

Qur'an Being a Speech of Allāh and not a Creation

Muftiyah Mirah Malaika

Course: The Ash'ari Creed, AQD 502

International Open University

Assignment question:

Write about al-Qur'ān being a speech of Allāh and not a creation. Mention the view of Ahlus-

Sunnah wal-Jama'ah

Author Note

Muftiyah Mirah Malaika, Department of Islamic Studies, International Open University.

Contact: info@mirahmalaika.com

Abstract

This research paper elaborates the positions of Aḥl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah and Ashā'irah regarding the Qur'ān being the speech of Allāh. The position of the Ashā'irah that the Qur'ān is not the actual speech of Allāh but merely a creation was brought up by ibn Kullāb and Abū Ḥasan al-Ash'arī and was then followed by their followers.

In the past, this issue has been very significant for the scholars of Aḥl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah as the government, which attributed itself to the Mu'tazilah creed, enforced the view on the scholars that the Qur'ān is a creation. The truth is far away from what they said.

Many scholars suffered under the persecution of the governors who tried to enforce this false belief but remained firm in their belief in the truth.

This research paper will explain some important matters regarding this issue.

Firstly, the correct view regarding Qur'ān being the speech of Allāh will be discussed with evidence.

Secondly, the view of the Ashā'irah creed will be mentioned and refuted with evidence.

Lastly, it will be explained why this issue is of such great importance in the Islamic creed.

Keywords: Aqidah, Islamic theology, Quran, speech of Allāh, Ash'ari Creed,

Asha'irah

Introduction

The righteous predecessors never differed regarding the Qur'ān being a speech of Allāh. The first time, a different view was brought up regarding this issue was the view of ibn Kullāb and Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī.

The modern-day Ashā'irah have retracted from the original view of ibn Kullāb and Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī to some extent, but they nevertheless do not follow the view of Aḥl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah and the righteous predecessors (salaf al-ṣāliḥ) as they still do not believe in the Qur'ān to be the speech of Allāh (kalāmullāh) in the real sense (ḥaqīqatan).

Therefore, it is of utmost importance to clarify the position of Aḥl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah regarding the Qur'ān to be the speech of Allāh (kalāmullāh) in the real sense (ḥaqīqatan) and to point out the mistakes that the Ashā'irah make in this regard.

This research paper is divided into three sections.

Section 1: The position of Aḥl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah regarding the Qur'ān being the speech of Allāh (kalāmullāh) will be discussed with evidence.

Section 2: The position of Ashā'irah regarding the Qur'ān being a creation will be discussed and refuted with evidence.

Section 3: The importance of the correct stance towards this issue will be clarified.

May Allāh grant us guidance and the ability to seek more knowledge and a better understanding regarding His religion and 'aqīdah (theology). Amīn.

**The Position of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah regarding the Qur'ān being the speech of
Allāh (kalāmullāh)**

Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah believe in the Quran to be the Speech of Allāh, uncreated, and an attribute of Allāh. (Al-'Uthaymīn, 2019) (Al-'Uthaymīn, 2008) (Al-Fawzān, 2009) This means that Allāh “speaks with letters and sound how He wants and when He wants.” (Al-'Uthaymīn, 2019) Therefore, it is both one of his Personal Attributes and one of His Attributes of Action. (Al-'Uthaymīn, 2019) Shaykh al-Fawzān described the Quran as “the Word of Allāh, revealed, not created, it initiated from Him, and to Him it returns”. (Al-Fawzān, 2009)

There is plenty of evidence in the Quran and the Sunnah, some of which will be mentioned here.

1. The Quran is the Speech of Allāh.

“And when anyone of the mushrikīn seeks your protection, then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of Allāh.” (Sūrah at-Tawbah, 9:6)

In this verse, Allāh attributes the word (kalām) to Himself, which shows that the Quran is the Speech of Allāh (kalāmullāh).

2. The Quran was revealed, not created.

“The month of Ramaḍān in which the Quran was revealed.” (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:185)

“Verily, We have sent it down in the Night of al-Qadr.” (Sūrah al-Qadr, 97:1)

“And We have revealed it by stages.” (Sūrah al-Israa', 17:106)

These verses clarify that the Quran was revealed and not created.

3. The Speech of Allāh can be heard by those who Allāh chooses to hear it, and it consists of letters.

“And We called him (Mūsā) from the right side of the mount, brought him near, and spoke privately to him.” (Sūrah Maryam, 19:52)

“And when Mūsā arrived at Our appointed time, His Lord spoke to him.” (Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7:143)

“When Allāh said, “O ‘Īsā, Indeed I will take you and raise you to Myself.” (Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān, 3:55)

4. Allāh speaks when He wants, and He doesn't speak when He chooses not to speak.

The Prophet ﷺ said: **“Allāh will say, “O Adam!” He will respond, “At Your service.” Then, He will call out, “Indeed, Allāh orders you to take a group from your progeny to the fire.”** (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 4741; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 222)

Abū Hurayrah reported: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, **“There are three (types of) people to whom Allāh will not speak on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, nor look at them, and they will have a painful punishment. These are: An aged man who commits Zina (illicit sexual act), a ruler who lies, and a proud poor person.”** (Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn, 616, 793, 1588, 1852; Sunan ibn Mājah, 2208)

Based on this evidence and further evidence, which was not mentioned here, it can be said that believing in the Quran to be a creation goes against the Quran and Sunnah.

The position of Ashā'irah regarding the Qur'ān being a creation

The Ashā'irah believe that the Quran is created.

Originally, the Ashā'irah claimed that kalām (speech) only is the meaning, so only the meaning was attributed to Allāh and not the letters or the sound of the kalām (speech). The latter-day Ashā'irah retracted from this view and claimed that kalām (speech) refers to words and letters in order to work around some contradictions they ran into with their previous view.

Furthermore, the Ashā'irah claimed that speech happens to the speaker, that the speaker does not engage in the speech himself, and that it is not his ability or will.

The Ashā'irah claimed that the speech of Allāh is a meaning which is separate from the words and letters. The letters and words are an expression to mean the meaning of the speech of Allāh. In addition to that, they claimed that it is similar to Allāh's attributes like His knowledge and His will, i.e. that they do not happen according to His Will. In essence, the Ashā'irah claim is that the Quran is just like the Injīl, Tawrāh, and other previously revealed scriptures. (Al-'Uthaymīn, 2019)

Evidence for the falsehood of this approach was mentioned in the previous section. However, some points should be specifically refuted to rule out any remaining doubt.

1. The claim of the Ashā'irah that the Quran is only the meaning, and not the actual words, letters and sound:

“So when We recite it [through Jibrīl], then follow its recitation.” (Sūrah al-Qiyāmah 75:18)

“And recite the Quran with measured recitation.” (Sūrah al-Muzzammil, 73:4)

“Those to whom We have given the Book recite it with its true recital. They [are the ones who] believe in it. And whoever disbelieves in it - it is they who are the

losers.” (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:121)

The recitation which should be followed, recited with measured recitation and with its true recital refers to the meaning, letters, words, and sound. Thus, these verses show without a doubt that the meaning cannot be separated from the words.

2. The claim of the Ashā'irah that the Quran is just like the other revealed books like the Injīl, Tawrāh:

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the message [i.e., the Qur’ān], and indeed, We will be its guardian. [i.e. We will protect it]” (Sūrah al-Ḥijr, 15:9)

“Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation.” (Sūrah al-Qiyāmah, 75:17)

These verses show that the Quran is protected and arranged in a way which does not apply to the other scriptures that were revealed previously. This is because Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent to all mankind, not only to his own people.

“And We have not sent you except comprehensively to mankind as a bringer of good tidings and a warner. But most of the people do not know.” (Sūrah Sabā', 34:28)

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ also said in a longer hadīth: ***“Every Prophet was only sent to his nation, but I have been sent to all mankind.”*** (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 335, 438)

Based on this evidence, we can refute the claims of the Ashā'irah in its totality.

The Importance of the Correct Stance towards the Speech of Allāh

The question may arise why it is actually so important to discuss the question of the Quran is the actual Speech of Allāh and not created. The importance will be apparent from the following points, in shā Allāh:

1. By saying that the Quran is a creation, one would deny those verses from the Quran which mention that it is a revelation.
2. By saying that the Quran is a creation, one would imply that the words of the Quran have no meaning in and of themselves, they are merely expressions that do not carry any command or prohibition.

Therefore, ibn al-Qayyim mentioned in his al-Nūnīyah: “This saying would falsify the commands and prohibitions. Because the command would be understood as something that is created in its form, without any actual implication. And the prohibition would be created with its form, without any objective of an actual implication. And the same with the information and enquiry.” (as quoted in (Al-‘Uthaymīn, 2008))

3. By saying that the Quran is a creation, one would imply that it is correct to say that “every word in existence is His [Allāh’s]”, which was a statement of ibn ‘Arabī. (as quoted in (Al-‘Uthaymīn, 2008)) This statement is obviously false as the word of the creation can never be like the Word of Allāh.
4. By saying that the Quran is a creation, one would imply that all other attributes of Allāh are creations as well which is far away from the truth.

(Al-‘Uthaymīn, 2008)

Therefore, it is understood why it is of such utmost importance that Aḥl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah stick to the truth and that all kinds of deviation are to be refuted.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that Aḥl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah follow the truth about the Quran being the Speech of Allāh based on the compelling and clear evidence in Quran and Sunnah, and that the views of the Ashā'irah are far away from the truth which was clearly elaborated in this research paper.

And Allāh knows best.

References

- Al-'Uthaymīn, M. i. (2008). *Commentary on Shaikh al-Islām ibn Taymiyyah's al-Aqīdah al-Wāsiyyah*. Riyadh: Maktaba Dar-us-Salam.
- Al-'Uthaymīn, M. i. (2019). *Explanation of a Summary of al-'Aqeedatul Hamawīyyah of ibn Taymiyyah*. Sharjah, UAE: Dar ul Thaqafah.
- Al-Fawzān, Ṣ. (2009). *Guide to Sound Creed: A book on Muslim Creed and Faith*. Cairo: Al-Maiman Publishing House.