

**What is the preserved tablet and what do the Ahlus-Sunnah say with regards to that which has been written on the Preserved Tablet. Is the writing considered as Kalaamullah which makes it Qadeem etc or is the writing created which makes it Haadith.**

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All praises belong to Allāh, the Creator Most Sublime Who is Uncreated, the One Who took an oath by the Pen and by what is written by it upon the Prescribed Tablet. Peace and blessings of Allāh be upon the final Prophet, Our Master, Muhammad Mustafa ﷺ, upon his purified family, his esteemed companions, and whomsoever follows in his blessed footsteps until the last day.

Primarily, know that, the Preserved Tablet is a creation of Allāh ﷻ thus it has a beginning and has not eternally existed.

Allāh ﷻ has said in the Qūr'ān in Suratu I-Burūj, verses 21-22:-

بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ مَّجِيدٌ - فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ

In fact it (what they deny) is the Noble Qūr'ān. In the Preserved Tablet.

When Allāh intended the decrees for creation He intended for them to be transcribed upon a tablet. He created the Pen and the Tablet. He thereafter commanded the Pen to write. This is found within the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْقَلَمَ فَقَالَ لَهُ اكْتُبْ قَالَ رَبِّ وَمَاذَا أَكْتُبُ قَالَ اكْتُبْ  
مَقَادِيرَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى تَقُومَ السَّاعَةُ

“The first thing Allāh created was the Pen. He said to it: Write. It asked: What should I write, my Lord? He said: Write what was decreed about everything till the Last Hour comes.”

So the Pen wrote upon the Preserved Tablet. It is beyond human comprehension to imagine this Tablet which has a record of every action, utterance, thought and movement (or lack of) within creation, from the moment the Pen began writing till the Last Hour. Know that, even if a leaf is to fall from a tree within the darkness of the night in an isolated forest, the precise time of its falling and the path of descent has been written upon the Tablet.

With respect to what has been written, since it is called the “Preserved” Tablet, there is a difference of opinion whether any changes can exist. Some hold the view, whatsoever has been written cannot be altered. Whilst others hold the view, it is possible for alterations to exist with the permission of Allāh. Both opinions are derived in light of the Qūr’ān and Sunnah.

Along with all that has been written upon the Preserved Tablet from what has been decreed, it also has the Qūr’ān protected within it, for Allāh has said in Suratu I-Zukhruf, Verse 4:

وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِيَّ حَكِيمٌ

And indeed it (the Qūr’ān) is, in the Mother of the Book with Us, exalted and full of wisdom.

It is established the Qūr’ān is the eternal speech of Allāh, whilst from the above verse it is established the Qūr’ān also exists upon the Preserved Tablet which is the creation of Allāh. The question arises - how is it possible for the eternal to exist within the contingent? The words ‘kalām’ and ‘Qūr’ān’ are often synonymously used in the same context. The ‘speech of Allāh’ (kalām nafsi) is eternal without beginning, it is free from utterance, sound and shape, and it is an attribute existing with the Essence of Allāh, the Qūr’ān is often referred to as the ‘speech of Allāh’ and in this context it is accurate. The uttered speech, that which exists upon the Prescribed Tablet and that which exists between the two covers of the book (mushaf), is also the ‘speech of Allāh’ (kalām lafzi), also called the Qūr’ān, but manifested as creation. The knowledge of how the transcription occurred from the kalām nafsi to kalām lafzi is with Allāh.

And Allāh knows best.

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