

Revelation, Philosophy and Kalam: The Creed of the Salaf Versus the Creed of the Mutafalsifah (Pseudophilosophers) and Mutakallimah (Speculative Theologians)

The Messengers conveyed what Allāh is described with on the basis of revelation (waḥy, naql) and this is light (nur) and guidance (hudā).

The [Philosophers](#) spoke upon ignorance (jahl) and the whisperings of the devils, and employed reason (ʿaql) to develop their idea of "divine perfection", the essence of which is that the Creator is just an abstraction, an idea in the mind, stripped of all names and attributes.

This philosophical baggage provided the foundation for what became known as "[ilm al-kalām](#)", something that had already entered the Jews, Christians and [Sabeans](#) before the advent of Islam.

The diagram below traces the origins and route of this "kalām" and contrasts between the way of the Prophets and Messengers followed by the Ahl al-Sunnah, those upon the way of the Salaf and the way of the [Philosophers](#) followed by the people of kalām.

These people tried to prove the origination of the universe using flawed arguments comprising false premises, and in order to maintain this proof (which they made to be something Islām itself depends upon), they had to explain away the fact that Allāh is described with names, attributes and actions.

On account of this "kalām", the people of kalām (Jahmiyyah, [Mu'tazilah](#), [Ash'ariyyah](#), Maturidiyyah) were forced to see **a conflict between reason (aql) and revelation (naql)**, and hence they devised mechanisms (ta'wīl, tafwīd etc) to make the revelation conform to reason, after they gave reason the higher status.

They saw --upon evaluation with the language of "divine perfection" put forth by the Greek Philosophers-- that the revelation contains apparent [tajsīm](#), [tashbīh](#) (anthropomorphism) and kufr (disbelief) and that such texts cannot be left alone and must be **neutralised/sanitised** in one way or another.

Thus, their speech about Tawḥīd revolved around this matter of distorting the texts using these mechanisms they invented, following their whims and desires.

REVELATION, PHILOSOPHY AND KALAM: THE CREED OF THE SALAF VERSUS THE CREED OF THE ASHARIS AND MATURIDIS

The Messengers and Revealed Books

Allaah is most knowledgeable of His own self and he conveyed, through His Prophets, Messengers and Books what He possesses of names, attributes and actions, such that they can know Him and worship Him.

The Prophets and Messengers are
 - most knowledgeable,
 - most eloquent and
 - most desiring of guidance for their people.

Hence, they conveyed the truth from their Lord about what He can and cannot be described with.

The Salafis are the followers of the Prophets and Messengers. They revere the Book of Allah and know that it is certain guidance from their Lord.

They have a uniform, consistent principle which applies to everything within this subject area: **To affirm whatever Allaah affirmed for Himself and what His Messenger affirmed for Him without likeness (tamtheel).**

There can never be any internal contradiction in this methodology because it is from Allah. This is the methodology of the Salaf and the Four Imams. There were no differences between them in the foundations of aqidah.

Hence, the way of the Salaf is to accept everything, whether in the Qur'an or the Sunnah, whether mutawaatir or ahaad—as long as the text is authentic—upon this uniform principle. So they accept all names, attributes and actions and they are completely consistent in this.

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 Version 1.1

The People of Kalam (Imported Philosophy)



They saw that "reason" (aql)—meaning the reason based upon Greek Metaphysics—clashes with revelation (naql) because the revelation affirms names, attributes and actions for Allah. which according to "aql" would make Allah a body. So they invented mechanisms to remove that contradiction. They opted to put reason (aql) ahead of revelation (naql). Hence, the Mu'tazilah invented principles to undermine the Quran and the Sunnah to allow allegorical interpretations to explain away those texts that imply Allaah is a "body" according to the logic of Greek Metaphysics. The Asharis and Maturidis inherited these foundations from them. They claim this is "tanzih" - removing defects from Allah.

In reality, their view amounts to the claim that the misguided philosophers were more knowledgeable of what is "divine perfection" than the Prophets and Messengers.

The various sects of kalam have differences with each other, and there are also blatant contradictions within a single school (e.g. the Asharis or Maturidis). This is because the foundation of their methodology is not from revelation. It is taken from the conceptual language, terminology and metaphysics of the misguided, wandering, straying Greek philosophers.

They are basically giving reason precedence over revelation and moulding the texts of revelation to fit with that so called reason. Ta'wil and tafwid are just the mechanisms to achieve this goal of removing the apparent "tajsim, tashbih and kufr" that has come in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, meaning, the names, attributes and actions of Allaah.

On this, all of these groups differ with each other as to what attributes they affirm and what they deny. This is clear evidence that they are upon falsehood, because if the proof of intellect was decisive as they claim, they would all have one, united saying and not have differed with each other.

The Intellects of Misguided Philosophers

Plato and Aristotle: They developed a "rational understanding" of the idea of what is "divine perfection" and said it is:

- without body
- without limit
- without mutability (change)
- without temporality
- without parts
- without divisibility
- without position
- without states
- without locations
- without passions
- and so on...

The theology of the Sabaeans, Jews and Christians was influenced by this terminology.

See for example:

Philo Judaeus (d. 50CE)
 Clement of Alexandria (d. 215CE)
 Augustine of Hippo (d. 430H)

If you read the writings of these people on the divine attributes, you will see that they are identical to what is in the books of the Mu'tazillah, Ash'aris and Maturidis.

This poison was entered into Islam by Ja'd bin Dirham and Jahm bin Safwan in the early 2nd century hijrah and it became known as ilm al-kalam. The Salaf condemned kalam and its people. and said that anyone who tried to acquire knowledge of Allaah through this method will go astray and become a heretic.

The people of kalam developed a rational proof to demonstrate the universe is originated called "huduth al-ajsam". However, this proof and its binding necessities clashed with what is found in the texts of the affirmation of names, attributes and actions for Allaah. Hence, the issue of the "conflict" between reason and revelation.