219613 - Ten textual and rational proofs that the Quran is the word of Allah and is not created

the question

I hope that you can advise me how to deal with the specious argument of the innovators, especially the innovated view that says that the Quran is created. I hope that you can give a detailed refutation of their specious argument, mentioning the books of trustworthy scholars who spoke at length in refuting the innovators concerning this issue.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Refuting innovation should be based on the fundamentals of the Sunnah and the fundamentals of ‘aqeedah, as knowledge should follow sound methodology that is based on Quran and Sunnah.

That type of knowledge cannot be acquired from random fatwas or reading at random; rather it is done through the methodical pursuit of knowledge, studying that is truly founded on the fundamentals, in which the seeker of knowledge spends years of his life researching, memorising, understanding and learning. Only then will he be able to understand the specious arguments and to understand the words of the scholars, and he will be able to have deep insight into ambiguous arguments that led to such serious errors in ‘aqeedah.

Here we will present a brief discussion to show how we could build an argument based on the fundamentals of religion, in order to prove that the Quran is the word of Allah and refute the specious argument that it is created. We will present this argument in brief, quoting it from specialised research, and from this presentation you will learn a little of the way to discuss issues of ‘aqeedah, and how vast in scope and subtle it is, and how much research and study is needed to understand it properly.

Hence we say:

We can quote ten proofs to demonstrate that the Holy Quran is the word of Allah and is not created. These proofs are as follows:

1. The first proof

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Indeed your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He Istawa (rose over) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and (He created) the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His Command. Surely, His is the Creation and the Command. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the Alameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists)” [al-A‘raaf 7:54].

The evidence in this verse consists of two points:

(i) Allah, may He be exalted, differentiated between the creation and the command, which are two of His attributes which He ascribed to Himself. As for the creation, this has to do with His deeds; as for the command, it has to do with His words. In principle, when two words are mentioned in conjunction, they should have different meanings, unless the context indicates that no differentiation is intended. In this case there is evidence to indicate that there is a difference between them, including the following point.

(ii) Creation can only occur through the command, as Allah, may He be exalted, says elsewhere (interpretation of the meaning): “Verily, His Command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, ‘Be!’ and it is” [Ya-Seen 36:82].

The word “‘Be!’” is His command. If it were created, then its creation would require a command, and that command would require another command, and so on ad infinitum. That cannot be so.

Imam Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) quoted this verse as evidence against the Mu‘tazili Jahamis.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

I say: Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “Surely, His is the Creation and the Command” [al-A‘raaf 7:54]. Thus He differentiated between the creation and the command.

Narrated by Hanbal in al-Mihnah (p. 53)

And he said to them: Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “The command of Allah has come” [an-Nahl 61:1], and His command is His word and His power, and that is not created. So do not interpret the Book of Allah in such a way as to make it sound as if it contradicts itself.

Narrated by Hanbal in al-Mihnah (p. 54)

In what he wrote for al-Mutawakkil, when he asked him about the issue of the Quran, Imam Ahmad said:

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “And if anyone of the Mushrikoon (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) seeks your protection then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of Allah (the Quran), and then escort him to where he can be secure, that is because they are men who know not” [at-Tawbah 9:6] and “Surely, His is the Creation and the command” [al-A ‘raaf 7:54]. So He tells us that the creation is His, then He says “and the command”. Thus He informs us that the command is not created. End quote.

Narrated by his son Saalih in al-Mihnah (p. 210-121)

Before Imam Ahmad, this argument was presented by Imam Sufyaan ibn ‘Uyaynah al-Hilaali al-Haafiz ath-Thiqah al-Hujjah [a great muhaddith] (may Allah have mercy on him) who said:

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “Surely, His is the Creation and the command” [al-A‘raaf 7:54]. The creation is the creation of Allah, may He be Blessed and exalted, and the command is the Quran.

Narrated by al-Aajurri in ash-Sharee‘ah (p. 80) with a jayyid isnaad from him.

2. The second proof

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The Most Beneficent (Allah)

Has taught (you mankind) the Quran (by His Mercy).

He created man”

[ar-Rahmaan 55:1-3].

Here Allah may He be exalted, differentiates between His knowledge (which He taught) and His creation. The Quran is His knowledge and man is His creation. His knowledge is not created.

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: "Verily, the Guidance of Allah (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) that is the (only) Guidance. And if you (O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) were to follow their (Jews and Christians) desires after what you have received of Knowledge (i.e. the Quran), then you would have against Allah neither any Walee (protector or guardian) nor any helper”

[al-Baqarah 2:120].

Allah, may He be exalted, calls the Quran knowledge , because it is what came to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) from his Lord, and it is what Allah, may He be exalted, taught him (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). Allah’s knowledge is not created because, if it were created, He would have had the opposite attribute before it was created – glorified and exalted be Allah far above that.

This proof was cited by Imam Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) when he presented his argument against the Jahamis in the court of al-Mu‘tasim:

‘Abd ar-Rahmaan al-Qazzaaz said to me: Allah was there and there was no Quran. I said to him:

Then (what you are saying is that) Allah was there and there was no knowledge that He possessed! He kept quiet, because if he had claimed that Allah was there and there was no knowledge that He possessed, then he would be a disbeliever in Allah.

Narrated by Hanbal in al-Mihnah (p. 45)

It was said to him (may Allah have mercy on him):

Some people say, if a man says that the words of Allah are not created, they say: Who is the scholar who taught you that? Where did you get the idea that His words are not created?

He said: The proof is the words of Allah, may He be Blessed and exalted (interpretation of the meaning): “Then whoever disputes with you concerning this matter after (all this) knowledge that has come to you” [Aal ‘Imraan 3:61]. There is nothing that came to him except the Quran (i.e., the Quran is the knowledge referred to here).

And he (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The Quran is knowledge from Allah. Whoever claims that the knowledge of Allah is created, is a disbeliever.

Narrated by Ibn Haani’ in al-Masaa’il (2/153, 154)

3. The third proof

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) to mankind). ‘If the sea were ink for (writing) the Words of my Lord, surely, the sea would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord would be finished, even if we brought (another sea) like it for its aid’”

[al-Kahf 18:109]

and

“And if all the trees on the earth were pens and the sea (were ink wherewith to write), with seven seas behind it to add to its (supply), yet the Words of Allah would not be exhausted. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise”

[Luqmaan 31:27].

Allah, may He be exalted, tells us – and what He says is true – that His words are unending, and that if the seas that Allah has created were ink with which to write, and the trees that Allah has created were pens with which to write, the ink of the seas would run out, and the pens would wear out, but the words of Allah would not be exhausted.

This highlights the greatness of His words, and that His words or speech is His attribute and His knowledge. This cannot be compared with the created, finite words of His creation, for if His words were created, they would have been exhausted before one of the seas was exhausted. But Allah, may He be exalted, has only decreed an end and a limit for created beings, not for Himself or His attributes.

4. The fourth proof

The names of Allah in the Quran, such as Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful, the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing, the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Generous and so on are part of His words or His speech, because it is He Who gave these names to Himself, with these words and meanings. Allah, may He be exalted, has made it equal to glorify His Essence and to glorify His names, as He, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High” [al-A‘laa 87:1]. He, may He be exalted, has made it equal to call upon Him by His Essence and to call upon Him by His names, as He says (interpretation of the meaning): “And (all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah, so call on Him by them” [al-A‘raaf 7:180]. Similarly, He, may He be exalted, has made it equal to remember Him by His Essence and to remember Him by His names, as He says (interpretation of the meaning): “And remember the Name of your Lord every morning and afternoon” [al-Insaan 76:25].

This glorification, supplication and remembrance, if applied to anything that is created, would

constitute disbelief in Allah.

If it is said that His words are created, His names are included in that, and whoever makes such a claim has gone beyond the pale of Islam, for the reasons we have mentioned, and because what that implies is that Allah, may He be exalted, did not have those beautiful names before He created His words; and the one who swore an oath by one of His names would be a mushrik, because he would be swearing by something that is created, and that which is created is different from the Creator.

This argument was presented by a number of the early generations and imams to prove that the Quran is not created, including Imam al-Hujjah Sufyaan ibn Sa'eed ath-Thawri, who said: Whoever says that [the words] "Say (O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)): He is Allah, (the) One, Allah-us-Samad (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks)"[al-Ikhlaas 112:1-2] are created is a disbeliever.

Narrated by 'Abdullah in as-Sunnah (no. 13). Its isnaad is jayyid.

Imam ash-Shaafa'i said:

Whoever swears by one of the names of Allah and breaks his oath has to offer expiation, because the name of Allah is not created; whoever swears an oath by the Ka'bah, or by as-Safa and al-Marwa, does not have to offer expiation (for breaking his oath), because these things are created, whereas (the name of Allah) is not created.

Narrated by Ibn Abi Haatim in Aadaab ash-Shaafa'i (p. 193) with a saheeh isnaad.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal said:

The names of Allah are in the Quran, and the Quran is part of the knowledge of Allah. So whoever claims that the Quran is created has gone beyond the pale of Islam, and whoever claims that the names of Allah are created has gone beyond the pale of Islam.

Narrated by his son Saalih in al-Mihnah (p. 52, 66-67)

5. The fifth proof

Allah, may He be exalted, has told us that the Book is from Him and is attributed to Him, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The revelation of the Book (this Quran) is from the Lord of the Alameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists)”

[as-Sajdah 32:2]

“Those unto whom We gave the Scripture (the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)) know that it is revealed from your Lord in truth”

[al-An‘aam 6:114]

“Say (O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) Ruh-ul-Qudus (Jibrael (Gabriel)) has brought it (the Quran) down from your Lord with truth”

[an-Nahl 16:102].

Allah has not attributed anything to Himself that He sent down, except His words, which indicates that there is a special meaning for that, so it is not like the sending down of rain, iron and so on. Allah has told us that He sent down these things, but He did not attribute them to Himself, unlike His words. His words or His speech is an attribute, and an attribute can only be ascribed to the one who possesses it, and not to anyone else. If His words were created, they could have departed from the Creator and would not be attributed to Him, because He, may He be exalted, has no need of His creation and none of it is His attribute.

6. The sixth proof

It was narrated that Khawlah bint Hakeem said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: “Whoever stops at a place and says: I seek refuge in the perfect words of Allah from the evil of that which He has created, nothing will harm him until he moves on from that place.”. Narrated by Muslim (2708).

If His words were created, then seeking refuge in them would be shirk, because that would be seeking refuge in something that is created. It is well-known that seeking refuge in anything other than Allah, may He be exalted, and His names and attributes is shirk, so how could the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) have taught his ummah something that is obviously shirk, when he is the one who came to teach them pure Tawheed?

This indicates that the words of Allah, may He be exalted, are not created.

Na'eem ibn Hammaad said: Refuge is not to be sought in anything that is created, or in the words of people, jinn, humans or angels.

Al-Bukhaari said, after quoting that: This indicates that the words of Allah are not created, and that everything other than Him is created.

See: Khalq Af'aal al-'Ibaad (p. 143)

7. The seventh proof

The hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) who said:

"The superiority of the words of Allah over all other words is like the superiority of Allah over all of His creation."

A hasan hadith, narrated by 'Uthmaan ad-Daarimi in ar-Radd 'ala al-Jahamiyyah (no. 287, 340); al-Laalkaa'i (no. 557)

This hadith confirms the belief of the salaf, that the Quran is the word of Allah and is not created. It does so in two respects:

(i) It differentiates between the words of Allah and other words. Words are either the speech of Allah, which is one of His attributes, or they are created words, which are part of the creation of Allah. Whatever is a divine attribute is ascribed to Allah, whereas the rest are mentioned in general terms, so as to include all words other than those attributed to Allah. If all

words were created, there would be no need for this differentiation.

(ii) The differentiation between the words of Allah and the words of others is like the differentiation between the essence of Allah and the essence of others. Allah's words and the nature thereof are connected to His essence and the nature thereof, just as the words of created beings and the nature thereof are appropriate to and connected to the essence of created beings and the nature thereof.

This argument was presented by Imam 'Uthmaan ibn Sa'eed ad-Daarimi in ar-Radd 'ala al-Jahamiyyah (p. 162-163). After quoting the hadiths on this topic, he said:

These hadiths indicate that the Quran is not created, because you would not see such a great difference when comparing between two created beings as you will see when comparing between Allah and His creation, because the difference between the two created beings is measurable, whereas the superiority of Allah over His creation is unmeasurable and no one can grasp it. The same applies to the superiority of His words over the words of created beings. If the words of Allah were created, there would not be such a great difference between them and the words of others, which is like the superiority of Allah over His creation. There is nothing like unto Him, so there are no words like His words, and no one could ever produce anything like them. End quote.

8. The eighth proof

On the basis of rational thinking, if the words of Allah were created, then it must be one of two scenarios:

(i) They are created and exist as part of the essence of Allah

(ii) or they are separate from Allah.

Both scenarios are false and in fact constitute abhorrent disbelief.

As for the first, it implies that a created thing could exist within the Creator, which is false according to the view of Ahl as-Sunnah and most of the followers of innovation [among the

Muslims]. Allah, may He be exalted, is independent of His creation and has no need of any of them in any way whatsoever.

As for the second, its implications lead to denying the attribute of divine speech, because the attribute exists in the one who possesses the attribute – as stated above – and does not exist in anyone or anything else. If it existed in anything else, then it would be an attribute of the one in whom it existed. What this would imply is that the Lord, may He be exalted, does not speak, and this is obvious disbelief, as we have explained above.

9. The ninth proof

As is clear to everyone, an attribute does not exist by itself. If the attribute is an attribute of the Creator, it should exist in Him, and if it is an attribute of a created being, it must inevitably exist in him, such as moving, staying still, standing, sitting, power, will, knowledge, life and other attributes. If an attribute is ascribed to something, then it is describing it and it belongs to the one in whom it exists. So these attributes may be ascribed to the created being, therefore they are descriptions of the created being, as they are ascribed to him. Some of them may also be ascribed to the Creator, such as power, will, knowledge, life and so on. Therefore they are attributes of His, as they are ascribed to Him. When they are ascribed to the created being, they are created, and when they are ascribed to the Creator, they are not created.

The attribute of speech is like other attributes; it must exist in something, and if it exists in that thing then it is an attribute of that thing and not of anything else. If it is ascribed to the Creator, may He be exalted, then it is His attribute. If it is ascribed to anyone else, then it is an attribute of that other entity. The attribute of the Creator is not created, just as His essence is not created, whereas the attribute of the created being is created, just as his essence is created. As Allah has ascribed speech to Himself, and has described Himself as speaking, then His speech (or words) is not created, because it is something that is connected to His essence, and His essence is not created. Discussion of the divine attributes is connected to discussion of the divine essence, and it must be discussed in the same terms.

If it is said that the Quran is created, we say: Allah should be above having ascribed to Him anything that is created. You (Jahamis) – according to your claim – declare Allah, may He be exalted, to be above having any created things existing in Him. As you declare your Lord, may He be exalted, to be above that, then you should not attribute speech to Him, but if you do not attribute speech to Him, you will be denying textual and rational evidence which testify that Allah, may He be exalted, possesses the attribute of speech.

But they refuse to admit that the words of Allah, may He be exalted, are not created, on the basis of an argument that is even more false than what is discussed above. They say: We affirm that Allah speaks with words that exist in something other than Him. Allah, may He be exalted, spoke to Moosa through created words that existed in the bush and did not exist in Him, therefore we declare Him to be above having created things (i.e., words) exist in Him.

We say in response: you regard the words as an attribute of the thing in which they exist, which implies – according to your view – that these were the words of the bush, so it is the bush that spoke to Moosa and said (interpretation of the meaning): " 'O Moosa (Moses)! Verily! I am Allah, the Lord of the Alameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists)'" [al-Qasas 28:30]. In that case, there is no difference between the words of the bush and the words of the accursed Pharaoh (interpretation of the meaning): " 'I am your lord, most high'" [an-Naazi'aat 79:24], because the words of the bush are its attributes, and not the attributes of Allah, and the words of Pharaoh are his attributes; each of them claimed to be divine [according to your claim], so Moosa had no right to object to what Pharaoh said, yet accept the words of the bush!

Think about this blatant disbelief which led people who believed in this argument to this shameful innovation and not to submit and accept the facts of revelation mentioned in the Quran, and to turn away from the noble revelation and prefer to it the scum of minds that are controlled by whims and desires that direct them wherever they want.

This rational argument was something used by Imam Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) against the Mu'tazili Jahamis when he debated with them in the presence of al-Mu'tasim. He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This is the story of Moosa. Allah said in His Book, speaking of Himself (interpretation of the meaning): “and to Moosa (Moses) Allah spoke directly” [an-Nisa’ 4:164]. Thus Allah affirms that He spoke to Moosa by way of honouring Moosa, and confirms that it was indeed speech. Allah, may He be exalted, said (interpretation of the meaning): O Moosa “Verily! I am Allah! La ilaha illa Ana (none has the right to be worshipped but I)” [Ta-Ha 20:14] but you are denying this, so this pronoun (“I”) would then refer to something other than Allah, and a created entity would be claiming to be the lord!

Narrated by Hanbal in al-Mihnah (p. 52)

10. The tenth proof

Words of the leading scholars of the early generations affirming this belief:

‘Amr ibn Dinaar – one of the best of the Taabi‘i imams – said:

I have been meeting the companions of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and others who are next in status to them for seventy years, and they say: Allah is the Creator, and everything other than Him is created. The Quran is the word of Allah; it came from Him and will return to Him.

‘Abdullah ibn Naafi‘ said: Maalik used to say:

The Quran is the word of Allah. And he used to regard as abhorrent the view of those who said that the Quran was created.

Narrated by Saalih ibn Ahmad in al-Mihnah (p. 66) with a saheeh isnaad from him.

Ar-Rabee‘ ibn Sulaymaan, the companion and student of ash-Shaafa‘i, said, narrating a debate that took place between him and Hafs al-Fard concerning the Quran:

He (Hafs) started the debate with Ash-Shaafa‘i, and ash-Shaafa‘i presented his argument with proof, and there was a lengthy debate in which ash-Shaafa‘i established proof that the Quran is the word of Allah and is not created, and he regarded Hafs al-Fard as a disbeliever. Ar-Rabee‘ said:

I met Hafs al-Fard in the gathering later on and he said: ash-Shafaa‘i wanted to kill me.

Narrated by ‘Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Abi Haatim in Adaab ash-Shaafa‘i (p. 194-195). Its isnaad is saheeh.

Ibn Abi Haatim said:

I asked my father and Abu Zar‘ah about the views of Ahl as-Sunnah concerning the fundamentals of religion and what they learned from the scholars in all regions, and what they believed concerning that.

They said:

We met the scholars from all regions, the Hijaz, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, and their view was that faith is both words and deeds, and it may increase or decrease; the Quran is the word of Allah and is not created in any way.

Narrated by Ibn at-Tabari in as-Sunnah (1/176) with a saheeh isnaad.

Imam Abu’l-Qaasim Hibatullah ibn al-Hasan at-Tabari al-Laalkaa’i quoted, in his great book Sharh Usool I‘tiqaad Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa‘ah: This is the view of five hundred and fifty individuals among the scholars and early generations of this ummah, all of whom say: The Quran is the word of Allah and is not created; whoever says that it is created is a disbeliever.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

These people number five hundred and fifty or more, from among the Taabi‘een and their followers and leading scholars, other than the righteous Sahaabah, despite the differences in their locations and the passage of many years. Among them are approximately one hundred imams from whom the people learned their beliefs and followed them in their views. If I wanted to write down the views of the hadith scholars (concerning this issue), their names would be many thousands.

End quote from as-Sunnah (493)

Summarised from the book al-‘Aqeedah as-Salafiyyah fi Kalaam Rabb al-Bariyyah wa Kashf Abaateel al-Mubtadi‘ah ar-Radiyyah (p. 121-147)

For more information on this topic, see also the twelfth volume of Majmoo‘ Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, “al-Quran Kalaam Allah”; and Mukhtasar as-Sawaa‘iq al-Mursalah by Ibn al-Qayyim

See also a useful article on this topic entitled Lima kaana al-Qawl bi Khalq al-Quran Kufran? Wa’l-Kalaam an-Nafsi by Shaykh ‘Amr Basyooni.

And Allah knows best.