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## REASON AND REVELATION IN THE TAFSIR AL-KASHSHAF: Mu'tazilah's Study of the Verses of Tanzih I'tiqodiyah

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**Abstract:** *The study of Qur'anic interpretation continues to develop along with the dynamics of Islamic thought, one of which is through the pattern of kalam interpretation developed by the Mu'tazilah. Tafsir al-Kashshaf by al-Zamakhsari is one of the main representations of the Mu'tazilah rational approach in understanding the verses of tanzih i'tiqadiyyah. This study aims to analyze the epistemological relationship between reason and revelation in the interpretation, especially in interpreting the concepts of divinity, divine justice, and human free will. In this context, a methodological dilemma arises between the authority of reason as the main interpretive instrument and the authority of revelation as a source of transcendent truth, which is problematic in the discourse of interpretation—both historically and contemporary. Using qualitative methods based on literature studies and content analysis of the interpretation text, this study found that al-Zamakhsari emphasized the supremacy of reason in interpreting verses containing elements of anthropomorphism, and rejected literal interpretations that have the potential to equate God with creatures. This interpretation consistently prioritizes linguistic and logical approaches to maintain the purity of the concept of monotheism. This study contributes to understanding the epistemological construction of Mu'tazilah interpretation and opens up opportunities for the development of contemporary interpretation methodology that is rational-transcendental and contextual.*

**Keywords:** *Analysis, Tafsir Al-Kashshaf; Reason and Revelation; Tanzih I'tiqadiyyah; Rationalism.*

## INTRODUCTION

The study of the interpretation of the Qur'an is a discipline that has developed along with the dynamics of Islamic thought. Interpretation functions as the main instrument in understanding the contents of revelation comprehensively, by considering linguistic, historical, and contextual aspects (Hasbiyallah, 2018). In its development, the interpretation of the Qur'an has various characteristics that are influenced by the scientific background, methods, and theological tendencies of its interpreters (Aiman, 2016). One of the prominent characteristics is the interpretation influenced by rational thinking, as seen in the kalam-based interpretation developed by the Mu'tazilah group.

Schools of interpretation based on certain theological schools often reflect the basic principles adopted by the school. In this context, Mu'tazilah as one of the theological schools in Islam has the characteristics of rationalistic thinking and emphasizes the supremacy of reason in understanding religious teachings (Tampubolon, 2014). This influences the method of interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, especially those related to the concept of divinity (Abdullah, 2016). Interpretations that represent Mu'tazilah's thinking often provide strong philosophical arguments and are based on the principle of rationality that still focuses on the debate on the issue of the supremacy of reason and revelation as the basis for interpretation.

The issue of the supremacy of reason and revelation remains a very relevant topic in contemporary Islamic discourse, especially in responding to modern challenges such as the liberalization of religious thought, hermeneutics of the Qur'an, and the emergence of contextual interpretations of social issues such as gender equality, human rights, and pluralism (Ferdiansah, 2024). In this context, some groups demand a reinterpretation of religious texts with a rational and historical approach (Andika, 2019), while others emphasize the importance of maintaining the authority of the revealed text normatively and transcendently. The tension between these two approaches shows that the problematic relationship between reason and revelation is not only a classic discourse in Islamic theology (Fadel, 2008) as shown in the Mu'tazilah study, but also the basis for methodological debate in building relevant interpretations that remain rooted in divine authority.

One of the tafsir works that reflects the Mu'tazilah style of thought is *Tafsir Al-Kashshaf* by al-Zamakhshari (d. 538 H). This tafsir is the main reference in understanding how the Mu'tazilah interpreted verses related to the doctrine of *i'tiqādiyyah* (Wahidah & Harahap, 2022). In this interpretation, it is clear that the tendency of Mu'tazilah rationalism places reason as the main tool in understanding revelation (Surahman, 2014). Al-Zamakhshari often puts forward logical arguments and in-depth linguistic analysis in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an (Husna Maulida & Bashori, 2025), especially those relating to the attributes of God, divine justice, and human freedom in endeavor.

There are several studies that are in line that discuss al-Zamakhshari and Mu'tazilah's thoughts. Among them is the one written by Jamaluddin (2015) with the title *Development and Influence of Mu'tazilah Theological Thought on the Creature of the Qur'an* with a discussion of the periods of thinking of the Qur'an as a creature by the Mu'tazilah (Jamaluddin, 2015). Then the writing of Muhammad Sugianto et al. (2022), entitled *Mu'tazilah interpretation method for Aqidah Verses* discusses the Mu'tazilah interpretation

method that prioritizes reason over revelation for Aqidah verses (Sugianto et al., 2022). Asep Mulyade et al. (2022) also wrote an article entitled *Manhaj Tafsir Al-Kashshaf* by al-Zamakhshari which discusses the method in the interpretation of Al-Kashshaf, the systematic writing of the interpretation of Al-Kashshaf which presents the method of thinking of al-Zamakhshari's interpretation (Mulyaden et al., 2022). From several existing writings, the author has not found one writing that discusses al-Zamakhshari's thoughts which lean towards Mu'tazilah in the interpretation of Al-Kashshaf. Therefore, this article will discuss the verse of tanzih I'tiqadiyah in the interpretation of Al-Kashshaf and will be analyzed with Mu'tazilah theology which prioritizes reason compared to revelation.

This study aims to examine the relationship between reason and revelation in the Tafsir Al-Kashshaf, especially in interpreting the verses of tanzih i'tiqādiyyah. This study is important to understand how the Mu'tazilah harmonizes the text of revelation with the principles of rationality that they adhere to. By examining al-Zamakhshari's approach, this study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the characteristics of rational interpretation and its contribution to the treasury of Islamic interpretation.

This study is expected to provide a more complete understanding of the epistemology of Mu'tazilah interpretation and how the tradition of Islamic rationalism contributes to understanding the Qur'an. This study can also be a reference for the development of Islamic interpretation and theology studies in a broader academic context.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is qualitative research with a library research approach, which is based on content analysis of the interpretation texts. The main focus of this study is the interpretation of al-Kashshaf by al-Zamakhshari which represents the rational approach of Mu'tazilah in interpreting the verses of Tanzih I'tiqādiyyah, especially the verses related to the concept of monotheism and the elimination of anthropomorphic attributes of God consisting of QS. Al-Baqarah; 2: 255, Al-Ikhlās; 112: 1-4, Al-Shura; 42: 11, Taha; 20: 5, al-Fath; 48: 10, and Al-An'am; 6: 103. This research explores how the argumentative structure, linguistic approach, and Mu'tazilah theological framework were applied by al-Zamakhshari in an effort to maintain the sanctity of the concept of divinity from elements of tashbīh (likeness of creatures).

The primary data in this study is the text of the interpretation of al-Kashshaf published in 1998 M., while the secondary data includes classical and contemporary Islamic theological literature that discusses the principles of Mu'tazilah rationality, the methodology of kalāmī interpretation, and comparisons between schools of thought in understanding the attributes of God. The data collection technique was carried out through documentary studies of these sources, which were then analyzed descriptively and analytically. This study also utilizes a comparative approach to examine the differences in interpretation between al-Kashshaf and other traditional interpretations such as Jāmi'al-Bayān by al-Ṭabarī. Thus, this method is expected to be able to deeply reveal the

contribution of Mu'tazilah's rational interpretation to the discourse of Islamic theology, especially in the meaning of monotheism that is free from material and physical elements.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Concept of Reason and Revelation in Islam**

In Islamic philosophy, reason is understood as the faculty of thought bestowed on humans to understand reality and achieve knowledge. Reason has a central role in human efforts to understand the nature of existence, both in physical and metaphysical aspects (Chaeratunnisa et al., 2024). In the views of Islamic philosophers such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali, reason is categorized into several levels, ranging from potential reason to actual reason that reaches the highest understanding (Damayanti et al., 2024). With its ability to reason, reason allows humans to interpret natural phenomena and explore the wisdom behind existence, but its limitations make it unable to reach absolute truth without the guidance of revelation.

On the other hand, revelation in Islam is seen as the main source of knowledge that comes directly from Allah. Revelation has a higher position than reason because it is a divine guidance that is free from human error (Kania, 2014). In the context of Islam, revelation is revealed through the prophets, with the Qur'an as the last revelation conveyed to the Prophet Muhammad (Saeed, 1999). Revelation not only functions as a guideline in aspects of worship and morals but also provides guidance in understanding the nature of life and the purpose of human existence (Suryadi, 2022). Therefore, in terms of which has more authority between reason and revelation, several theological schools in Islam have different definitions of the positions of reason and revelation.

The different definitions of the Mu'tazilah and the Ash'ariyah in discussing the relationship between revelation and reason are fundamental theological debates in the tradition of classical Islamic thought. The Mu'tazilah, as a rationalist school, prioritizes the supremacy of reason as the main instrument in interpreting revelation (Tariq, 2008), even in some cases subordinating the textual meaning of the Qur'an to logical reasoning in order to maintain the consistency of rational principles such as justice and God's wisdom (Dahlén, 2004). The Mu'tazilah emphasizes that the position of the reason is more important than the Qur'an so the Qur'an only serves as a confirmation or comparison. The ideology that is emphasized by this sect is the *usul al-khamsah* (Putri et al., 2025).

In contrast, the Ash'ariyah places revelation as the highest authoritative source and recognizes the function of reason only as a tool to understand and accept the truth brought by revelation, not to judge or interpret its meaning absolutely (Nurhuda, 2024). Imam al-Ghazali as an Ash'ariyah figure emphasized that reason must submit to revelation because revelation comes from a perfect divine source and human reason is limited (Hidayat, 2024). This methodological difference gives rise to tension between textual and rational approaches, which have implications for differences in understanding the attributes of God (Habermas & Mendieta, 2002), human freedom, and the principles of morality in Islamic

law, and continues to influence the discourse of interpretation and theology until the contemporary era.

Although in Islamic studies with the majority of scholars' opinions, revelation has the highest authority, Islam does not eliminate the role of reason in gaining knowledge (Shamsul, 2024). Reason functions as an instrument that allows humans to understand revelation more deeply, as explained in QS. Şād [38]: 29, QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 242, QS. Yunus [10]: 100, QS. Al-Mulk [67]: 10, and QS. An-Naḥl [16]: 44 these verses encourage humans to think and reflect (Setiawan & Asyiqien, 2019). Islamic scholars and philosophers emphasize that reason and revelation must work harmoniously, where reason is used to interpret and implement revelation in life (Husaini, 2022). In this case, science and rational thinking do not conflict with religion, as long as they remain within the corridor guided by the principles of revelation.

Thus, the relationship between reason and revelation in Islam is not a contradictory relationship, but rather complementary. Revelation provides guidance that cannot be achieved by reason alone, while reason helps humans understand and apply revelation in everyday life (Rust, 1981). The balance between reason and revelation is a fundamental principle in Islamic philosophy, which allows Muslims to develop critical thinking while still adhering to religious teachings.

### **Mu'tazila Views on Reason and Revelation**

Mu'tazilah is a school of thought in Islamic theology known for its rational approach to understanding religious teachings. They emphasize rationalism as the primary method of gaining knowledge, including understanding Islamic doctrines (Huda et al., 2016). In the Mu'tazilah view, reason has the capacity to determine what is right and wrong, even before revelation (Sirait & Nasution, 2023). Therefore, they believe that humans can achieve an understanding of God, justice, and morality through their reason, without having to rely entirely on revelation. This rationalism is the main characteristic of their theology, which distinguishes the Mu'tazilah from other groups of theologians.

In the Mu'tazilah system of thought, reason is not only an instrument of thought but also has authority in interpreting and assessing revelation. They argue that revelation should not be understood in a purely literal way, but must be interpreted based on rational principles (Bagir, 2017). If there is a verse in the Qur'an or hadith that seems to contradict reason, then the verse needs to be understood metaphorically or interpreted to be in line with the principles of rationality (Kharlie, 2018). With this approach, Mu'tazilah emphasized that revelation must be understood within a logical framework that is acceptable to human reason.

Although Mu'tazilah prioritized reason, they still recognized the role of revelation as the source of truth in Islam. However, they place reason as a higher authority in determining the truth of religious teachings (Khan, 2017). For them, revelation cannot be taken for granted without going through a process of rational understanding. For example, the concept of God's justice in Mu'tazilah theology is based on the rational principle that God cannot be unjust (Anwar et al., 2024). Therefore, they reject the doctrine of predestination

(absolute destiny) embraced by other theological groups, because it is considered contrary to the concept of God's justice that can be understood by human reason.

The Mu'tazilah view of the relationship between reason and revelation also affects their method of understanding Islamic law. They emphasize that Islamic law must be understood by considering the principles of justice and benefit (Hazmin & Mochammad Yahya Ghazali, 2023). If a law in the revelation text seems incompatible with rational principles or contrary to justice, then the law must be reinterpreted to remain relevant to more universal moral values (Asghar, 2013). This approach makes Mu'tazilah thought more flexible and adaptive to the times.

Thus, in Mu'tazilah theology, reason has a very dominant position in understanding revelation. They asserted that reason is not just a tool for understanding religious teachings, but also has the authority to judge the truth of a doctrine. This thought contributed greatly to the development of Islamic philosophy and opened space for dialog between religion and rationality. Although the Mu'tazilah's rational approach has drawn controversy in the history of Islamic thought, their intellectual legacy remains influential in the study of theology, philosophy, and Islamic law to this day.

### **Tafsir Al-Kashshaf and Mu'tazilah**

Al-Zamakhshari became a Mu'tazilah figure who was widely admired for his love of knowledge. Many writings mention that al-Zamakhshari dedicated all his life to gaining knowledge. However, before further explaining his work in science, it is necessary to first mention the biography, the characteristics of the interpretation of al-Kashshaf, and the study of Mu'tazilah theology on the interpretation of al-Kashshaf.

#### **1. Al-Zamakhshari's Biography**

As written in the interpretation of Al-Kashshaf al-Zamakhshari's full name is Abd al-Qasim Mahmud ibn Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhshari. But there are also those who write Muhammad ibn 'Umar ibn Muhammad al-Khawarizmi al-Zamakhshari. Al-Zamakhshari was born in Zamakhshar, a small town in Khawarizmi (now located in the country of Turkistan, Russia), on Wednesday 27 Rajab 467 H. Or March 18, 1075 M. (Al-Zamakhshari, 1968a).

His expertise in various disciplines—from tafsir to Arabic literature—made him one of the most influential scholars of his time (Ahmad, 2024). His journey to knowledge began when he finished studying the Koran with his father, and al-Zamakhshari began going to the city of Khwarizm to study. In Khawarizm he met many scholars and took part in many studies. However, not long after that, he had to go home because his father was in prison and died. When al-Zamakhshari returned home, he also met with the leading scholar in Khwarizm, namely Abu Mudhar al-Nahwi (d. 580 H.), who was also the teacher who instilled the Mu'tazilah ideology in him.

Imam Al-Zamakhshari is a fanatical adherent of Mu'tazilah ideology, so some people call him Abu al-Qasim al-Mu'tazili. The Tafsir book he wrote shows his fanaticism. Al-Zamakhshari was very clever at using gestures in a beautiful language style when

interpreting very profound verses (Pramana, 2024). People who do not study the Tafsir Book will not know the mutism of al-Zamakhshari.

His journey then continued to Mecca. There, he lived next to the Kaaba (Baitullah), so he was nicknamed Jarullah (Ahmad, 2024). In Mecca, he spent his time mastering the book Nahwu written by Sibawaih (518 H). Abu al-Hasan al-Akhtash al-Awsat was one of Sibawayh's students who was a Zamakhshari teacher who greatly influenced the linguistic aspects of his interpretation (Wasim, 2021). His long journey in satisfying his desire for knowledge led him to become Imam al-Kabir in the fields of Tafsir, Hadith, Nahwu, Literature, and Fiqh. From the fields of science.

During his life, Az-Zamakhshari produced many written works, among which As-Suyuthi mentioned were Al-Kashshaf in the field of tafsir, al-Fâiq in the field of Gharib al-Hadith, *asâs al-Balâghah*, *rabî'ul abrâr*, *nushûsh al-Akbbâr fî al-Hikâyât wa mutasyâbih asmâ' ar-Ruwâh*, *ar-Rawâidh fî al-Farâidh*, *al-Manhâj fî al-Ushûl*, *wa al-Mufashshal fî an-Nahwî*, and many more (Abu Bakar As-Suyuthi, 1396). His works show his abilities and depth of knowledge.

## 2. Characteristics of Tafsir Al-Kashshaf

Tafsir al-Kasasyâf by Az-Zamakhshari is one of the tafsir books that have major advantages in linguistic and literary aspects (Zubairin, 2020). According to Muni Abdul Halim, this book was first written by Az-Zamakhshari when he was in Al-Quds (now Palestine) and was completed in more than two years and two months (Abdul Halim, 2000, p. 105). In his muqaddimah tafsir, Az-Zamakhshari named his work with the full title *al-Kasyf 'an Haqâ'iq at-Tanzîl wa 'Uyûn al-Aqânîl fî Wujûh at-Ta'wîl* (Al-Zamakhshari, 1968a, p. 3). Az-Zamakhshari himself describes his interpretation with two main characteristics. First, this interpretation is based on Mu'tazilah's thought. Second, it has advantages in linguistic aspects (Abdul Halim, 2000).

In compiling his interpretation, Az-Zamakhshari applied the analytical method (tahlili), namely interpreting the verses of the Qur'an according to the order in the mushaf (Igisani, 2018). However, at the same time, this interpretation can also be categorized as a comparative interpretation (muqâran), because in various parts, the author often compares a verse with another verse that has a similar theme (Haromaini & Ag, 2015). In addition, he also compared the meaning of the verse with the hadith of the Prophet SAW and various opinions of scholars of interpretation, while highlighting the differences between these views (Adi, 2019). Az-Zamakhshari interpreted each sentence in great detail (Al-Zamakhshari, 1968a, p. 214). Even so, his explanation remains concise, not long-winded, and in line with his broad knowledge and understanding.

## Mu'tazilah's Study of Al-Kashshaf's Interpretation

Al-Zamakhshari is different from other scholars who interpret the Qur'an using the tafsir bi al-Ma'thur method, he minimizes interpretation with athar. However, it does not mean that his interpretation does not accept the verses of the Qur'an. Al-Zamakhshari takes the value of beauty in the language in his interpretation. Sometimes al-Zamakhshari

also interprets the Qur'an with the hadith of the prophet, but many of the hadith used by him are *dha'if* or even *maudu* (al-Khalidi, 2008, p. 552)', however, rationality still dominates in his interpretation.

Al-Zamakhshari prioritizes reason over naql. In principle, in the teachings of the Mu'tazilah, reason has the highest authority that surpasses all things. Therefore, the understanding of reason can dominate naql evidence such as the Qur'an, Hadith, Ijma', and Qiyas (Al Ja'far & al-Sarhan, 1980, p. 214). Thus, the element of liberalism in Al-Kashshaf's interpretation is definitely there, because the interpretation is greatly influenced by the dominance of reason.

It is important to remember that the use of ratios in collecting data sources plays an important role for al-Zamakhshari. This action is considered reasonable considering that the creed he adheres to is the Mu'tazilah creed. In line with that, Subhi Saleh cites a principle that developed among the Mu'tazilah regarding the position of reason: *al-hasan ma hasanahu al-'aqlu wa al-qabih ma qabbahahu al-'aqlu* (Shaleh, 1988, p. 294) This means that reason has control over the truth intended by the Mu'tazilah.

Not only in his thoughts that prioritize rationality, but al-Zamakhshari also chose the works of teachers who had the same ideology as him as references in his interpretations (Jannah & Rahman, 2023), including the interpretation of 'Amr Ibn 'Ubaid Al-Manzili (d. 144 H), who was an early Mu'tazilah figure who was a contemporary of Wāṣil ibn 'Atā', and the interpretation of Abi Bakar Al-'Asam Al-Mu'tazili (d. 235 H), one of the important exegetes and theologians from the middle generation of Mu'tazilah. He is known as a student of al-Jubba'i (father of Abū Hashim al-Jubba'i) and inherited the typical rationalistic approach of the Mu'tazilah in interpreting the Qur'an (Lateh et al., 2018). Then there is the interpretation of Al-Zujaj (d. 311 H), who is a reference figure for Az-Zamakhshari in terms of grammatical nahwu, Sharaf, and Mu'tazilah style in his interpretation, and the interpretation of al-Rummani (d. 348 H). Al-Rummani is a predecessor and methodological inspiration for az-Zamakhshari. (Al Ja'far & al-Sarhan, 1980, p. 214), From his references, it can be ascertained that the interpretation of al-Kashshaf is very thick with Mu'tazila ideology.

The Mu'tazilah ideology is very thick with rationality, but in relation to God, not everything can be rationalized; therefore, it is considered important to discuss it. The Mu'tazilah interprets monotheism as absolute purification for Allah SWT from the attributes of creatures (there is nothing similar to Him) (Supriyanto, 2022). Absolute purification of Allah SWT leads them to believe that Allah SWT does not have a body, likeness, form (صورة), flesh, blood, person (شخص), or essence/substance. جوهر is a characteristic/other than the essence of عرض and has no direction, is not surrounded by a place, and is not characterized by the characteristics of creatures which indicate new properties (the opposite of eternal) (Subhi, 1985, pp. 121–122) This belief resembles the Jahmiyah creed which rejects the attributes of Allah, especially those that indicate the likeness of Allah to creatures. The nature and essence of Allah were determined by the Mu'tazilah to be power/capacity, All-Living, and All-Knowing.



The relation to the attributes of God can be divided into two discussions. First, God is reviewed from His essence and actions. Second, God from physical nature (anthropomorphism). According to Mu'tazilah, attributes are not interpreted as *ma'dumat* or *muhdatsat*, so if there is a word that is the same as a creature, it is only limited to the name, not the essence (Abd Jabbar, 1963, p. 186). Abu Hudhi explains the concept of nafi al-sifat (the negation of God's attributes) as part of Mu'tazilah theology, which emphasizes the absolute oneness (tawhid) of Allah (Mutahhari, 1985). According to Wasil bin 'Ata', God cannot be characterized with attributes that have their own existence and then attach to His essence. This is because God's essence is qadim (has no beginning), so if an attribute is attached to Him and is also qadim, then there will be a qadim entity other than God. This concept, according to Wasil, has the potential to give rise to the belief that there is more than one God (*ta'addud al-qudama*), which is contrary to the principle of pure monotheism. Therefore, God should not be considered to have attributes separate from His essence, but rather everything associated with Him is His own essence, without any difference between substance and attributes (Nasution, 2006, p. 47).

### Analysis of the Tanzih I'tiqadiyah Verse in Tafsir Al-Kashshaf

Tafsir Al-Kashshaf by al-Zamakhshari is one of the tafsir that emphasizes a rational approach to understanding the verses of the Qur'an, especially in relation to the i'tiqadiyah verses (Rahmatulloh, 2020). As a commentator who adheres to Mu'tazilah principles, al-Zamakhshari emphasizes the concept of the oneness of Allah as the main basis of Islamic teachings. In his interpretation, he prioritizes a deep linguistic approach and rejects interpretations that could lead to tasybih (likeness of Allah to His creatures). In relation to the I'tiqadiyah verses taken in this research, they are those that discuss *Tanzih I'tiqadiyah*.

Among the tanzih I'tiqadiyah verses in the Al-Kashshaf interpretation is QS. Al-Baqarah verse 255, which states *اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ* (Allah, no there is a God besides Him, the Almighty, the Almighty), al-Zamakhshari interpreted that the life and existence of God are absolute, do not depend on other than Him. In his interpretation, he emphasized that the nature of al-Hayy (the Almighty) is not life in the biological sense, but a perfect life without beginning and end, al-Zamakhshari interpreted it as God being Mortal' and eliminating death in Allah (Al-Zamakhshari, 1968a, p. 295) This approach is in line with the Mu'tazilah principle of rationality which emphasizes that Allah is the only necessary being (*wajib al-wujud*), while creatures are dependent beings (*mumkin al-wujud*). In contrast to at-Tabari takwil *al-Hayy* with eternal affirmation. Meanwhile, *al-Qayyum* is interpreted by at-Tabari as Allah is the regulator of all the affairs of His creatures who stand alone without depending on anyone, and creatures depend on Him. (Muhammad ibn Jarir, 1405a, pp. 399–401).

In QS. Al-Ikhlâs verses 1-4: *قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ* in tafsir Al-Kashshaf emphasized that this surah is the foundation of pure monotheism. When interpreting the sentence *لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ* Az-Zamakhshari rejects all forms of belief that equate God with creatures (Al-Zamakhshari, 1998a, pp. 460–463), as is the belief of Christians who believe that God has children (Pardosi & Murtiningsih,

2019). This is contrary to the principle of tanzih in terms of monotheism. God does not have children, which shows that He is not bound by biological and temporal cycles. Therefore, He is very different from creatures. According to Zamakhsyārī, this verse clearly but beautifully eliminates all kinds of theological polytheism, showing the *ijāz* of the Qur'an in revealing the creed with a strong and concise sentence structure.

In QS Al-Shura verse 11: *لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ* Az-Zamakhsyari in this verse places great emphasis on the principle of absolute tanzih towards Allah. According to him, tawail is a rhetorical form of denying all forms of similarity between God and His creatures. He rejected the literal understanding of Allah's attributes found in the mutasyābihāt verses because it could lead to tashbīh (likening Allah to creatures) (Al-Zamakhsari, 1968b, pp. 396–397). Therefore, according to Zamakhsyārī, although Allah is called All-Hearing and All-Seeing (*al-Samī' al-Baṣīr*), the capacity cannot be compared with the ability of creatures to hear and see (Frolov, 2022). To understand the greatness of Allah, we must understand His attributes without limiting Him or likening Him to creatures. The Mu'tazilah's kalām approach, which combines rational rigor with the richness of the language of the Qur'an, is visible in this interpretation.

Then in QS. Taha verse 5: *الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى* This verse is included in the mutasyābih verses which are often the subject of theological debate. In the interpretation of Al-Kashshaf, Az-Zamakhsyari explains that "*istawa*" does not mean that Allah "sits" and "resides" physically on the 'Arsy as understood literally, but rather as a form of symbol of Allah's power (Al-Zamakhsari, 1998b, p. 67). Az-Zamakhsyārī firmly rejects the literal interpretation which makes Allah in a physical-physical sense (Supardi et al., 2023). According to Zamakhsyari, *istiwa*' must be interpreted metaphorically as a representation of Allah's sovereignty, majesty, and dominance over creatures, even though the Qur'an itself states that there is nothing comparable to Him. Therefore, understanding this verse literally means negating the principle of tanzih. This shows that az-Zamakhsyārī attempted to integrate the meaning of the Qur'anic text with the principles of rational creed.

Then in QS. Al-Fath verse 10 ... *يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ* ... In his interpretation, Az-Zamakhsyari rejects the literal meaning of the word "*yadullāh*", which means "the hand of Allah". He believes that the word "hand" in this situation does not refer to a body organ, but refers to strength, attention, or assurance that Allah's help will come (Al-Zamakhsari, 1998a, pp. 537–538). In tanzih, it is impossible for Allah to have a body similar to a creature. Zamakhsyārī is very careful with verses like this because the wrong interpretation can lead us to an understanding of anthropomorphism (Darojat et al., 2017). According to him, this style of language must be returned to the context of Arabic balaghah and Majaz. Meanwhile, Jami' al-Bayan at-Tabari explains "*yad*" as a symbol of power. (Muḥammad ibn Jarīr., 1405b, pp. 74–75)

Selanjutnya, dalam QS. Al-An'am ayat 103: (*Dia tidak dapat dicapai oleh penglihatan, tetapi Dia dapat melihat segala sesuatu*), al-Zamakhsari menafsirkan ayat ini sebagai bukti bahwa Allah tidak dapat dilihat oleh mata manusia, baik di dunia maupun di akhirat. Ia menolak konsep *ru'yatullah* (melihat Allah) yang diyakini oleh beberapa aliran teologi lain. Karena

menurutnya, penglihatan hanya dapat menangkap sesuatu yang memiliki bentuk dan dimensi, sedangkan Allah Mahasuci dari sifat-sifat tersebut. Tafsir ini mencerminkan pandangan Mu'tazilah yang sangat menekankan prinsip tanzih (penyucian Allah dari sifat-sifat makhluk).

Furthermore, in QS. Al-An'am verse 103: لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ (He cannot be reached by sight, but He can see everything), al-Zamakhshari interpreted this verse as evidence that Allah cannot be seen by human eyes, either in this world or in the hereafter. He rejected the concept of ru'yatullah (seeing Allah) which is believed by several other theological schools. Because according to him, vision can only capture something that has form and dimension, while Allah is Most Pure from these attributes (Al-Zamakhshari, 1968a, pp. 382–383). This interpretation reflects the Mu'tazilah view which strongly emphasizes the principle of tanzih (the purification of Allah from the attributes of creatures).

Several interpretations of the tanzih verse in the Jami' al-Bayan interpretation, which has an Asyariyah ideology, and the Al-Kashshaf Mu'tazilah interpretation are very different in providing interpretation. As shown in the table:

No	Name of surah and verse	text of the verse (summary)	Zamakhshari's interpretation	Principles of Tanzih and Mu'tazilah
1	QS Al-Baqarah: 255	اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ	<i>al-Hayy</i> : Perfect life, not biological- <i>Qayyum</i> : Self-sufficient, does not need creatures	Rejecting physical attributes for Allah, emphasizing the <i>wajib al-wujud</i> and the purity of the Divine Essence
2	QS Al-Ikhlāṣ: 1–4	لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ	God is childless and unbegotten, not related to time/biology	Rejecting anthropomorphic beliefs (such as the Trinity); absolute tanzih dzātiy
3	QS Asy-Syūrā: 11	لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ	There is nothing similar to Allah	Rejecting tashbih, interpreting the attributes of Allah metaphorically, not literally
4	QS Tāhā: 5	الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى	<i>Istimā'</i> is interpreted as a symbol of power, not sitting or residing.	Metaphorical interpretation of the <i>mutasyabihāt</i> verse; maintain the glory of Allah
5	QS Al-Fath: 10	يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ	<i>Yadullah</i> is interpreted as power and help, not physical hands	Rejection of bodily form for God; using balāghī majaz (figurative language style)

No	Name of surah and verse	text of the verse (summary)	Zamakhshari's interpretation	Principles of Tanzih and Mu'tazilah
6	QS Al-An'ām: 103	لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ	Vision cannot reach God	Rejecting ru'yatullāh; because Allah does not have a spatial/physical dimension

In interpreting the tanzih I'tiqadiyah verses, al-Zamakhshari also often uses language and balaghah approaches to strengthen his arguments. He highlights the use of sentence structure, word meaning, and the historical context of verses to explain the oneness of Allah in a rational and logical way.

Overall, Al-Kashshaf's tafsir displays a concept of monotheism that is strongly influenced by Mu'tazilite thought, which emphasizes the oneness of Allah in the most rational and logical form. Al-Zamakhshari tries to cleanse the concept of monotheism from all forms of similitude or attribution of Allah to the characteristics of creatures. Through a linguistic and rational approach, his interpretation provides a unique perspective in understanding monotheism, while also reflecting the character of Mu'tazilah's theological thought which upholds reason as the main tool in understanding religious teachings.

## CONCLUSION

This study makes a significant contribution in highlighting the characteristics of Mu'tazilah rationality in the interpretation of tanzih i'tiqadiyah verses through an in-depth study of al-Zamakhshari's Tafsir al-Kashshaf. The main finding of this study is the assertion that al-Zamakhshari consistently rejects the literal interpretation of mutasyābihāt verses that have the potential to equate God with creatures (tasybih), and replaces it with a linguistic and metaphorical approach that is in line with the principle of pure tawhid. This study also presents a comparative analysis between al-Kashshaf's tafsir and traditional tafsir such as al-Ṭabarī's Jāmi' al-Bayān, which shows fundamental differences in the epistemological approach between the rational Mu'tazilah and textual Ash'ariyyah styles.

Another specific contribution of this study is the emphasis on how Mu'tazilite theology, especially the doctrine of God's justice and human freedom, helped shape al-Zamakhshari's method of interpretation. In this context, this study successfully reveals that rationalism is not merely a method, but also a theological paradigm that influences the entire structure of interpretation. This approach proves its relevance in contemporary discourses of interpretation and theology, especially in efforts to harmonize reason and revelation. Overall, this study broadens insights into the epistemology of kalāmī interpretation and provides an academic foundation for further studies in the context of Islamic rationalism-based interpretation methodology. This study also serves as an important reference in re-understanding the relationship between reason and revelation in Islam in a more dynamic and critical manner.

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