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Rhetorical Disagreements between Ibn ‘Āshūr's *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* and al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf*: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

This research article examines Ibn ‘Āshūr's principal rhetorical disagreements with al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf* as reflected in *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*. It focuses on key rhetorical issues, including grammatical ellipsis (*taqdīr*), restriction (*ḥaṣr*), *iltifāt*, *isti'nāf*, *taḍmīn*, *Fā' al-Faṣīḥah*, and the rhetorical use of verb tenses. The Qur'an has continually inspired scholarly inquiry into its linguistic and rhetorical dimensions, with successive exegetes building upon the contributions of their predecessors. Among the most influential of these was al-Zamakhsharī, whose *al-Kashshāf* remains a foundational work in Qur'anic rhetoric and a major source for Ibn ‘Āshūr. Through a comparative analytical approach, this study demonstrates that Ibn ‘Āshūr critically evaluates al-Zamakhsharī's interpretations in light of Qur'anic coherence (*naẓm*), context, and rhetorical principles. While maintaining profound respect for his predecessor, Ibn ‘Āshūr offers constructive criticism that refines and expands earlier rhetorical insights. The study argues that his engagement with *al-Kashshāf* not only preserves the classical tradition of Qur'anic rhetorical exegesis but also advances it through rigorous and independent analysis.

Keywords: Al-Taḥrīr Wa Al-Tanwīr, Al-Kashshāf, Muḥammad Al-Ṭāhir Ibn ‘Āshūr, Al-Zamakhsharī, Qur'anic Rhetoric, Tafsīr, Comparative Exegesis, Rhetorical Analysis

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Introduction

The science of Tafsīr has evolved through a continuous scholarly tradition in which successive exegetes built upon and critically evaluated the works of their predecessors. Within this tradition, Qur'anic rhetoric (balāghah) occupies a central place, as it explores the literary and rhetorical features that constitute a major aspect of the Qur'an's inimitability (i'jāz al-Qur'ān). Among the classical commentaries, al-Zamakhsharī's al-Kashshāf occupies a unique position for its pioneering treatment of the rhetorical and linguistic dimensions of the Qur'an. Its influence extended to almost every subsequent exegete, particularly Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr, whose al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr reflects extensive engagement with al-Kashshāf. Although Ibn 'Āshūr highly praised al-Kashshāf and regarded it as one of the greatest works of Qur'anic exegesis, he did not follow it uncritically. Rather, he frequently evaluated al-Zamakhsharī's rhetorical interpretations, agreeing with them in many instances while offering reasoned criticism where he considered alternative explanations more consistent with the Qur'anic context, coherence (naẓm), and rhetorical style.

This article examines Ibn 'Āshūr's principal rhetorical disagreements with al-Zamakhsharī in al-Kashshāf, focusing on issues such as taqdīr, ḥaṣr, iltifāt, isti'nāf, taḍmīn, Fā' al-Faṣṭḥah, and rhetorical tense usage. It aims to demonstrate that Ibn 'Āshūr's critique represents a constructive scholarly engagement that both preserves and advances the classical tradition of Qur'anic rhetorical exegesis.

Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī (467–538 AH / 1075–1144 CE)

Al-Zamakhsharī's full name was Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Khwārizmī. His kunyah was Abū al-Qāsim, and he was widely known by the honorific title Jār Allāh ("Neighbor of God"). He was among the most eminent scholars of Islamic studies, Qur'anic exegesis, Arabic lexicography, and Arabic literature.

He was born in Zamakhshar, a village in Khwarazm. He later travelled to Mecca, where he resided for a considerable period. Owing to his long stay in the vicinity of the Sacred

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Mosque, he became known as Jār Allāh ("the Neighbor of the House of God").¹ Thereafter, he travelled extensively through various cities before finally returning to Gurganj, where he passed away.

Among his most celebrated works are **“Al-Kashshāf ‘an Ḥaqā’iq Ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl wa ‘Uyūn al-Aqāwīl fī Wujūh al-Ta’wīl”** (a commentary on the Qur'an), **“Asās al-Balāghah”**, and **“Al-Mufaṣṣal”**. He adhered to the Mu'tazila and openly expressed his theological convictions. He was also highly critical of the Ṣūfīs, and in particular, his Tafsīr, *Al-Kashshāf*, contains numerous criticisms of Ṣūfī interpretations.

Al-Zamakhsharī was among the earliest Qur'anic exegetes to make Qur'anic rhetoric (balāghah) a central focus of exegetical study. His *Al-Kashshāf* is regarded as one of the most significant, distinctive, and specialized works in the field of Qur'anic rhetoric, and it remains a foundational reference for the study of the rhetorical dimensions of the Qur'an.

Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn ‘Āshūr (1296–1394 AH / 1879–1973 CE)

‘Allāmah Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn ‘Āshūr's full name was Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Shādhilī ibn ‘Abd al-Qādir Ibn ‘Āshūr al-Tūnisī.² His kunyah was Abū al-Qāsim. He was one of the most distinguished contemporary scholars of Qur'anic exegesis, Islamic jurisprudence, legal theory (uṣūl al-fiqh), ḥadīth, Arabic language, and literature.

He was born in Tunis, where he received his primary and advanced education. He later joined the University of Ez-Zitouna, where he served as a teacher and muftī, and was eventually appointed as the Shaykh (Rector) of the institution. He devoted his entire scholarly career to teaching, writing, and religious reform, and passed away in Tunis in 1973.

Among his most celebrated works are **“Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr”** (Qur'anic exegesis), **“Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah al-Islāmiyyah”**, **“Alaysa al-Ṣubḥ bi-Qarīb”**, and **“Al-Waqf wa Āthāruhu fī al-Islām”**.³ He adhered to the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence and the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah. In his Qur'anic exegesis, he gave particular

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prominence to linguistic, rhetorical, legal-theoretical, and maqāṣid-based (higher objectives of Sharī'ah) approaches. His Tafsīr, *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, is especially renowned for its rigorous treatment of Qur'anic rhetoric, the higher objectives of Islamic law, and subtle linguistic insights, making it one of the most significant Qur'anic commentaries of the modern era.

Ibn 'Āshūr's Evaluation of Al-Kashshāf:

Among the earlier Qur'anic commentaries, 'Allāmah Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr relied most extensively on Al-Kashshāf in his Tafsīr. Throughout *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, he frequently cites Al-Kashshāf: at times praising it, at times analyzing its rhetorical insights, at times engaging in scholarly discussion with it, and on certain occasions disagreeing with and critiquing its conclusions. Nevertheless, he regarded Al-Kashshāf as the most outstanding work among the classical Qur'anic commentaries. He writes:

Although the number of Qur'anic commentaries is very large, most of them merely repeat the works of earlier exegetes. Their authors' principal contribution lies in compiling previous material, differing only in the degree of brevity or elaboration. In reality, the most important commentary is Al-Kashshāf.⁴

Likewise, while discussing the understanding of the Qur'an's inimitability (i'jāz al-Qur'ān), Ibn 'Āshūr identifies Al-Kashshāf as the principal reference on the subject. He states:

Whoever wishes to understand the detailed aspects of the Qur'an's inimitability should consult the commentaries devoted to this subject, foremost among which is Al-Kashshāf by al-Zamakhsharī.⁵

'Allāmah Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr also offers a comparative assessment of Al-Kashshāf. In his view, Al-Kashshāf enjoys a distinctive position in the field of Qur'anic rhetoric (balāghah). He writes:

Two great exegetes emerged during the same period: one in the East, namely Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd al-Zamakhsharī, the author of Al-Kashshāf, and the other in the West (al-Andalus), namely Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Ibn 'Aṭīyyah, the author of Al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz. Both penetrated deeply into the subtle meanings of the Qur'anic

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verses, cited evidence from classical Arabic, and transmitted the opinions of earlier exegetes. Al-Zamakhsharī, however, distinguished himself in the fields of rhetoric and the Arabic language, whereas Ibn ʿAṭīyyah devoted greater attention to the legal and juristic dimensions of Qurʾānic interpretation. These two scholars constitute the twin pillars of their discipline, and the scholars who came after them have consistently relied upon their works.⁶

Although al-Ṭāhir Ibn ʿĀshūr highly praised al-Kashshāf and its author al-Zamakhsharī, acknowledging his remarkable scholarly stature, it appears that on certain occasions he adopted a rather severe attitude toward him. His criticism is marked by sharpness, strict judgment, and at times harsh language. For example, while criticizing al-Zamakhsharī's treatment of the Qurʾānic variant readings (qirāʾāt), he writes:

As for the linguistic explanations that al-Zamakhsharī considered to be contrary to the rules of Arabic, they deserve careful reconsideration. We cannot assume that eloquent Arabic is confined only to those linguistic usages transmitted by the grammarians of Baṣra and Kūfa. On this basis, we reject many of al-Zamakhsharī's views in which he declared certain mutawātir (mass-transmitted) Qurʾānic readings to be weak merely because, in his opinion, they were based on less common Arabic constructions. This is particularly true in cases where he dismissed well-established recitations, such as the reading of ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĀmir, as unacceptable.⁷

Likewise, on several occasions Ibn ʿĀshūr accuses al-Zamakhsharī of arbitrariness (taʿassuf) and of showing disrespect toward the Qurʾānic reciters. In one place he remarks:

This is yet another instance of the author of al-Kashshāf's habitual arbitrariness, whereby he unjustifiably casts doubt upon the Qurʾānic reciters and attempts to belittle their opinions.⁸

On certain occasions, Ibn ʿĀshūr also accuses al-Zamakhsharī of self-conceit and partisanship. He writes:

The pride that al-Zamakhsharī displays in al-Kashshāf is, in reality, a consequence of his bias and unfairness toward those who disagreed with him—a trait for which

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he was well known. It was not fitting for the scholars of our intellectual tradition to respond in the same harsh manner to his rhetoric. However, since he initiated such an approach, others were compelled to reply in kind.⁹

Similarly, while criticizing al-Zamakhsharī's treatment of the mutawātir (mass-transmitted) Qur'ānic readings, Ibn 'Āshūr writes:

At this point, al-Zamakhsharī has stirred up unnecessary controversy and carried his objections to excess. This is characteristic of his habitual approach: whenever a mutawātir Qur'ānic reading differs from his grammatical principles, he attempts to discredit it, as though the Qur'ānic readings were merely the personal judgments and analogical reasoning of the reciters. In reality, however, these readings are authentically and mass-transmitted reports. Variations in grammatical inflection do not detract from eloquence; rather, they serve to enrich and clarify the meaning.¹⁰

In our view, it appears that 'Allāmah Ibn 'Āshūr kept Al-Kashshāf constantly before him while composing his commentary, subjecting virtually every verse—and, at times, every word—to critical examination. This is also suggested by his own statement:

Wherever we disagree with al-Zamakhsharī's preferred interpretation, we shall clarify our reasons in their respective places.¹¹

It is possible that the severity of Ibn 'Āshūr's criticism was, to a considerable extent, influenced by al-Zamakhsharī's adherence to Mu'tazilī theology, and this impression is supported by Ibn 'Āshūr's own remarks. Nevertheless, it would arguably have been more appropriate had he adopted a more measured and purely academic tone in his critique of Al-Kashshāf. An example of this may be seen in the following comment:

The question of man's superiority over other unseen creatures, such as the angels and the jinn, is not under discussion here. Rather, it is a matter of theology that can only be established through revealed texts. There was therefore no need to introduce, at this point, the well-known dispute between Ahl al-Sunnah and the Mu'tazilah concerning the superiority of human beings over the angels. However, al-Zamakhsharī, in keeping with his usual practice, sought once again to criticize Ahl al-Sunnah and to interpret the Qur'an in support of his own theological school. In doing so, he exceeded the bounds of scholarly propriety, for which he deserves criticism and censure.¹²

Nature Of Disagreements And Selected Examples:

Ibn 'Āshūr's criticisms of Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī's Al-Kashshāf primarily concern subtle scholarly issues, such as grammatical ellipsis (taqdīr), rhetorical interpretation (tawjīh), restriction (ḥaṣr), iltifāt (rhetorical shift), isti'nāf (resumption), taḍmīn (semantic inclusion), the explanatory fā' (fā' al-faṣīḥah), and the rhetorical use of past and future verb forms, rather than al-Zamakhsharī's scholarly stature or intellectual competence. Ibn 'Āshūr critiques Al-Kashshāf in numerous places. Some of the most notable examples are presented below.

(1) Disagreement over the Interpretation of "مَنْ"

Ibn 'Āshūr raises numerous objections to Al-Kashshāf. One of these concerns the interpretation of the word "مَنْ" in the following verse of Sūrat al-Naml (27:59–60):

"قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَىٰ ۚ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ. أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ...."

Ibn 'Āshūr states:

In this verse, 'مَنْ' is an interrogative pronoun serving as the subject, while its predicate is the clause 'خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ'. This is a rhetorical question intended to elicit an acknowledgment that Allah alone is the true deity and has no partner. There is therefore no need to assume any omitted expression in the construction.

In contrast, al-Zamakhsharī and all those who followed him maintain that 'مَنْ' is a relative pronoun, whose predicate is omitted but understood from the preceding statement 'اللَّهُ'. They further maintain that an omitted interrogative hamzah is implied after 'أَمْ', so that the intended meaning becomes: 'Rather, tell me: Is the One who created the heavens and the earth better, or those whom you associate with Allah?'

According to Ibn 'Āshūr, this interpretation is unnecessary and does not accord with the rhetorical style of idrāb (discursive transition), because it merely continues the previous subject. Under the interpretation adopted in Al-Kashshāf, the verse no longer exhibits transitional idrāb—that is, a shift from one theme to another.¹³

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In Al-Kashshāf, al-Zamakhsharī explains:

If it is asked what the difference is between the use of 'أَمْ' in 'أَمْ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ' and in 'أَمْنْ خَلَقَ', the answer is that the first 'أَمْ' is connected (*muttaṣilah*), because it means: 'Which of the two is better?'

The second 'أَمْ', however, is disjunctive (*munqaṭi'ah*), carrying the meaning of 'بل' together with an implied interrogative hamzah. Thus, after Allah says, 'Is Allah better, or those whom they associate with Him?', He then says, 'Rather, is the One who created the heavens and the earth better?' In this manner, they are led to acknowledge that the Creator of the entire universe is certainly superior to the lifeless idols that possess no power whatsoever.¹⁴ At this point, Ibn 'Āshūr disagrees with al-Zamakhsharī's assumption of an omitted construction and his interpretation of "مَنْ" as a relative pronoun. He regards this interpretation as unnecessary and argues instead that "مَنْ" should be understood as an interrogative pronoun, since this better preserves the rhetorical *idrāb* and enhances the eloquence of the verse.

(2) Disagreement over Isti'nāf (Independent Commencement)

Ibn 'Āshūr raises another objection to Al-Kashshāf in connection with the interpretation of the following verse from Sūrat al-Baqarah (2:3):

"الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ"

Ibn 'Āshūr writes:

The author of Al-Kashshāf also suggests the possibility that 'الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ' constitutes an independent sentence (*musta'naf*), functioning as the subject (*mubtada'*), with its predicate (*khabar*) being the subsequent statement 'أُولَئِكَ عَلَى هُدًى'.

In my view, however, this is an interpretation that is inappropriate in this context, because *isti'nāf* requires that one topic be concluded before moving on to another, a rhetorical device known as *iqtidāb*. Such a style is only suitable when the preceding subject has been fully discussed, or when it has been elaborated to such an extent that there is a risk of the

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audience becoming weary. In such cases, a new topic is normally introduced by expressions such as 'هذا', 'أما بعد', or similar transitional phrases.

In the absence of such circumstances, an abrupt shift to a new topic is regarded as a weakness on the part of the speaker or orator. This is especially true because the style of a written work allows much greater scope than that of an oral address, since a book provides ample opportunity to develop different subjects in detail.¹⁵

In Al-Kashshāf, al-Zamakhsharī writes:

The expression 'الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ' admits several grammatical interpretations:

It may function as an adjective modifying 'الْمُتَّقِينَ', and is therefore in the genitive case. It may also be in the accusative case as an expression of praise, as though the meaning were: 'I mean those who believe in the unseen.' Alternatively, it may be in the nominative case for the purpose of praise, meaning: 'They are the ones who believe in the unseen.'

Another possibility is to treat it independently from 'الْمُتَّقِينَ', in which case it serves as the subject (mubtada'), while the following clause 'أُولَئِكَ عَلَى هُدًى' functions as its predicate (khabar).¹⁶

Ibn 'Āshūr rejects al-Zamakhsharī's suggestion of isti'nāf as rhetorically inappropriate. He argues that 'الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ' should remain syntactically connected to 'الْمُتَّقِينَ', since introducing a new independent statement without necessity is contrary to the principles of eloquence.

(3) Disagreement over the Predominance of the Past Tense over the Future

Ibn 'Āshūr also disagrees with Al-Kashshāf on this point in his commentary on the following verse from Sūrat al-Baqarah (2:4):

"وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ"

Ibn 'Āshūr writes:

Faith in the revelation that was yet to be revealed is also included within the meaning of this verse, because this is established through the verse's implied meaning (mafḥūm al-iltizām). Thus, belief in future revelation is certainly intended by the statement, although it is not the direct denotation of the word 'أُنْزِلَ' ('was revealed'), which is in the past tense.

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Therefore, there is no need to claim—as Al-Kashshāf does—that the past tense here predominates over the future, meaning that 'بِمَا أُنْزِلَ' refers both to what has already been revealed and to what will be revealed in the future.¹⁷

In Al-Kashshāf, al-Zamakhsharī explains:

If it is asked: If 'بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ' refers to the entire Qur'an and the complete Sharī'ah, then at the time the believer's accepted faith, the whole Qur'an had not yet been revealed. Why, then, is the past tense 'أُنْزِلَ' used? On the other hand, if it refers only to what had already been revealed at that time, then this would imply belief in only part of the Qur'an rather than in the entire revelation, whereas faith is required in both what has been revealed and what is yet to be revealed. The answer is that the entire Qur'an is intended. Although part of it had yet to be revealed, the past tense is used because what is already present is allowed to predominate over what is not yet present. This is similar to the linguistic convention in Arabic whereby the first person may predominate over the second person, or the second person over the third person. For example, one says: 'أنا وأنت فعلنا' ('You and I did'), or 'أنت وزيد تفعلان' ('You and Zayd do'). Likewise, since part of the Qur'an had already been revealed while the remainder was still to come, the entire Qur'an was treated as though it had already been revealed, and the past tense was therefore employed. This interpretation is also supported by the divine statement: (Sūrat Al Ahqaf 46:30) 'إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ' 'مُوسَى'. Even though the jinn had not heard the entire Qur'an, nor had the whole Qur'an been revealed at that point, the past tense was nevertheless used, and the explanation is the same.¹⁸

According to Ibn 'Ashūr, belief in future revelation is already established by the implied meaning of the verse; therefore, there is no need to explain the use of the past tense through the principle of taghlīb (predominance). Al-Zamakhsharī, however, justifies the use of the past tense by applying this principle.

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(4) Disagreement over Whether Fronting Implies Restriction (Ḥaṣr)

Ibn ‘Āshūr also disagrees with Al-Kashshāf on this issue. Commenting on the following verse from Sūrat al-Baqarah (2:4):

"وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ"

Ibn ‘Āshūr writes:

In this verse, 'وَبِالْآخِرَةِ' (the prepositional phrase) is placed before its governing verb 'يُوقِنُونَ'. In my view, this fronting serves merely to express emphasis and to preserve the rhythmic ending (fāṣilah) of the verse. It also serves to praise the believers for having firm conviction in that reality which is of the greatest importance to every believer, namely, the Hereafter. Therefore, this fronting does not convey the meaning of restriction (ḥaṣr), because such an interpretation would not be appropriate here. If restriction were intended, the meaning would be that they have certainty only in the Hereafter and in nothing else, which is clearly not the intended sense. The author of Al-Kashshāf and his commentators have attempted to derive the meaning of restriction from this fronting. To support this interpretation, however, they shift the restriction away from the principal object itself and apply it instead to one of its qualities or states. Such a type of restriction is not recognized in classical Arabic usage.¹⁹

In Al-Kashshāf, al-Zamakhsharī writes:

The fronting of 'وَبِالْآخِرَةِ' and the placement of 'يُوقِنُونَ' after the pronoun 'هُمْ' constitute a subtle allusion to the 'اهل الكتاب' (People of the Book). It indicates that although they professed belief in the Hereafter, their belief did not conform to reality, and therefore their claim could not be regarded as true certainty.

Genuine certainty belongs only to those believers who have faith in the revelation sent down to you ﷺ and in what was revealed before you. For certainty (yaqīn) is knowledge that is completely free from doubt and firmly established.²⁰

According to Ibn ‘Āshūr, the fronting of 'وَبِالْآخِرَةِ' serves only the purposes of emphasis and commendation, not restriction. Al-Zamakhsharī, however, interprets this fronting as

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conveying restriction and as containing an implicit allusion directed at the 'أهل الكتاب' (People of the Book).

(5) Objection to Assuming an Elliptical Conditional Clause with Fā' al-Faṣṭḥah

Ibn 'Āshūr also disagrees with Al-Kashshāf on this issue. While commenting on the following verse from Sūrat al-Baqarah (2:60):

"وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا..."

Ibn 'Āshūr writes:

In my view, the fā' cannot be regarded as Fā' al-Faṣṭḥah unless the clause following it cannot be directly coordinated with the preceding statement. However, if such coordination is grammatically valid, then it is simply the ordinary coordinating fā'. In such a case, although an omitted expression may be assumed, it serves only the purpose of brevity and clarification of meaning.

In this verse, the gushing forth of the springs is a direct consequence of Allah's command: 'اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ', because it is inconceivable that a prophet such as Mūsā (peace be upon him) would fail to obey Allah's command.

Likewise, in ordinary speech, when someone asks a question and is told in response, 'Do this,' it is naturally understood that the instruction itself contains the answer to the question. For example, if a student asks, 'What is the ruling on this issue?' and the teacher replies, 'Open such-and-such chapter of the manual,' it is automatically understood that the student will open the book and find the answer.

However, to assume here an omitted conditional clause such as: 'If you strike the rock, then twelve springs will gush forth,' is, in my opinion, neither obvious nor appropriate. Surprisingly, the author of Al-Kashshāf has also adopted this interpretation.²¹

In Al-Kashshāf, al-Zamakhsharī writes:

The fā' in 'فَانْفَجَرَتْ' is connected to an omitted clause. The intended meaning is: 'Then Mūsā struck the rock, and twelve springs gushed forth from it,' or 'If you struck the rock, then twelve springs gushed forth from it.'

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According to this explanation, the fā' is Fā' al-Faṣīḥah, and such a fā' appears only in eloquent and highly expressive speech.²²

According to Ibn 'Āshūr, there is no need to interpret the fā' here as Fā' al-Faṣīḥah by assuming an omitted conditional clause. Al-Zamakhsharī, on the other hand, regards it as Fā' al-Faṣīḥah and explains it by positing an implied conditional or omitted verb.

(6) Disagreement Regarding Iltifāt (Rhetorical Shift)

Ibn 'Āshūr also differs from al-Kashshāf regarding the rhetorical device of iltifāt. While commenting on the following verse from Sūrat al-Baqarah (2:214):

"...أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخِلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ"

Ibn 'Āshūr writes:

In this verse, the address is directed explicitly to the Muslims. Although the preceding discussion concerned other people, the discourse now turns directly to the believers; therefore, this cannot be regarded as iltifāt.

The author of al-Kashshāf considered it an instance of iltifāt, because the previous verse stated: "فَهَدَىٰ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ", according to which one might have expected the continuation to read "أَمْ حَسِبُوا".

However, the more accurate view is that "أَمْ" here introduces a transition from one subject to another, constituting idrāb intiqālī (transitional digression). When discourse begins a new topic in this manner, it effectively initiates an independent section. Consequently, the change in style should not be classified as iltifāt; rather, it simply marks the commencement of a new subject.²³

In al-Kashshāf, al-Zamakhsharī writes:

After mentioning the disagreements of the previous communities with their prophets, their rejection despite the coming of clear proofs, and recounting their circumstances, the purpose was to encourage the Messenger ﷺ and the believers to remain steadfast and patient in the face of the opposition, denial, and hostility of the polytheists and the أهل الكتاب (People of the Book).

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Accordingly, Allah addressed them through the rhetorical device of *iltifāt*, because this mode of expression is more eloquent and more effective.²⁴

According to Ibn ‘Āshūr, this passage does not represent *iltifāt*; rather, it marks the beginning of a new subject through *idrāb intiqālī* (transitional digression). Al-Zamakhsharī, however, regards it as an instance of *iltifāt*, employed for its rhetorical elegance and persuasive effect.

(7) Difference Regarding Taḍmīn (Semantic Inclusion)

Ibn ‘Āshūr also disagrees with al-Kashshāf regarding the issue of *taḍmīn* (semantic inclusion). While commenting on the Qur'anic verse from Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān (3:176):

"وَلَا يَخْزَنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَن يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا...."

Ibn ‘Āshūr writes:

In this verse, the Prophet ﷺ is instructed not to grieve over those who hasten in disbelief—that is, those who exert every effort to promote disbelief and advance its cause.

The expression "يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ" means that they plunge deeply into disbelief. They hasten to manifest it, support it, and act upon it. Whenever an opportunity arises, they spread it and strive to establish it firmly in people's hearts.

Some scholars have maintained that the verb "يُسَارِعُونَ" implicitly contains the meaning of "يقعون" (to enter or fall into), and that this is why it is followed by the preposition "في". This is also the approach adopted by the author of al-Kashshāf and his commentators.

In my view, however, this is not a case of *taḍmīn* but rather an instance of representational metaphor (*isti‘ārah tamthīliyyah*). The condition of those who are extremely eager to spread disbelief, sow doubts in the hearts of believers, devise plots, and exploit every opportunity is likened to that of a person who hastens to seize something for fear of losing it and becomes completely engrossed in obtaining it.

Accordingly, the use of the preposition "في" indicates that they are already deeply immersed in disbelief. Had the preposition "إلى" been used instead, it would have implied that they were merely moving toward disbelief and had not yet entered it. In reality, however, they

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were already disbelievers. The verse refers to the hypocrites, and according to another opinion, to those who had accepted Islam but later apostatized out of fear of the polytheists.²⁵

In al-Kashshāf, al-Zamakhsharī writes:

This means that they hasten into disbelief and display an intense inclination toward it. They refer either to the hypocrites who stayed behind or to those who reverted from Islam.²⁶

In reality, al-Zamakhsharī does not explicitly state that this is an example of taḍmīn; rather, he merely explains the intended meaning of the verse. Ibn ‘Āshūr, however, interprets his explanation as implying taḍmīn and subsequently objects to it. At first glance, such criticism does not appear to be necessary, since metaphor (isti‘ārah) and taḍmīn are closely related rhetorical devices. Metaphor inherently involves semantic inclusion, while taḍmīn likewise depends upon metaphorical association, as the implied meaning of the borrowed expression is embedded within the context for a specific rhetorical purpose.

Conclusion:

- Ibn ‘Āshūr made extensive use of Imām al-Zamakhsharī's al-Kashshāf in his al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr. Indeed, it is difficult to find a page of his commentary that does not reflect its influence or explicitly refer to it.
- Ibn ‘Āshūr's engagement with al-Kashshāf went far beyond mere quotation. He endorsed its views in many places, elaborated upon its insights, employed its arguments, critiqued its interpretations, and engaged with it in a sustained scholarly dialogue.
- Whenever he disagreed with al-Zamakhsharī, Ibn ‘Āshūr maintained due scholarly respect while presenting his criticism in an academic manner. He supported his preferred interpretations with grammatical, rhetorical, and contextual evidence.
- His criticisms are directed primarily at technical issues such as grammatical ellipsis (taqdīr), rhetorical interpretation, restriction (ḥaṣr), iltifāt (rhetorical shift), isti'nāf (resumption), taḍmīn (semantic inclusion), Fā' al-Faṣīḥah, and the use of the past tense for future events, rather than at al-Zamakhsharī's scholarly standing.
- Ibn ‘Āshūr's distinctive contribution lies in making the context of the discourse, the coherence of the Qur'anic text (naẓm al-Qur'ān), and Qur'anic rhetoric the primary criteria for evaluating al-Zamakhsharī's views.
- In certain instances, however, Ibn ‘Āshūr's criticism appears open to reconsideration, as he interpreted al-Zamakhsharī's statements according to specific rhetorical categories

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(such as *taḍmīn*), even though al-Zamakhsharī himself had not explicitly identified them as such.

- This demonstrates that al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr is both a continuation of the scholarly legacy of al-Kashshāf and a critical, analytical contribution to that tradition, enriching Qur'anic exegesis and rhetorical studies with greater depth and breadth.

¹ . Ibn Khallikān, Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad., *Wafayāt al-A‘yān wa-Anbā’ Abnā’ al-Zamān*, Edited by Iḥsān ‘Abbās. Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977, vol. 5, p. 173.

² . Iyād Khālīd al-Ṭabba‘, Muhammad al-Tahir Ibn Ashur: 'Allamat al-Fiḥ wa Usulih wa al-Tafsir wa 'Uluḥ, Dar al-Qalam, 2005 CE / 1426 AH, p. 22.

³ . Bīlqasim al-Ghālī, Shaykh al-Jamī' al-A'zam Muhammad al-Tahir Ibn Ashur: *Hayatuhu wa Atharuhu*, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, Beirut, Lebanon, 1996/1417 AH, p. 68–70.

⁴ . Ibn ‘Āshūr, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir , *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Maktabat Dār Ṣaḥnūn li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī‘, Tunis, 1997, Vol. 1, p. 7.

⁵ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Vol. 1, p. 104.

⁶ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Vol. 1, p. 14.

⁷ . Ibn ‘Āshūr, *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 1, p. 60

⁸ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 19, p. 189

⁹ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Vol. 6, p. 252

¹⁰ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Vol. 7, p. 77

¹¹ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Vol. 1, p. 61

¹² . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Vol. 14, p. 131-132

¹³ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 19, p. 285

¹⁴ . *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 3, p. 380

¹⁵ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 1, p. 226

¹⁶ . *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 1, p. 79

¹⁷ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 1, p. 236

¹⁸ . *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 1, p. 83

¹⁹ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 1, p. 237-238

²⁰ . *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 1, p. 83

²¹ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 1, pp. 502

²² . *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 1, p. 173

²³ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 2, p. 297

²⁴ . *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 1, p. 283

²⁵ . *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol. 3, pp. 288–289

²⁶ . *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 1, p. 471