāh” that features perfection traits as integral parts of His essence and He is clean of any defection and possibility.

In proving the idea that each perfection trait is exactly an integral and objective part of the God, he gives “knowledge” as an example and orders that “for example, science and knowledge do not hold for the God's sacrosanct quintessence but they would be in proportion to the God's quintessence if they are purified of flaw and possibility, to wit the knowledge by presence and in a supervisory and perfect conversance over a certain thing. This same reasoning also holds for life and power. Thus, the God's inherent knowledge is a real trait that belongs to His essence in an integral manner”. (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984)

- ✓ **Actual and Essential Traits:**

The actual and essential traits have been put forth in the interpretation of many of the verses in “brilliant lights' interpretation”. Allameh divides the divine characteristics into the integral and additional traits. Under the interpretation of verse 186 of surah Al-A'ARĀF, he divides the perfection traits of the God into two types as explained in the following words: some of the divine characteristics imply the stability and integrated nature of them and they are envisioned as the objective and necessary traits like life and power; these are called essential traits. The other type includes the additional traits that are shared between the creatures and beings such as creation that is comprehended by intellect through deduction from “creature”; these are called actual traits.

In continuation, he expresses that each of the God's actual or essential traits are real features in a default manner and that if a name or word is used to refer to them, it would be the name of the God because each of the God's actual and/or essential traits signify a sign or a name or an embodiment of the divine domain. As for the quality of the God's characterization by perfection traits, Allameh, like many of the speakers and philosophers, takes advantage of the law “take the ultimate goal and leave the basics”. Under the interpretation of the expression “the most compassionate the most merciful” and characterization of the God by compassionateness and mercifulness, he orders that the compassionateness is a passive trait indicating the impression left on an observer upon bearing witness to the needfulness of a needy as a result of which one might feel tenderness of the heart and sadness of the mind thereby to take measures in line with satisfying the needful person's demand and this is one of the lowest ranks of

compassionateness. Hence, because passive state, as a manifestation of a possible being's flaw, is far from the God's essence, it can be stated that the God's compassionateness is an integral and necessary and objective part of His essence so the utmost rank of the God's compassionateness is the very donation of such a gift as existence.

He states that the characterization of the God by the perfection traits is the highest rank of those attributes. Such a way of characterization has also been intended by Molla Sadra and Allameh Tabataba'ei and it is the best method of expressing the God's characterization by perfection traits. Using the same style, Allameh also characterizes the God with such other perfection traits as volition, power, wrath, knowledge and so forth (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

In defining the divine characteristics and the way of characterizing the God by these traits, Ayatollah Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani Najafi has not made use of many philosophical expressions but he has conceptually employed philosophical principles and intellectual proofs.

- **Originality of Existence:**

The originality of existence and credibility of the nature have been extensively discussed in philosophy. Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini defines originality as stated in the following words:

“And, in terms of the existence originality, the thing that is honored to exist in the supernatural world and is essentially worthy of being existent is the very being and its nature can be understood and abstracted based on its being. Finally, the thing that is wanted in the system and comes to existence and is originally a part of the system is a unit and specific external existence that is introduced by intellect as, saying, the mankind; it is not so that the human beings have been created but that they are demanded by the universal system and the mankind, in general, has been beamed from the supernatural world and his form and matter are the transversal accompanying effects of such existence” (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

He continues the discussion by expressing that the God is the existing sole and His truth is the mere existence featuring expansion but no combination. He cannot be denied of any attribute and perfection; it means that the God's existence is not limited to any lack so that He can be deprived thereof. He goes on with stating that “so, all the creatures are beams of the God's existence and relying in their being on Him and that the God's existence is self-standing and essentially exclusive to Him. Thus, the entire creatures are existentially completely needful of the God and they are never independent”.

Then, he exemplifies the existence of the God and the existence of the creatures in the sun and the light and states that the sun rays are perfectly dependent on the sun in their occurrence and survival.

- **Necessary Being, Possible Being and their Relationships:**

The addition of a necessary trait to an existence means that the existence is necessary for it but the addition of a possible trait to an existence means that the existence is probable for it. Of course, in regard of the possibility in its specific sense, i.e. the meaning that is used in philosophy and intended by the philosophers, nonexistence is also not necessary for it.

The relationship between the necessary being and the possible being the way the world's possible being have come to the existence are discussions for which many ideas and notions have been offered in philosophy and theosophy. Here, we suffice to the presentation of the idea by Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani.

Under the interpretation of such verses as “*Lam Yaled wa Lam Youlad wa Lam Yakon Lahū Kofowan Ahad*” and after expressing that these verses are interpretations of the oneness and praiseworthiness of the sacred domain of the God, he discusses the possible beings' needfulness of the God and gives an explanation about the way the God has knowledge of the beings before and after coming to existence and explicates the possible beings and the God as the necessary being in the following words.

He expresses that “the possible beings are each purely linked to and stem from an expanded existence in the external system and they are in the domain of His omnipotent force majeure and their occurrence and persistence as well as their evanescence are all within the area of His mighty intuition and power because the possible beings are beams and sun rays of the heavenly blessings and they never feature any expediency in respect to His knowledge and power rather He gives existence to and allows the appearance of everything within certain limits and the existence is never related to and originated from the universe

but it is dependent on the existence of a necessary being and stemming from it and all the beings are constantly revolving about the pivot of His wants” (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

He also states that the possible beings and the possibilities owe their existence to a beam of the God’s existential light and they are all dependent on the God and that the God has intuitive knowledge over all of them and also that the creatures are sun rays of the God’s existence and this God’s light will be beaming the external system forever.

Elsewhere and in brilliant lights’ interpretation, in defining the necessary existence and the possible existence with the latter being also called linked existence by him he expresses that an existence can be either necessary meaning that it is needless of any other thing and self-standing in its existence or possible meaning that it is needful of another thing to be existence; in this regard, the necessary being has to feature an existence without beginning and ending and it has to be self-existence and self-reliant. All of the subsequent possible beings and possibilities borrow their existence from the God and they are linked creatures having no existence of their own rather their existence is sort of linked; there is also defection and flaw in the possible beings but no defection and flaw can find a way into the God’s existence.

He concludes his discussions on the necessary being and possible being in the following words:

“The result is that a being cannot exist in any other way than a necessary being, as a real and self-dependent existence in its absolute sense, or a possible being taking its existence in the form of a beam or a ray from the former; whatever the things that are bestowed upon a possible being are also beams of the perfect existence of the endower; so, based on this proof, the existence is either self-standing or an incumbently needless and absolutely independent being featuring no beginning and ending and the second type of the existence is an abstract and material link like an individual’s shadow that is not independent in its essence rather being purely linked and stemming from a self-existent stand-alone being and considered as a beam or ray of the sun that is issued in an axis thereof by its omnipotent blessing” (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

As it was observed, he defines the necessary being as a self-relying existence and the possible beings as dependent other-relying existences.

The following paragraph gives his interesting idea about the existence of the possible beings.

He states that the creatures are per se light beams issued by the God and His light not that a beam of the God’s light has irradiated on them. Some philosophers believe that based on the axiom of the essential unity of the existence that there is only one existence that belongs to the God and there is no other existence except that of the God; in exemplifying this with the sun and its light beams, they are of the belief that a beam of the God’s existence irradiate on the other beings and it is this beam of light that is reflected by them not that these creatures have an existence other than the reflected existence in themselves. They also considered the sun rays and beams as integral parts of the sun’s existence. But, Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani describes the beams as being the world’s creatures. It is made clear with this exemplification that the creatures each feature an existence but, like the sun rays that depend their existence on the sun and will be shining as long as the sun irradiates, the possible creatures’ existence depends and relies on the God’s existence and they are needful of the God for occurrence and persistence.

- **Unity of the God and its Proof:**

Islamic philosophers have offered numerous proofs for proving the God’s existence amongst which the order theorem, guidance theorem, veracious individuals’ argument and an array of other proofs can be pointed out. Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Najafi Hamadani has not specifically dealt with the proofs of justifying the God’s existence in his interpretations rather he has made transient references to some proofs like the theorems of order and nature and considers the God’s existence as a well-proved claim for all of the mankind and realizes it as a datum intrinsically internalized in the nature of all the mankind. Under the interpretation of verse 163 of surah BAQARAH, he orders that the prophets’ intention has not been the justification of the God’s existence because theology is the intrinsic instinct of the mankind meaning that all the human beings are naturally seek for the recognition of a God the existence of which is proved for them; the only controversial issue is the oneness of the God and this is

why the sentence “*Lā Elāha Illā Allāh*” [there aren’t any other gods but the one Allah] is the first shout reverberated by the prophets in the world for introducing the oneness of the God to the mankind meanwhile being a warning announcement that lest the mankind’s internal force that has been existentially incumbent to create the world goes astray or be impressed by some created things like some human individuals or the moon or the sun and/or fire and light and become ignorant of the real Creator and take other things as His partners.

It becomes clear from the abovementioned materials that Allameh believed that the God and the Creator’s existence is accepted in a default manner in the nature of all the human beings as well as in theology and the mankind has been in search of the God and the real Creator in the course of history but he has sometimes happened to mistakenly take and worship an unreal god as his creator.

In the discussions on theology and recognition of the real God, as it was mentioned, Allameh knows theology as a built-in compartment of the human nature in his interpretation of the brilliant lights and finds it not so much difficult to recognize the real God by the use of the intellect and through observing the universe; however, to prove the oneness of the God, he points to several intellectual proofs that will be presented below.

One of the reasons that he offers in his interpretations for indicating the God’s singleness and his not being partnered is that the human conscience testifies that any partner considered for the God in devising strategies for organizing and ruling the world is per se another creature of the God and the effects that are objectified by the partner in the world’s order are also assisted by the God out of His graciousness. In this case, when the human beings’ conscience brings testimony that the God has not appointed any partner for ruling the world and establishing order therein, how can any partner be considered for the God at all?

Under the interpretation of verse 83 of surah BAQARAH, he orders that the world’s creator’s existence is well-evident in its essence and accepted by the mankind’s nature and not a single wise person can deny it. Hence, it is not needed to be proved by theorems or taught and advised by the prophets; the things in need of the proofs and theorems have been the prophets’ intentions and it is, verily, the Creator’s unity and His uniqueness in creation and His unexampled existence in terms of essence and traits.

✓ **Individuation, a Proof for the God’s Unity:**

Individuation and distinction are important discussions in philosophy and some philosophers have dealt with it. Here, Allameh Tabataba’ei’s definition of distinction and individuation is presented. In *Bedāyah Al-Hekmah*, Allameh Tabataba’ei orders that distinction means the difference of a nature from another but individuation comes about by an object’s possession of a certain nature; he realizes individuation as the reason for the existence of a nature in such a way that when a nature comes to existence, it is consequently given an individuation or another.

Ayatollah Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Najafi Hamadani expresses individuation as a reason for the unity of the God. Under the interpretation of verse 117 of surah BAQARAH, he orders: “and, another effect and outcome of an unprecedented trait is that the limitless and sequential creatures of this world are each unique and unprecedented and unexampled within their existential and individuation limits because the multiplicity of the individuals of any sort of the creatures’ ranks includes a truth beyond the essences of each person and the ambiguous type of any individual’s existential persistence is the very objective individuation of that person that solely belongs to him or her and other individuals of the same type do not share anything of that characteristic hence every creature is unprecedented, unexampled and unique and also unequalled and matchless within its individuation realm and this signifies the existence of the one Creator of the world” (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

As it was observed, Based on the individuation of the natures and objects and the creatures of the universe, Allameh proved that this individuation of the natures and the special and unique characteristics of any creature are somehow specific to it and expressive of the existence of a unitary and single God.

The other reason for the God’s oneness that has also been pointed out in the brilliant lights’ interpretation is the prophets’ mission and their being dispatched by the God. Under the interpretation of verse 165 of surah NISĀ’A, Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani orders that the prophets’ mission is a proof of the God’s oneness for the reason that all the prophets have come to the mankind to guide and lead

them and call them towards a single God while, if there was any other gods other than the One God, prophets could have been sent by them towards the human beings to navigate them towards God. So, the commissioning of the prophets to the guidance towards a single God is per se another proof indicating the uniqueness of the God.

- **Eschatology:**

Allameh Najafi expresses that resurrection is amongst the intellectual necessities and no wise person can doubt about its occurrence. In proving the resurrection, he orders that the foreigners who believe in the God and know that they and the world have been created by Him should also know that the prerequisite to this intrinsic belief is that the mankind will also have a more perfect life after death otherwise the creation of the world would be in vain. Then, he deals with the decomposability of the body as an elemental thing and indestructability of the soul as the truth of the human being and the faculty of thinking and contemplation and belief and an abstract thing.

- ✓ **Exemplification and Embodiment of Actions in the Hereafter:**

Actions' embodiment or actions' objectification and/or actions' exemplification are very important discussions in philosophy and discourse and they mean the embodiment of the mankind's actions before them on the judgment day. By the actions' embodiment, it is intended that the human beings' good and benevolent actions of the human beings appear in the form of heavenly gifts and paradise and the sins and the immoralities emerge as fire and hell chastisement to the human beings.

The actions' embodiment on the judgment day is based on the relationship between action and punishment and this is one of the very important topics dealt with in the holy Quran and many narrations. Based on verses and narrations, the actions' embodiment is not so that an external factor would begin punishing or rewarding for what one has done in this world rather it is the ego that punishes and rewards; fire and blessings are existent along with the soul on the judgment day.

The philosophers and speakers, as well, have offered many theories in this regard. There are also presented interpretations different from verses on actions' embodiment by them. Of course, it is noteworthy that actions feature both corporeal and otherworldly forms and they will lose their corporeal form on the judgement day after undergoing certain changes and appear in their otherworldly forms that will be either the causes of pleasure and happiness and/or irritation and sadness.

Under the interpretation of verse 30 of surah ĀL-e-IMRĀN, Allameh Hosseini orders that "this verse speaks of the isthmus and intuition and it is related to the time that every soul and ego would intuitively and internally find whatever the things it cordially and ideologically believed in the world" (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

He expresses that the God creates the forms of the teachings and the truths that existed in the hearts of the believers in the world in an intuitive and inherent manner in their soul and psyche in the other world and this real knowledge and teachings will be accompanying him like a shadow. Allameh also knows the verse as embracing the apparent actions and behaviors and orders that resurrection as well as the signification of the verse "*Man Amelat Min Khairen Mohzaran*" also incorporates the dispositional and bodily actions and voluntary and optional movements; he also holds that the human beings use their body organs based on their judgements and by the soul's requirement and force to give manifestation to their ideological and intuitive forms and teachings and truths through their actions and movements in the outside world and it is as a result of the volitional actions that the beliefs are embodied, the garment of truth is put on the opinions and the sensual and psychological intentions are actualized.

- ✓ **The Human Beings' Isthmic Form from the Perspective of the Intellectual Sciences:**

Allameh Hosseini Hamadani uses the intellectual proofs to exemplarily define the isthmic form of the human beings as the very sensual, ideological and ethical forms and orders that the soul streamlines towards perfection in proportion to its capacity to become finally revealed on the judgment day in the form of a vivid truth very much like the elemental body that takes its own path towards perfection in proportion to its own competency as a result of the spiritual attractions of the soul. He takes advantage of the example of the body to shadow relation in this regard.

✓ **Eternal Life in Heaven and Hell:**

One of the very important issues frequently discussed by many philosophers and speakers regarding resurrection and otherworldly life is the eternal life after the judgment day in the other world and its quality. Numerous notions have been posited in this regard. There are many questions in the intellectual approach to the human's eternal life in the other world and these questions have given rise to conflicts and challenges in the area of intellectual and philosophical discussions. Some of the theologians realize the God as the absolute being and pure benefactor and the human beings as the manifestations of the God in the universe and, due to the same reason, find the human beings' sins and guilt as nonpermanent but as veils that blur the truth. They state that the human beings reach their preliminary structure after death and decay. In regard of this latter issue, Molla Sadra, under the influence of Ibn Arabi, insists on the non-eternity of life in the other world but, later on, he revises his idea and proves the eternity of chastisement using various proofs including the proportion of the punishment with the human essence. Allameh Tabataba'ei, as well, accepts the eternity of chastisement following Molla Sadra's revised notion. In an intellectual justification of the issue and under the verse 82 of surah BAQARA, Allameh Hosseini Hamadani proves the eternal life in the heaven and hell in this way: "although the God's chastisements and rewards have boundless ranks and perceptions, the least of their perception to the Kaffirs includes eternal and persisting chastisement because the perfection of every being and/or every trait depends on its persistence and stability and its decline and shakiness would be considered as a flaw in that being or trait and, because the God's wrath is an aspect of His godly and indefinite compassionateness and blasphemy's entitlement to chastisement is also limitless, the Kaffirs and disbelievers will never deserve the God's mercifulness and they will be never forgiven by him hence they will be inflicted with the hell fire for always and ever" (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

Under the interpretation of verse 25 of surah BAQARAH, he also proves the believers' eternal life in heaven in the same way and expresses that the heavenly gifts are the best manifestations of the mercifulness and compassionateness of the God and their persistence depends on the persistence and stability of the divine mercifulness and, because transformation and decline of every gift would be envisioned as an instance of defection, so these heavenly blessings should be persistent and everlasting.

It was also observed in eschatological discussion, as well, that his philosophical approach is in a way that he has dealt with the explanation of the holy Quran's verses through taking advantage of the intellectual proofs.

• **The Prophet's Ascension in Brilliant Lights' Interpretation:**

The ascension has been succinctly dealt with in the holy Quran. Reference has been made to ascension in the first verse of surah ESRĀ'A, verses 5-18 of surah NAJM and verse 45 of surah ZOKHROF. In these verses, the worldly duration of ascension, the distance of this wayfaring ascension and the prophet's observations when in ascension and the ascension's goal can be seen but the explanation and explication of these topics is beyond the present study's scope. However, the qualities of the prophet's ascension and the prophet's perception and, more importantly, the ascension's physicality and/or spirituality are not seen in these verses. Due to the same reason, there are many ambiguities regarding the aforesaid issue and philosophers have dealt with their solutions. (The center for the culture and teachings of the Holy Quran, 2005)

Under the interpretation of the first verse of surah ESRĀ'A, Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani Najafi expresses the following cases regarding the issues of ascension the explanations of which have not been stated in the holy Quran:

- 1) The movement and wayfaring of the great apostle of Islam (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards) from Masjed Al-Haram to Masjed Al-Aqsa have taken place with the same elemental body and within a certain period of time. It means that this part of the ascension has been physical.
- 2) There is a discrepancy between the scholars regarding the idea that whether the ascension has been physical, spiritual or concomitantly physical and spiritual.



- 3) The prophet's ascension from Masjed Al-Aqsa to the high heavens and his being presented with the ranks of the sublime world has been spiritual for the fact that the high heavens are abstract and beyond time and such a sublime world can be only perceived by heart or by the sacred soul of such a person as the prophet (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards); however, considering the other fact that the prophet's soul had been attached to his elemental body and he has been residing in a place in Masjed Al-Aqsa, it can be stated that the ascension has been both physical and spiritual.
- 4) The signs shown by the God to the prophet (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards) during his ascension have surely been of ranks a lot higher than those of the preliminary self-evident truths and also they must have been perceived through intuition and knowledge by presence not in an acquisitive manner for the fact that the prophet (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards) has discerned them with no intermediation and without applying his senses and imagination.
- 5) The intention of the prophet's ascension from Masjed Al-Haram to Masjed Al-Aqsa has been getting ready to receive the signs of the almighty magnificence of the God so that his cognizance can reach the utmost degree of the possible recognition and intuition and he can feel the splendor of the God in his heart.
- 6) This rank of intuition that has been reached for the prophet (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards) during his ascension is only specific to the last prophet of the God and none of the previous prophets arrived at such a lofty position.
- 7) Reaching the close vicinity of the God's domain can be rendered feasible only as a result of the perfect relationship and attention of the human soul to the omnipotent domain of the God.

As it was clarified, Allameh Hamadani Najafi's idea regarding the most important issue of ascension that is the physicality or spirituality of the ascension is that it has happened in two parts with the first, i.e. from Masjed Al-Haram to Masjed Al-Aqsa, having taken place in a bodily form and the second part, from Masjed Al-Aqsa to the sublime world, in a spiritual manner but it has also been in such a way that the prophet's soul had been attached to his honorable body. So, it can be stated that the ascension of the last prophet (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards) has been concomitantly physical and spiritual as held by Allameh Hosseini Najafi.

- **Knowledge:**

- ✓ **Knowledge By Presence and Acquisitive Knowledge:**

Knowledge is attained either with no intermediation of the form and concept that is called knowledge by presence or by the intermediation of a sensory imaginative form and/or actualized by an intellectual and imaginative concept that is called acquisitive knowledge. The ego-specific acquisitive knowledge pertains to materials and its container is mind. In knowledge by presence and intuition, nothing happens outside the learner's essence rather it is an integral aspect of his or her existence. (Fayyaz Saberi, 2003)

Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Najafi Hamadani has also dealt with acquisitive knowledge and knowledge by presence. Under the interpretation of verse 120 of surah MĀ'IDA, he states that everybody is well aware of one's own self and his or her own internalities based on the knowledge by presence; it means that s/he knows and finds his internal essences through knowledge by presence. But, his idea about the knowledge of the other numerous creatures in the world is that the human beings have no insight over them and it is only accidentally and by chance if they gain knowledge of them and this would be a sort of acquisitive knowledge that is attained by the mankind only in a limited manner.

He adds that the other countless classes of the creatures including the animals and others essentially have no knowledge of their own selves and the other creatures; so, the world is a vast scene of the unseen world that is manifested within the format of countless creatures having no knowledge of one another.

The followings are some of the examples that Allameh gives about the acquisitive knowledge and knowledge by presence in brilliant lights' interpretations:

He exemplifies the acquisitive knowledge in the existence of a city like Mecca or in a mathematical equation like two plus two equals four and expresses the knowledge over the internal characteristics and the humans' insights over their habits and their psychological memories as examples of the knowledge by presence.

Allameh enumerates the sensual wayfaring and self-recognition in such a way that the human beings find themselves as a beam of the God's domain amongst the types of the knowledge by presence and the psychological and intuitive insight and adds that none of the fellows of faith and piety will find themselves enhanced from acquisitive cognizance and intuition and the utmost level of their wayfaring and perfection is cognizance and intuition through psychological intuition and self-recognition.

✓ **Divine Knowledge:**

Allameh Najafi Hamadani expresses under the interpretation of verse 255 of surah BAQARAH about the God's characterization by such a trait as knowledgeableness that knowledge and insight are perfection traits that mean a form of an object inscribed in the mind and these traits do not belong to the God for the fact they are place-specific and flawed but they can become in proportion to and fitting the God's domain in case of being separated from flaw and probability, to wit knowledge by presence in a manner of perfect mastery over evident truths.

He continues that characterizing the God by such a trait as knowledge shows that it refers to the inherent knowledge of the God hence knowledge is the real and objective attribute of the God's essence and the term "knowledge" is applied as a noun for an essential and intrinsic adjective of the God.

According to the definition of the essential and actual traits in the previous sections, it was concluded that the God has insight over the creatures due to the existence of the creatures. Such a type of knowledge for the God is an actual trait but the knowledge in any other form is an essential trait. Under the interpretation of verse 186 of surah AL-A'ARĀF, Allameh Najafi Hamadani expresses that it has been clear to the God from the very beginning that what goal each of the human individuals choose and which school of thought they follow and to which pleasant or unpleasant happening they will be encountered and which of their goals and intentions they will achieve during the last instants of their lives.

He continues his discussions with the idea that the divine knowledge of the foresaid type is an inherent trait the lower example and rank of which is actual trait that is a part of this world's system and based on the movement and decline.

➤ **Removing the Conflict between the God's Prior Knowledge and Human Beings' Free Will:**

As it is clear and previously proved by the philosophers, the God's knowledge has certain types that are briefly dealt with in the following sections:

▪ **Kinds of the Divine Knowledge:**

**A. God's Knowledge of His Own Essence:**

The God is aware of His own essence through knowledge by presence. The God is an abstract being hence His own reality is perceived by Him through knowledge by presence.

**B. The God's Essential Knowledge of the Creatures:**

There are various notions stated regarding the God's inherent knowledge of the creatures but Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hosseini Hamadani is well aware of the idea that the God has full and detailed knowledge by presence about the entire creatures and beings.

**C. The God's Prior Knowledge of the Creatures:**

The God's prior knowledge over the creatures is of the knowledge by presence type and, in terms of its succinct or detailed nature, it can be stated that it is brief while being of the detailed intuition type because the God has expanded knowledge about the existential perfections of all the creatures for his enjoyment of an essential and inherent rank. Since existence is a truth, it is evident that every perfect thing possesses the existential ranks of an imperfect thing plus an additional complementary part. Additionally, nothing will be added to the God's knowledge after the creatures reach an existence rank because no change has a way into the divine essence's rank (Molla Sadra, Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim, Asfar).

Under the interpretation of verse 9 of surah SHO'ARĀ'A, Allameh Najafi points to this sort of the divine knowledge and expresses that the God has knowledge of all the creatures even before they come to existence.

#### **D. Knowledge of Creatures After Being Created:**

Knowledge of the creatures after their creation or, in other words, actual knowledge of the creatures is a sort of detailed knowledge by presence but it is not an integral aspect of the God's essence because this knowledge is assumed to feature an actual nature that outlays the God's essence. Here, the God has knowledge about the reality of the creatures that are per se actually created by Him (Sa'eidi Mehr, 2011). This type of the God's knowledge has also been frequently pointed out in the brilliant lights' interpretation and this knowledge has been described as a sort of detailed knowledge by presence. He orders that the God's knowledge is an objective part of His essence in which difference and multiplicity have no way neither conceptually nor in real terms.

The main discussion here pertains to the third type of the God's prior knowledge and its contradiction of the humans' free will. Allameh Najafi Hamadani expresses such a conflict from the perspective of Fakhr Razi as stated in the following words:

In the Great Interpretation of the verse 8 of surah SHO'ARĀ, Fakhr Razi reasons for the justification of determinism that the human beings' actions are not issued based on their free will. The reasoning can be summarized in that the world's incidents, the human actions included, have been clear to the God from the very beginning. So, the occurrence and actualization of each of them is necessary and any violation thereof means that the God's knowledge is flawed but the God's domain is pure of any defection in which case the mankind is envisioned as predestined regarding all his actions for the reason that they have been previously clear to the God. That is because the necessity for the occurrence and actualization of an action based on the God's knowledge contradicts the doer's free will. In responding to this reasoning and fault, Allameh Najafi Hamadani states that the God has prior knowledge of all the creatures and their actions that are per se dependent on the God's free will in doing an action or another meaning that this knowledge not only is not contradictory to the human beings' free will but it also affirms the human beings' free will in their actions. In resolving this conflict, he states that:

"The answer to this doubt is that the God's knowledge of the humans' free will in doing actions causes solidification and stabilization of the doer's attribute of free will because, the same way that the God has knowledge over the mankind's original actions, He also has knowledge of such a doer's characteristic as free will that is termed individuation of action for the reason that the God's knowledge is not across the doer's free will like a being that necessarily depends on another for existence or the being that inherently has the possibility of existence; hence, in terms of the issuance, the actions are performed out of a doer's free will which is an instrument of an action's individuation and also because the God has had knowledge of such an arbitrary action from the very beginning, the issuance of the action is an optional feature that is inviolable" (Hosseini Hamadani, 1984).

As it was made clear, Allameh resolves the conflict by stating that the human beings' free will is along the God's will but in a lower rank and that the God has knowledge of both the actions of the human beings and the optionality of doing them or leaving them undone.

#### **Conclusion:**

The philosophical approach of the brilliant lights' interpretation is in such a way that, upon encountering a subject in need of intellectual elaboration and explanation by means of the philosophical principles, Allameh has used the same style to explain them and defend the intellectuality of the Holy Quran's verses. In confrontation with the philosophical topics, he also has specifically explicated the philosophical matters in every corner of his interpretative book alongside with the interpretation of the verses. In this regard, his ideas are very valuable and resolving and ponderable, in some cases.

He divides the divine characteristics into two types of inherent or essential and actual, and explains the relationship between the God's essence and characteristics based on a philosophical style in such a way

that he has made use of the existence originality theory to explicate the necessary being and its relationship with possible beings and creatures. He is also seen utilizing philosophical and intellectual principles in explaining the verses on resurrection, the God's ascension, the eternal life in hell as well as an array of the other subjects.

## References

1. Ayyazi, M. A., (2001), "Allameh of Hamadan and brilliant lights", *Golestan-e-Quran*, 17(27).
2. Dehghanpour, A., (2009), "Molla Sadra's philosophical approach towards the interpretation of the holy Quran", *Ma'arefat*, 17(128).
3. Fayyaz Saberi, A., (2003), "the God's prior knowledge and humans' free will", *Islamic Discourse*, 13.
4. Hosseini Hamadani, M., (1984), "brilliant lights in the interpretation of the holy Quran", 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Lotfi Press.
5. Molla Sadra, (2006), "translation of Asfar", 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Mawla.
6. Nasiri, A., (2012), "Molla Sadra and philosophical approach towards the Holy Quran", *Bayyinat*, 18(69).
7. Sa'eidi Mehr, Muhammad, (2011), "divine knowledge from the perspective of Sadr Al-Mota'allehin", novel religious mindset, no.22.
8. Tabataba'ei, M. H., (2015), "Bedayah Al-Hekmah", 18<sup>th</sup> ed., Dar Al-Elm.
9. The center for the culture and teachings of the Holy Quran, (2005), "Holy Quran Encyclopedia", 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Qom, Boustan-e-Ketab Publication Institution.