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## **A Letter on Realizing that the Qur'an is Miraculous by Ibn Kamal Pasha: Study and Analysis**

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### **In the Name of Allah, the most Merciful, the most Compassionate**

Praise be to Allah alone, then:

This is a study of the Letter of Ibn Kamal Pasha, which is called:

(A Letter on the Realization that the Qur'an is miraculous)

I followed the following plan:

Author's biography.

His sources.

The pros and cons of the Letter.

Discussion of some of the Letter issues:

- 1- Types of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an.
- 2- - The reference to the pronoun in the Almighty's saying in Surat Al-Baqarah: "And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant [Muhammad], then produce a surah the like thereof..."
- 3- An excitation about the eloquence of the Qur'an.
- 4- Is the eloquence of the Qur'an varying?
- 5- Saying it in pure form. Does Ibn Kamal Pasha say so?

The Conclusion: It contains an enumeration of some of the errors that the author made which had not been noticed about before.

I ask Allah for help

### **Author's Biography<sup>2</sup>**

Shams al-Din Ahmed bin Suleiman bin Kamal Pasha, his grandfather was one of the princes of the Ottoman Empire. He spent his youth in a glory and pampering. The love of perfection overcame him, so he studied the honorable knowledge spending days and nights on that when he was a young man, then they enrolled him in a group of military people. He said about himself that he was with the Sultan Ba'Yazid Khan in a journey, and the minister at that time was Ibrahim Pasha, son of Khalil Pasha who was a very important minister, and none of the princes was superior to him. He -may Allah the Almighty have mercy on him- said: "I was standing on my feet in front of the Minister Al-Mazbour, and the aforementioned prince was sitting next to him, when a man from the scholars came, he had a shabby appearance and poor clothing, so he took a situation above the aforementioned prince, and no one prevented him from doing

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<sup>2</sup> Resources of the biography: Al-Shaq'aq Al-Numaniyyah, p. 226, Al-Kawkab Al-Sa'irah 2/107, Al-Fawa'id Al-Bahiyya 21, Nuggets of Gold 8/238, Hadiyat Al-Arifin 1/141, Al-A'lam 1/133.

so! So I was confused about this. I said to some of my companions: Who is this man who sat higher than the prince? He said: He is a scholar, a man, a teacher, called Mawla Lutfi. I said: How much is his job? He said: Thirty dirhams. I said: How can this prince with his high position be so humble? My companion said: Scholars are glorified for their knowledge, and if it is delayed, neither the prince nor the minister will be pleased with that.

He said, may Allah have mercy on him: So I thought to myself, and said: I will not reach the rank of a prince in the emirate. If I work with knowledge, I can reach the rank of the aforementioned scholar, so I intend to work after that with the honorable knowledge. He said: When we returned from the journey, I arrived in the service of the aforementioned master, and he was then given Dar al-Hadith School in the city of Edirne, and forty dirhams were assigned to him for every day. He said: So I read to him "Hawashi Sharh Al-matali'", and he had read the "Mabani Aluluom" in his early youth. Then he read to some scholars, including Mawla Al-Qastalani, Mawla Khateeb Zadeh, Mawla Ma'ruf Zadeh, and Mawla Al-Lutfi, a student of Sinan Pasha. Then he became a teacher at the Skop School and was given Dar Al-Hadith in Edirne, and he was given a pension of one hundred Ottomans every day. Then he became a mufti in Constantinople after the death of Mawla Ali Al-Jamali, and he remained in the position of the advisory opinion "fatwa" until his death in the year nine hundred and forty.

### Scholars Praise on him

The scholars wrote up and praised him with praise that worthy of him. Tash Kubri Zadeh said: "He, may Allah have mercy on him, was one of the scholars who devoted all his time to knowledge. He was preoccupied with knowledge day and night and presented everything that came to his honorable mind. Night and day got tired, but his pen did not get tired, and he sorted out many treatises on the important mysterious matters"<sup>1</sup>. Al-Taji said about him: "There is rarely any art in which Ibn Kamal Pasha does not have a work in it"<sup>2</sup>.

The author of Al-Fawa'id Al-Bahiyya said: "He was as prolific in his writings and as knowledgeable in the Roman lands as Al-Jalal Al-Suyuti in Egypt. In my view he was more precise in his outlook than Al-Suyuti and had a better understanding, although it is a fact that they constituted the charms of that era"<sup>3</sup>. The scholars of Cairo acknowledged his credit after they debated and discussed with him and were impressed by the eloquence of his words.

### His Writings

Ibn Kamal Pasha was famous for his many books and letters, including:

- 1- Taghyir Elmiftah wahu Ikhtisar lil-miftah<sup>4</sup>.
- 2- Sharh Taghyir Elmiftah<sup>5</sup>.
- 3- Sharh Miftah Al-iluolm.
- 4- Footnotes on (Sharh Al-Miftah by Sayyid Al-Sharif).
- 5- Footnotes on Al-Kashaf.
- 6- Footnotes on the beginnings of Tafsir al-Baydawi.
- 7- Tafseer Al- Qur'an Alkarim.
- 8- Risalah fi Tahqiq anna Al- Qur'an Mu'ujaz

All of these letters are manuscripts, and most of them have copies.

<sup>1</sup> Ash-shaqayiq Alnuemaniat s 226

<sup>2</sup> Ash-shaqayiq Alnuemaniat s 226

<sup>3</sup> Alfawayid Albahiat 21

<sup>4</sup> Edited in The Islamic University in Medina

<sup>5</sup> Edited in The Islamic University in Medina

### **Sources of Ibn Kamal Pasha in his Letter**

Ibn Kamal Pasha mentioned a group of resources, and he referred to them, stating their titles and he varies in referring to them, including:

- 1) He may give the title of the book and its author, such as his saying: “this shows that Al-Fadil Al-Taftazani is not correct, in a report... in his explanation of Al-Maqasid. And in his quotation from Al-Sakaki, he said: “What Al-Sakaki disclosed about when he said in Al-Muftah...”

And in his quotation from Al-Amidi, he said: “Al-Amidi in Abkar Alafkar” ...

- 2) The name of the book may be associated with the word “owner” and the like, as he says: “The owner of Al-Mawaqif said,” and “The Sheikh said in Dala'il Al'ijaz.”
- 3) He may be limited to the name of the author only, as in his response to Al-Baydawi, he said, “As for what Imam Al-Baydawi mentioned...”

This is a detail of its sources after the summary. It was quoted from:

- 1) Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani (died 471 AH) he stated that he quoted from his book Dala'il Al-I'jaz in one place.
- 2) Al-Sakaki (died 626 AH) and he quoted Al-Muftah twice, declaring this.
- 3) Al-Amidi (died 631 AH) quoted from his book Abkar Al-Afkar in three places, and he stated this clearly.
- 4) Al-Baydawi (died 685 AH) quoted him twice, refuting him. He said: “As for what Al-Baydawi mentioned,” and he did not reveal the name of his book, and it is in Al-Baydawi's interpretation of Surat Al-Baqarah: “And if you are in doubt about what We have revealed to Our servant...” and he said in the second: “In Al-Baydawi's words in the preamble to his interpretation
- 5) Al-Iji (died 756 AH) and he did not reveal his name due to his fame. Rather, he said: The author of Al-Mawaqif said, and the like, and he mentioned this twice.
- 6) Al-Taftazani, (died 793 AH), he quoted many times from him, sometimes in support and other times against, and he mentioned him more than anything in his treatise. He quoted him in Al-Maqasid (i.e., Maqasid al-Talibin, written by Al-Taftazani and explained by him), and he quoted him five times. He also quoted his explanation of the positions to his sheikh Al-Iji, and he quoted him three times.

He also quoted his explanation of Al-Muftah in several places, declaring this clearly in all of his quotes.

- 7) Al-Sharif Al-Jurjani (died 816 AH): He was quoted from his explanation of Al-Miftah which was called: Al-Misbah in three places. He also quoted his explanation of the positions.

### **The Pros and Cons of the Letter**

This thesis, despite its brevity, is useful, as it has revealed important aspects in (The Miracle of the Qur'an), and its author has made clear investigations in a number of issues presented by him, (the wise people still infer the goodness of books and the greatness of their benefit according to the value of their author) according to Ibn al-Wazir al-Yamani.<sup>1</sup>

### **Features that Distinguish the Letter Include**

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<sup>1</sup> Preferring the methods of the Qur'an, p. 117.

- 1) The author relies on evidence and reasoning in what is presented and suggested, so he goes with the evidence wherever it goes.
- 2) Discussing the scholars and not accepting their opinions, which indicates an independent and capable personality.
- 3) The author's honesty and gratitude for knowledge, in attributing a statement to its author, as he does not mention a statement without attributing it to its author or to its book. Abu Ubaid al-Qasim bin Salam said: "Part of gratitude for knowledge is that you attribute it to its speaker"<sup>1</sup>.

### **Against the Letter**

- 1) The difficulty of the author's style and the difficulty of knowing his opinion in some places. This may be due to the abundance of his copying beside his report, and sometimes the long separation between the subject and the predicate or the condition and its main clause.
- 2) He contradicts the most correct view on some issues.

### **Study and Discussion of Some of the Thesis Issues**

Aspects of the miracle of the Qur'an:

The author mentioned nine aspects of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an, after stating the consensus that it is a great miracle. In this, Al-Taftazani was mistaken when he said: The aspects of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an are five with no sixth.

If we had followed this path, we would have misled the author as well, as Al-Zarkashi<sup>2</sup> mentioned twelve sayings about the miraculous nature of the Qur'an, but some aspects are included in others.

Here is a discussion of some of what was mentioned, including:

He attributed the first aspect to some of the Mu'tazilites, and other imams said it, and it is that the miracle is due to the strange systems it contains, the strange arrangement, and the style that is contrary to what the Arabs know.

He attributed the third aspect to Al-Baqalani (but he did not confirm that), which is that the miracle is the sum of the two matters, and I did not find a reference for this saying to him, knowledge be to God.

When he mentioned the fifth aspect, which is that; its miraculousness is due to its lack of difference and contradiction with its length, he denied this and said: It is as if this speaker was unaware of the occurrence of the challenge to make a surah of it.

In his objection, he considered: This is an aspect that cannot be denied. Rather, it is part of the greatness and miraculous nature of the Qur'an, and the author later made it (one of the characteristics of the Qur'an)! No fuss.

Then you find among the rhetoricians the long, drawn-out poem in which there is only the ability of the expressive speaker to express something hidden or precise or to highlight it to the obvious thing. Then you find one or two or more lines that are the lines of the poem, and the rest of it is useless nonsense.

As for the Qur'an as a whole, it is eloquent to the extremes of eloquence according to those

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<sup>1</sup> Edited by Al-Qadi Iyad in *Al-Ilma'*, p. 228, and see: *Tabaqat Al-Mufasssir* by Al-Dawoodi 2/41.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Burhan (2/93-108)

who know it in detail and in general and who understand Arab speech and expressions<sup>1</sup>.

Then the author provided evidence and provided reasons in a place other than the dispute, so no one said: The miraculous nature of the Qur'an is limited to this aspect, and that it is the aspect in which the challenge occurred until his statement is rejected and attributed to negligence.

### **The Reference to the Pronoun in the Almighty's Saying in Surat Al-Baqarah: "Then if you are in Doubt about what we have Revealed to our Servant, Then Produce a Surah Like it"**

Scholars differed on this matter in two opinions:

#### **The First Statement**

It goes back to the Qur'an, and this is the opinion of the majority of scholars<sup>2</sup> and it was chosen by a group of scholars such as Ibn Jarir Al-Tabari, Al-Zamakhshari, Ibn Katheer, and Al-Baydawi<sup>3</sup>.

It should be noted here that most of those who favored this opinion did not reject the second opinion, but rather made it preferable.

#### **The Second Statement**

The pronoun refers to the Prophet, peace and prayer be upon him, and this is what Al-Zajaj and others say<sup>4</sup>.

Some scholars, such as Ibn Ashour<sup>5</sup> interceded and stated that both statements are intended, and Al-Darwish said: Both meanings are nice and Beautiful<sup>6</sup>, and Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen also said so<sup>7</sup>.

The most correct view - and Allah knows best - is the first opinion for matters such as:

- 1- It is identical to what Allah the Almighty said in Surat Yunus: "Then bring a surah like it."
- 2- The speech is about the Qur'an, not about to whom it was revealed.
- 3- Challenging all people is more eloquence than challenging one or some of them.
- 4- Because referring it back to our servant gives the illusion of the possibility of it being issued by someone who was not of his character and did not suit him.

As for our friend Ibn Kamal Pasha, he believes that the pronoun refers to the Prophet, peace and prayer be upon him. He said in L/2: "The meaning of 'min mithlih' (what is like it) is one who is in his condition of being illiterate and has not read books and has not learned the sciences."

As for his statement before that, l/1: "With this detail, it becomes clear that the reference of the pronoun in 'mithlih' is to the Quran not to the messenger" - he means the challenging verses other than the verse of Al-Baqarah.

### **A Notification about the Eloquence of the Qur'an**

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsir Ibn Kathir 1/202

<sup>2</sup> Al-Muharrar Al-Wajeez 1/143, Al-Jami' Ahakam Al-Qur'an 1/350

<sup>3</sup> Tafsir al-Tabari 1/117, Al-Kashshaf 1/183, Tafsir Ibn Kathir 1/201, Tafsir al-Baydawi 2/38

<sup>4</sup> Zad Al-Masir 1/50, al-Tabari 1/117

<sup>5</sup> At-Tahrir wa At-Tanweer 1/338

<sup>6</sup> Parsing of the Qur'an 1/68

<sup>7</sup> Interpretation of Surat Al-Baqarah by Ibn Uthaymeen 1/82

The origin of eloquence in the Qur'an is agreed upon, as the author said, but is the disagreement of an unusual high degree?

The author responded by saying L/3: "no need for those who prove its miraculousness in terms of rhetoric to claim it, and they have no way to prove it."

This was evidenced by Al-Iji's words in *Al-Mawaqif*<sup>1</sup>, and he followed Al-Sakaki and Al-Taftazani, and he put the latter in illusion twice, as well as Al-Sharif Al-Jurjani in his explanation of *Al-Miftah*, he justified this by saying that "there is no level in rhetoric except that another level can exist above it."

### **Do the Verses of the Qur'an vary in Eloquence**

The author argued that this discrepancy, if it is meant that the eloquence of the Qur'an is between eloquent and not eloquent is rejected, and therefore bears the negation in the author's words.

But if what is meant by it is its difference in terms of goodness and acceptance, then this exists, and it comes from the point of view of necessity of status.

The truth is that the Qur'an varies in eloquence, as it is between eloquent and more eloquent. This meaning has been confirmed by more than one person. Such as Sheikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah<sup>2</sup>, and Ibn Sinan Al-Khafaji said: "As for the increase of some of the Qur'an over others in eloquence, the matter is clear from it and is not hidden from those who comment with a little bit of this craft, they pulled off a little bit. People still single out places from the Qur'an that they admire in their eloquence and good composition, such as the Almighty's saying: "And it was said, 'And it was said: "O earth! Swallow up your water, and O sky! Withhold (your rain)." And the water was diminished (made to subside) and the Decree (of Allah) was fulfilled (i.e. the destruction of the people of Nuh (Noah). And it (the ship) rested on Mount Judi, and it was said: "Away with the people who are Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doing)<sup>3</sup>. It is noticed that the difference in its eloquence came from the difference in positions.

### **Saying Using as-Sarafa**

The author determined the meaning of As-Sarafa, he resolved the disagreement between those who used it, and then responded to some scholars who mixed up some issues with it:

First: The meaning of the Sarafa:

He said to L6: The meaning of the As-Sarafa is that the Arabs were able before the mission to speak words like the Qur'an, but Allah Almighty diverted them from opposition.

### **Second: Those who Speak by As-Sarfa form**

He mentioned that those who speak by As-Sarfa form were Ustaz Abu Ishaq, Al-Nizam, and Al-Sharif Al-Murtada, but he pointed out that Ustaz Abu Ishaq and Al-Nizam saw this as diverting the Arabs' motives from the opposition.

As for Al-Sharif Al-Murtada, he believes that As-Sarfa form is that Allah robbed the Arabs of the knowledge that is necessary in the opposition.

Then he responded to Al-Taftazani for not distinguishing between these two opinions, and

<sup>1</sup> p. 349

<sup>2</sup> The Answer of the People of Knowledge and Faith, p. 174

<sup>3</sup> Sir Al-Fasaha P 334

made everyone agree on one opinion, and attributed Al-Murtada's saying to Al-Jahiz. This illusion occurred to Al-Taftazani in his explanation of Al-Miftah, but he mentioned it correctly in his explanation of the positions, and the author pointed out that.

### **Third: Evidence of the Invalidity of the As-Sarfa form**

On the authority of Al-Taftazani, he mentioned three aspects in responding to the statement of using As-Sarfa form:

- 1- The eloquent Arabs were amazed at its good organization and eloquence.
- 2- If it had been intended to be miraculous As-Sarfa, it would have been appropriate to neglect its eloquence and high class. Because the lower it is in eloquence and the weaker it is, the more the lack of opposition becomes more evident in its violation of custom.
- 3- God Almighty's saying: "Say: "If the mankind and the jinns were together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another". If the meeting and the use of others in the place of challenge, it only improves what is not possible for some, and imagine that it is possible for all, so it is intended to deny that.

But the author stated that the last two aspects are suitable for responding to the meaning of As-Sarfa form according to Abu Ishaq and Al-Nizam, but not to the doctrine of Sharif Al-Murtada.

The author cited Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani's statement in the evidence of the miracle<sup>1</sup>, in his response to the statement of As-Sarafa. The summary of what Abdul Qahir inferred was that if As-Sarfa form was true, the Arabs would have felt that within themselves and would have spoken about it - even among themselves. And would have said: We could have done it, but Mohammad has bewitched us. When they did not say any of that, it indicates that the As-Sarfa statement is an incorrect statement.

### **Fourth: Does Ibn Kamal Pasha Say it is Pure**

What appeared to me from contemplating his words - and Allah knows best - is that he does not say in As-Sarfa form except as a form of sending down. What indicates that he does not say in As-Sarfa form in his statement L/1: "If what the challenger brought, came from him, as informing him of the unseen, or appeared from his hand, not from him, like the words sent down to our Prophet, peace be upon him, is outside the scope of humans - as is what is chosen from among what has been said about it - the miracle is to do forth in the object that is challenged, even if it is not outside of it - as is the view of the As-Sarfa people - beyond the scope of humans, then the miracle is in preventing the deniers from coming up with something similar to it.

He explained his choice in his saying: "As the Chosen One..."

Likewise, when he denounced Al-Baydawi for saying in the preamble to his interpretation<sup>2</sup>: "And (Allah) cursed those who opposed him from the eloquent Adnan, until they thought that they had been enchanted."

Ibn Kamal said in response to him: There is a flaw in this speech, "because what appears from it is that these eloquent people do not know that the Qur'an has reached the high level of eloquence that is beyond the reach of humans, but rather what appears to be that they are

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<sup>1</sup> p 614

<sup>2</sup> Tafseer Al-Baydawi 1/52



among those who say As-Sarfa form..." L/10.

Likewise, when Abdul Qahir's words were mentioned in support of him - all of this indicates that he does not speak in As-Sarfa form to begin with.

But he uses As-Sarfa as way of sending down for the opponent. that the miraculousness of the Qur'an is proven, even if we agree with you that Allah has drifted the Arabs. This is indicated by his saying L/1: "The Qur'an is miraculous...", then he said: "Whether the opposition is with the ability to do it or without that".

What supports this is his denial of Al-Taftazani and Al-Iji in their claim that the proof of miracle depends on premises, including: that their non-opposition is due to their inability to do it, not due to their dismissal.

The truth is that this is a good approach on the part of the author, and it was followed by a group of scholars before him, such as Al-Razi<sup>1</sup>, Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah<sup>2</sup>, and Ibn Kathir<sup>3</sup>.

As for what Naeem Al-Homs<sup>4</sup>, that Ibn Kamal Pasha speaks about the use of As-Sarfa form, there is a matter of consideration, he did not read this letter, but rather he cited a general excerpt from his words, in which there is no clear indication that he speaks in As-Sarfa form. As for his words here, they are clearer and more apparent. And when the river of Allah comes, the river of stronghold ceases.

## In Conclusion

There are errors that the author made, which I will point out, including:

His saying: "peace be upon him" when mentioning the Prophet, prayers and peace be upon him, which is contrary to what is preferable according to scholars. It was appropriate for him to pray and grant him peace in compliance with the Almighty's saying: "O you who have believed, pray for him and grant him peace with complete salutation"<sup>5</sup>.

- And he said: "unusual", and it is correct to strip it of the alif and lam, as Sibawayh mentioned that (ghair) does not receive the alif and lam<sup>6</sup>. In Hashiyat Al-Sabban<sup>7</sup>: Its entry is from the words of the Mawlid.

- And in his saying: "Addressing the great crowd," he used it in the genitive case in addition, and it is known in the speech of the Arabs to use it in the accusative case in the accusative case. They say: They came to the great crowd, that is, with all of them<sup>8</sup>.

- His statement: "There is no rank in rhetoric that does not exist...", the "waw" here is a virtue, and the eloquent one is to strip the sentence of it, as God Almighty says: "And no messenger would come to them except that they ridiculed him"<sup>9</sup>.

The author used a number of regional terms and discussed them in their own way.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Tafsir Al-Kabir 11/163

<sup>2</sup> Aj-Jawab Al-Sahih 4/75

<sup>3</sup> Tafsir Ibn Kathir 1/203

<sup>4</sup> In his book The Idea of the Miracle of the Qur'an, p. 165

<sup>5</sup> Explanation of Sahih Muslim by Al-Nawawi 1/44, Dictionary of Verbal Prohibitions, p. 348

<sup>6</sup> Al-Kitab 3/479

<sup>7</sup> 2/244. And Abath Al-Walid by Abu al-Ala, p. 312

<sup>8</sup> Hashiyat al-Shihab on Tafsir al-Baydawi 2/38, al-Nihayah by Ibn al-Atheer 2/65

<sup>9</sup> The statement by Sheikh Khaled Al-Azhari 1/293



Among that is the term “conditional” that he mentioned, which is: the one on which something depends and does not enter into its essence or affect it.<sup>1</sup>

Here, I hold the reins of my pen, otherwise we would have extended the statement:  
Whoever wants to do more or less... whatever he reaches the point is sufficient for him  
I ask Allah the forgiveness for my mistake, and praise be to Allah first and last.

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<sup>1</sup> Alta'arif at by Al-Jurjani, p. 42.

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