

Exploring the Concept of “*Kalimāt*” in the Quran and Hadith: A Preliminary Survey of Relevant Issues and Literature

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Abstract: The term “*kalimah*,” as found in both the Quran and hadith, has engendered significant scholarly discourse due to its multifaceted definitions and theological implications. The extant body of literature scrutinises various aspects of *kalimah*, encompassing its linguistic explications, its attribution to Allah, its juxtaposition with human utterance, and its correlation with cosmic order and the broader universe. Furthermore, the surveyed materials underscore the paramount importance of comprehending the myriad forms and applications of *kalimah* within the Quran and hadith. Scholars have delved into its grammatical intricacies, didactic significance, and diverse connotations. Additionally, the interplay between *kalimah* and the divine ordinances governing the universe, often referred to as *al-sunan al-ilāhiyyah*, has been a subject of contemplation and interpretation. In a broader context, the literature on *kalimah* serves as an exemplar of the expansive domain of Islamic scholarship and the unceasing pursuit to fathom the profound concepts embedded in Islamic scripture. The study demonstrates a profound awareness of the intricate nature inherent in the concept of *kalimah*, transcending not only the religious context but also within the domain of linguistic scholarship. The concept of *kalimah* is deeply intertwined with several other pertinent debates within the academic sphere. These encompass discussions concerning the nature and discipline of *kalām* in Islamic theology, the exploration of divine attributes, and the examination of the concept of *jawāmi‘ al-kalim* (compact speech) attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad. This literature review lays the foundational groundwork for forthcoming systematic inquiries and theological dialogues pertaining to *kalimah*, thereby augmenting the comprehension of devout Muslims, and fostering a deeper connection to their religious heritage.

Keywords: *Kalimah, Semantic dimensions, Divine attributes, Islamic Scripture, Sufi perspective, Cosmic order.*

1. Introduction

At first glance, one might easily define “*kalimāt*” as simply “words.” However, within the context of religious scripture, this term unfolds profound complexity. Notably, in the Quranic text, the reference to ‘*Īsā* or Jesus as the “*kalimat* (word)” of Allah [al-Nisā’ 4: 171] presents a multifaceted challenge in defining its essence, as ‘*Īsā* is unquestionably

perceived by others as a human being rather than a mere word. Thus, a deeper understanding of the term *kalimat* is warranted. Similarly, the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad advises believers to seek refuge in the “perfect *kalimāt* of Allah,” which has prompted a variety of scholarly interpretations [1] (3371), [2] (2708). Some limit it to the Quran, while others extend its scope to encompass

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revelations to earlier prophets. Furthermore, specific hadith connect *kalimāt* to the Divine decree, igniting a theological debate concerning the Quran's pre-existence in the "preserved tablet" where the decree was written 50,000 years before the creation of heavens and earth [2] (2653). Furthermore, the term "*kalimah*" is inextricably linked to the concept of "*ma'nā*," with the latter necessitating an in-depth examination of its interpretation. For instance, the Arabic term *ma'nā* can be argued to encapsulate up to six Greek linguistic notions: *theōria*, *pragma*, *sēmainō*, *tropos*, *paraphoros*, and *presbutikos* [3]. Consequently, it adds a further layer of complexity when deciphering an already intricate subject. This essay sets out to explore the concept of *kalimāt*, not as a mere linguistic element, but as a religious concept derived from the Quran and hadith. Its objective is to establish a framework for a further systematic examination of the concept of *kalimah* within the realm of past and ongoing Islamic intellectual discourse. It is expected that a profound comprehension of the religious concept of *kalimāt* will enhance faithful Muslims' discernment and purposeful observation of their own *kalimāt*.

2. *Kalimāt* in the Quran and Hadith

When utilising the *Kalimāt al-Qur'ān* function on the al-Maany website, 40 results are generated for the term *kalimāt* in both its singular and plural forms within the Quran [4]. However, Angga Fathurohman's graduate thesis, which draws from Ali Zadeh's dictionary of Quranic terms titled *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān li-Ṭālib Āyāt al-Qur'ān*, identifies a total of 26 occurrences of this term in the Quran [5]. Upon comparative scrutiny, a disparity emerges, as an additional 14 instances were inadvertently omitted in the thesis. These instances, as provided in the thesis, are as follows: Āl 'Imrān 3: 21, 39, 45, 64, al-An'ām 6: 115, al-A'rāf 7: 137, al-Tawbah 9: 40, 74, Yūnus 10: 19, 33, 96, Hūd 11: 110, 119, Ibrāhīm 14: 24, 26, al-Kahf 18: 5, Ṭāhā 20: 129, al-Mu'minūn 23: 100, al-Zumar 39: 19, 71, Ghāfir 40: 6, Fuṣṣilat 41: 45, al-Shūrā 42: 14, 21, al-Zukhruf 43: 28, al-Faṭḥ 48: 26. 25 places are mentioned here, as the term occurred twice in verse 40 of al-Tawbah. The additional 14 instances provided by the website are as follows: al-Baqarah 2: 37, 124, al-Nisā' 4: 171, al-An'ām 6: 34, al-A'rāf 7: 158, al-Anfāl 8: 7, Yūnus 10: 64, 82, al-Kahf 18: 27, 109, Luqmān 31: 27, al-Ṣāffāt 37: 171, al-Shūrā 42: 24, al-Tahrīm 66: 12.

Notably, another researcher, Kaṣṣāb meticulously examines the various forms of the term as they appear in the Quran, listing them as follows: *kalimat* with *al-tā'* *al-marbūṭah* (20 instances), *kalimat* with *al-tā'* *al-ṭawīlah* (5 instances), *kalimatunā* (1 instance), *kalimatuḥu* (1 instance), *kalimāt* (7 instances), and *kalimātuḥu* (6 instances) [6]. This comprehensive analysis corroborates the 40 instances provided by the website. In contrast, al-Ruwaylī in his paper extends this inquiry by counting occurrences of any derivative of the Arabic root *kāf-lām-mīm* in the Quran, resulting in a total of 75 instances [7]. Further elaboration by Mona Saad specifies that 51 occurrences assume noun forms,

while 24 occurrences take the form of verbs [8]. These occurrences are dispersed throughout 32 surahs of the Quran. She proceeds to delineate the overarching meanings of *kalimat*, which according to her, encompass 32 distinct meanings. Several other studies made similar findings as the above and the most comprehensive would be the study by Khaled Bakrou titled *al-Kalimah (Kalimah) fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* [9].

Regarding the presence of the term *kalimah* in hadith literature, a comprehensive search was conducted using the Jawāmi' al-Kalim software, encompassing a vast array of 1400 hadith collections. The inquiry into its singular form yielded a substantial 576 instances, while the plural form yielded a slightly lower count of 566. To further refine the search, a specific focus was directed towards the term "*kalimāt Allāh*." Nevertheless, despite obtaining 128 results, it is noteworthy that none of these instances truly constituted a compound term of "*kalimāt Allāh*"; instead, they contained both "*kalimāt*" and "*Allāh*" as separate components within a single hadith. For instance, the majority of these occurrences featured expressions like "*kalimāt yanfa'uni Allāh bihā*." Subsequently, an additional inquiry utilising the phrase "*bi-kalimāt Allāh*" returned 360 results. It is worth noting that some of these outcomes are repetitions of the same hadiths, owing to their inclusion in multiple hadith collections. While a comprehensive analysis of the entirety of these results would necessitate a dedicated extensive study beyond the scope of this paper, several general conclusions can be gleaned from a preliminary examination of these findings.

Firstly, within the realm of hadith studies, it is essential to acknowledge that the paraphrasing of hadith texts is permissible under specific conditions met by the narrators. Consequently, the examination of the semantic nuances of words within hadith texts necessitates a more circumspect approach. For instance, within the aforementioned results, there exists a hadith narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, in which the Prophet is reported to have said, "Whoever would adopt these *kalimāt* from me, act upon them, or impart them to others who would act upon them?" This represents the translation of the hadith text as recorded by al-Tirmidhī, suggesting that the term *kalimāt* was articulated directly by the Prophet [10] (2305). However, upon consulting another early hadith compilation, *Musnad Ibn Ḥanbal*, which predates al-Tirmidhī, the wording of the same hadith can be translated as, "Who among my community, who will learn these five traits (*khiṣāl*) and act upon them, or teach them to someone who will put them into practice? [11] (8095)" Hence, for a more compelling exploration of the semantic dimensions of *kalimah* in hadith literature, it is imperative to place greater emphasis on the term *kalimah* when it occurs within specific prayer recitations documented in the hadith. For this reason, this study incorporated an examination of the phrase "*bi-kalimāt Allāh*" due to its presence in the renowned prayer reported in the hadith, i.e., "*a'ūdhu bi-kalimāt Allāh al-tāmmat*."

With regard to the main points observed in the preceding findings, it is evident that the plural form of *kalimāt* typically

conveys specific phrases or utterances associated with prayers. For instance, an account preserved in Ibn Abī Shaybah's *al-Muṣānnaḥ* recounts that the Prophet would recite the following phrase, “*subḥānaka Allāhumma wa bi-ḥamdika, aṣḥadu an lā ilāha illā anta, astaghfiruka wa atūb ilayka,*” at the conclusion of gatherings [12] (29939). When queried about this practice, the Prophet explained, “These are the ‘*kalimāt*’ that I was taught by Gabriel.” Another hadith employs the term *kalimāt* to refer to the supplications made by the Prophet. Shaddād ibn Aws is reported by Ibn Abī Shaybah to have said, “Please commit to memory what I am about to convey. I heard the Prophet proclaim, ‘When people begin amassing gold and silver, treasure these *kalimāt*: *Allāhumma inī as’aluka al-thabāt fī al-amr* (O Allah, I implore You for steadfastness in this matter) ...’ [12] (29971)” As previously highlighted, a narration recorded by al-Tirmidhi and Ibn Ḥanbal presents the notion of *kalimāt* as signifying a set of advisory words. In another hadith relayed by Ibn Mandah, the term *kalimāt* pertains to five commandments entrusted to Prophet Yaḥyā, with instructions to convey them to his people [13, p. 376]. Notwithstanding, a comprehensive examination of the authenticity and precise wording of these hadiths is warranted. However, it becomes evident that *kalimāt* in its plural form frequently denotes specific, well-established, or fixed expressions. This contrasts with the use of *kalimah* in its singular form, which, in most hadiths, encompasses any form of speech by human beings.

For instance, al-Bukhārī has documented a hadith in which the Prophet asserts, “A servant of Allah may utter a word (*al-kalimah*) that pleases Allah without attaching much importance to it, and, as a result, Allah may raise his status several degrees. Conversely, a servant of Allah may utter a word (*al-kalimah*) carelessly, without considering its gravity, which displeases Allah, and consequently, he may be condemned to the Hellfire [1] (6478).” Another hadith, featured in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* compilations of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, addresses the query, “What constitutes a good omen?” to which the Prophet responds, “A good word (*al-kalimah*) that one of you hears [1] (5754), [2] (110).” Additionally, a hadith found in both these esteemed collections underscores that “the good word (*al-kalimah*) is a form of charity (*ṣadaqah*) [1] (2989), [2] (1009).” It is notable that only in specific hadiths does the term *kalimah*, when in the form of a definite noun, pertain to God’s divine decree. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, a hadith recounts how “a surreptitious listener hears a word (*al-kalimah*) from the heavens, which he conveys to that which is below him [1] (4800).” In his treatise on eschatology and events preceding the Last Day, al-Dānī records a hadith outlining the missions of the Prophet ‘Īsā after his second coming, including the phrase “*wa taqūm al-kalimah li’l-Lāh Rabb al-‘ālamīn* (until the matter or decision belongs only to God) [14] (691).”

In conclusion, the phrase “*kalimāt Allāh,*” particularly as it appears in the hadith “*a’ūdhu bi-kalimāt Allāh al-tāmmah,*” has garnered significant attention and commentary from scholars who specialise in providing exegeses for the primary

canonical compilations of hadith. This aspect will be expounded upon in the subsequent sections through a review of pertinent scholarly literature. Additionally, it is noteworthy that despite the substantial body of work dedicated to thematic hadith compilations and collections centred on specific themes, there appears to be a conspicuous absence of any extant treatise focused explicitly on the theme of “*kalimāt*” within the Prophet’s hadith. The preliminary overview presented here is intended to offer insights into the multifaceted meanings and interpretations of *kalimah* as conveyed within the corpus of hadith literature.

3. Literature and Issues Surrounding *Kalimāt*

The discourse surrounding the interpretation of *kalimah* finds its roots in the early stages of Quranic exegesis and has, over time, been intricately woven into the lexicon of Arabic lexicographers. Thus, it is imperative to acknowledge that a comprehensive investigation into the various perspectives and views concerning the meaning of *kalimah* within classical and medieval sources would warrant a dedicated study, exceeding the confines of this paper. This becomes even more pronounced when considering the intricate relationship between *kalimah* and *kalām*, the latter denoting the rational discourse of theology within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Our current exploration, however, is limited to contemporary literature related to the interpretation of *kalimah*. In the course of this research endeavour, a meticulous search yielded a total of 25 pertinent works, ascertained from research databases and bibliographic references, such as the database of al-Mandumah, following a process of judicious exclusion and selection. Most of the works are presented in Arabic.

As is customary in Arabic scholarly literature, a prevalent theme across these works is the exploration of the linguistic definition of *kalimah*. Frequently cited figures like Ibn Manẓūr play a central role in these discussions, with his overarching conclusion that *kalimah* in Arabic encapsulates three distinct referential meanings. Ibn Manẓūr stated, “The word *kalimah* may refer to a single letter of the alphabet, to a word composed of a group of meaningful letters, or to an entire poem and an entire sermon.” However, it is imperative to acknowledge the multifaceted nature of this issue, extending well beyond this succinct statement. In the context of the present research, the earliest comprehensive exploration of the *kalimah* within the realm of the Arabic language dates back to al-Muhayri’s 1987 study, titled “*Mafḥūm al-Kalimah fī al-Naḥw al-‘Arabī.*” Among his notable conclusions, al-Muhayri emphasised that, in Arabic, the essence of *kalimah* closely aligns with the concept of *al-lafzam* (monème) as understood by Arab linguists, rather than corresponding directly with the French “mot” or the English “word” [15]. Al-Muhayri contends that a comprehensive understanding of *kalimah* necessitates the consideration of two fundamental concepts: *al-waḍ’* (linguistic convention) and *al-qaṣd* (intention). For him, this

complex discussion underscored the profound level of analysis achieved within the realm of Arabic linguistic scholarship.

The intricate issue of defining the core essence and significance of *kalimah* remains a focal point of extensive discussion in subsequent works, particularly those dedicated to exploring its linguistic dimensions. Numerous scholars delve into the intricate connections between *kalimah*, *lafz*, *kalām*, *ḥarf*, and *ṣawt*. al-Duraynī conducts an insightful comparative analysis of *kalimah* definitions between early and later Arab linguists, while Mubarakī extends this comparative exploration to encompass the Western linguistic conception of the term “word” [16], [17]. Shani builds upon the groundwork laid by al-Duraynī, and in a work titled “*Mā al-Kalimah? (What is Kalimah?)*”, Amadsho addresses both the linguistic dimension and the religious connotations of *kalimah* as found in the Quran and hadith [18], [19]. This persistent scholarly interest in linguistics is exemplified in Milah’s 2019 paper, which meticulously compares *kalimah* definitions among early, later, and contemporary linguists [20]. These dedicated investigations predominantly probe the linguistic dimension of *kalimah*, though certain aspects of the discourse also reverberate within literature focused on the religious dimensions of the term.

The intricate relationship between the linguistic and religious dimensions of this subject is prominently exemplified in the thesis presented by Marbūh, which delves into the influence of the Arabic language in elucidating the intentions behind religious scriptures [21]. Subsequently, Abd al-Mawla embarks on an exploration, through his article, of the distinctive rhetorical and expressive qualities inherent in the term *kalimah* as it appears in the Quran, primarily from a linguistic perspective [22]. While not directly centred on the term *kalimah*, al-Bayati’s article, which assesses and translates the Quranic term *āyat* into English, provides a valuable standpoint, considering that *kalimah* constitutes an integral component in constructing an *āyat* [23]. This English article is one among several English-language research works that, while not explicitly addressing the challenge of defining *kalimah*, bear relevance to the issue by addressing matters of meaning and other linguistic facets tied to the Quran. For instance, Alexander Key’s work titled *Language Between God and The Poets: Ma’ānī in the Eleventh Century* examines the concept of God’s *ma’ānī* (meanings) and God’s speech, which inherently entails the concept of God’s words [3]. On another note, it should be learned that, in the Western context, there has been no shortage of studies exploring the nature and trajectory of “*kalām*” as the scholarly field of theology.

Another subject tangentially related to the theme of *kalimah* is the scriptural concept of *jawami’ al-kalim*. This concept is rooted in a hadith stating that the Prophet was endowed with *jawami’ al-kalim*. Traditionally, it has been interpreted as concise words with expansive meanings. However, some scholars have posited that this term pertains to the Quran itself. Given the shared etymological root between *kalim* and *kalimah*, a closer examination of the

discourse surrounding *jawami’ al-kalim* promises to enhance our comprehension of *kalimah*. Presently, only a limited number of specialised studies exist on this topic. Among them, the most extensive is *Jawāmi’ al-Kalim al-Nabawī: Dirāsah Ta’ṣīliyyah* authored by ‘Umar al-Muqbil [24]. Additionally, a notably comprehensive academic paper in Turkish titled *Bana Cevāmiu’l-Kelim (Özli Sözciler) Verildi Hadisinin Tahlili* further addresses this subject [25]. Lastly, Mutaz al-Khatib delves into the distinctions between *jawami’ al-kalim* and *al-aḥādīth al-kullīyyah* (the general principal hadith) while chronicling the historical evolution of the latter within the Muslim intellectual tradition [26]. These works, while not explicitly dissecting the multifaceted meanings of *kalimah*, undoubtedly enrich our comprehension of the term, particularly from the religious perspective.

4. Approaches to the meanings of *kalimah* in the Quran

Transitioning to the body of literature dedicated to a profound exploration of the meaning of *kalimah* and its derivatives in the Quran, one of the earliest comprehensive works in this domain can be attributed to Samīr Sulaymān’s book titled “*Khiṭāb al-Kalimah fī al-Qur’ān: Qirā’at fī Niẓām Dalālātihā al-‘Ammah wa Dalālātihā al-Sananiyyah*,” published in 1989 [27]. Sulaymān artfully posits the concept of horizontal and vertical readings to elucidate the multifaceted meanings of *kalimah*, consequently proposing both linguistic and creative interpretations. The creative dimension in his discourse pertains to the influence of Divine *kalimah* in the manifestation of specific laws and norms governing the universe. Despite its roots in extensive Shi’ite references, Sulaymān’s treatment transcends sectarian boundaries, delving into the linguistic and philosophical dimensions of the concept. A kindred approach is discerned in the 2013 article, “*al-Kalimah fī al-Qur’ān al-Karīm (Dirāsah Dilāliyyah)*,” which was featured on a Shi’ite website [28]. The author propounds a nuanced perspective that encompasses *al-bu’d al-takwīnī* and *al-bu’d al-i’tibārī*, signifying the creative and linguistic dimensions, while underscoring the theological facet inherent to the concept of *kalimah*.

Another approach to delving into the multifaceted meaning of *kalimah* is evident in Khālīdī’s work, *Muṣṭalah al-Kalimah fī al-Qur’ān al-Karīm* [29]. In this meticulous examination, Khālīdī scrutinises various grammatical forms of *kalimah*, encompassing *kalimatu* and *kalimata* (singular possessed), *kalimatun*, *kalimatan*, and *kalimatin* (singular indefinite), *kalimat* with *tā’ maftūḥah*, *kalimāt*, *kalimatunā*, and *kallamahu*. Furthermore, Khālīdī conducts a comparative analysis of the concept across diverse languages, expanding the horizons of this inquiry. As mentioned above, Angga’s thesis provides a notable contribution by elucidating nine contextual meanings of *kalimah* through a meticulous analysis of its positioning within Quranic sentences [5]. Notably, Angga’s work centres on extracting educational

values inherent in the Quranic *kalimah*, offering insights into its pedagogical significance. Another seminal study conducted by Bakrou, characterised by its comprehensiveness, undertakes a profound exploration of *kalimah* [9]. Bakrou's paper, arguably the most exhaustive on this subject, yields a staggering twenty distinct meanings of the term as found in the Quran. Beyond the semantic investigation, Bakrou places particular emphasis on understanding the Quranic principle of *naẓm* (coherence), alongside an exploration of the various forms, types, rules, and other facets related to the concept of *kalimah*. These endeavours, all published in 2018, manifest a palpable surge in scholarly interest surrounding the concept of *kalimah* in the Quran.

Instead of exhaustively enumerating the diverse meanings of *kalimah* and its derivatives within the Quran, some literature opts to identify overarching thematic threads. In a 2018 article, Kaṣṣāb, in his work titled *Maḥmūd al-Kalimah fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm Bayna al-Ḥaqīqah al-Lafẓiyyah wa al-Wāqī'iyah*, delves into three primary themes [6]. Firstly, he delves into the significance of *kalimat Allah* in connection with the prophets of Allah, such as Ādam, Ibrāhīm, 'Īsā, and Yahyā. Secondly, he scrutinises the concept of *kalimah* as representing ideals like *'adālah* (justice), *musāwāh* (equilibrium), and *al-wa'd* (unchanging promises). Thirdly, Kaṣṣāb investigates *kalimah* as an approximate representation of the divine knowledge's vastness, as indicated by the image of ocean and pens. Kaṣṣāb provides comprehensive elucidations within these three thematic dimensions. Another article, following a similar thematic approach, is authored by al-Ruwaylī, titled *al-Kalimah wa Atharuhā 'alā al-Fard wa al-Mujtama'* [7]. al-Ruwaylī posits five operative forms of *kalām* in the Quran: *kalām Allāh al-'Āmm* (God's speech), al-Quran, *kalimāt Allāh* (words of God), the speech of created beings, and the speech of the deceased. Finally, as previously noted, Mona Serageldin's work, despite listing 32 meanings of *kalimah*, offers a valuable discourse on the concept of God's eternal words and 'Īsā as the *kalimah* of Allah.

The ensuing discussion will now narrow its focus to three specific themes integral to the comprehension of *kalimah* in the Quran and hadith. These themes encompass *kalimāt* as they pertain to Allah, *kalimāt* ascribed to human beings, and *kalimāt* associated with the cosmic order and the universe. These themes will serve as pivotal entry points for further research into the concept of *kalimah* in the context of Islamic scholarship.

5. *Kalimāt Allāh, Kalimāt al-Insān and Kalimāt al-Akwān*

The corpus of literature, spanning from Samīr Sulaymān's seminal work to the latest article by al-Shaykh in 2023, predominantly engages in an in-depth exploration of the semantic dimensions of *kalimah* when ascribed to Allah [5]–[9], [16], [19], [22], [27]–[33]. Al-Shaykh's recent article, in particular, undertakes a comprehensive analysis of all words

in the Quran that are associated with the word Allah [32]. This scholarly discourse underscores a significant theological debate surrounding words linked to Allah, prompting a critical examination of whether these words signify His divine attributes or serve alternative functions. Sulaymān, for instance, interprets *kalimāt rabbik* as *al-taklīm al-Ilāhī*, signifying God's direct speech [27]. Amadsho categorises *kalām Allāh* in the Quran into two groups: *muḥaddad* (specifically identified in the Quran) and *ghayr muḥaddad* (unspecified) [19]. In this context, Bakrou expounds upon fundamental concepts such as *dīn Allāh* (the religion of Allah) and *tawḥīd* (monotheism) while interpreting *kalimāt Allāh* [9]. Furthermore, these scholarly works delve into the various interpretations of *kalimāt* with which God tests the Prophet Ibrāhīm. Bakrou, for instance, views them as *ikhtibār* (tests). Both Mona Serageldin and al-Shaykh provide dedicated discussions on the *kalimāt* with which God tests Ibrāhīm [8], [32].

Additionally, a substantial portion of this literature also places special emphasis on the interpretation of *kalimat Allāh* when describing the Prophet 'Īsā. Ḥusayn explains that Prophet 'Īsā is referred to as *kalimat Allāh* because he was created without a father, making his condition akin to *kalām Allāh* (God's book), which serves as guidance for humanity [28]. Bakrou posits that 'Īsā is the bearer of *bishārah* (good news) from Allah, while al-Ruwaylī suggests that *kalimah*, in this instance, denotes a *qaḍiyyah* (a matter decided by Allah) [7], [9]. Mona attributes to numerous exegetes, including Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Ibn Taymiyyah, the view that *kalimat Allāh* in the Quranic verse refers to 'Īsā himself, signifying that he was referred to as *kalimah* because he was created by God's command "*kun fa-yakūn* (be, and it is)" [8]. These examples illuminate the multifaceted discussions encompassed within the theme of *kalimah* in relation to Allah.

When it comes to the semantic realm of *kalimāt* as applied to human beings, an array of scholarly perspectives emerges. Sulaymān, for instance, underscores the Quranic emphasis on *al-takhātib bayna al-bashar*, which signifies communication among human beings [27]. Ḥusayn, in his article titled *al-Kalimah fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm (Dirāsah Dilāliyyah)*, illustrates this notion by referencing Quranic verse 40 from sūrah al-Tawbah [28]. In this verse, the phrase "*kalimat alladhīn kafarū*" conveys the notion of the words of those who disbelieve, which, according to Ḥusayn, implies their malevolent plot. Likewise, Amadsho highlights verse 5 from sūrah al-Kahf, wherein a direct reference is made to *kalimāt* uttered by those who falsely accused Allah of having a son [19]. The verse aptly conveys the message: "*kaburat kalimatan takhruj min afwāhihim in yaqūlu illā kadhibā,*" which translates to "it is a monstrous assertion that comes out of their mouths: what they say is nothing but lies." Hence, Bakrou posits that *kalimāt al-insān*, when attributed to human beings, can encompass both virtuous and malevolent expressions [9]. It becomes evident that much of the scholarly literature converges on the perspective that the term *kalimāt*, when linked to human beings, bears a neutral and inclusive connotation, encompassing their general utterances

and speech.

Regarding *kalimāt al-akwān*, which encompass the words associated with the universe at large, the preceding discourse has hinted at the concept of *al-sunan al-ilāhiyyah*, the divine laws and orders governing the cosmos, as notably emphasized by authors like Sulaymān and Ḥusayn [27], [28]. This suggests that the entire universe operates in accordance with the *kalimāt* (words) of God. Amadsho further underscores that trials and tests in worldly life are divinely ordained, and human beings are tasked with passing them as determined by God [19]. Additionally, Mona Serageldin raises an interesting point by drawing attention to the speech of creatures, as indicated in verse 82 of sūrah al-Naml, which states, “*akhrājnā lahum dābbatan min al-arḍ tukallimuhum,*” translating to “We shall bring a creature out of the earth, which will tell them [8].” Lastly, much of the literature delves into the significance of *kalimāt Allāh* in verse 27 of sūrah Luqmān, which reads, “If all the trees on earth were pens and all the seas, with seven more seas besides, [were ink,] still God’s words would not run out: God is almighty and all wise.” Most scholars correlate this verse with the profound knowledge of Allah, contending that this knowledge manifests in the beings and events of the universe. The pens, in this context, are interpreted as symbolic representations of God’s knowledge. These instances illuminate the interconnectedness of *kalimāt* in the Quran with *al-akwān*, signifying the beings and phenomena of the universe.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the extensive review of relevant literature underscores a profound awareness of the intricate nature inherent in the concept of *kalimah*, transcending not only the religious context but also within the domain of linguistic scholarship. The discourse surrounding *kalimah* navigates a nuanced path, spanning from the universally understood concept of a word to the intricacies of its specific construct and interpretation within the religious framework. The literature dedicated to engaging with this religious discourse strives to provide the most comprehensive framework for comprehending the concept of *kalimah*. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that philosophical approaches have been discerned within the literature, alongside subtle references to a multitude of theological debates. The concept of *kalimah* is deeply intertwined with several other pertinent debates within the academic sphere. These encompass discussions concerning the nature and discipline of *kalām* in Islamic theology, the exploration of divine attributes, and the examination of the concept of *jawāmi‘ al-kalim* (compact speech) attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad. Given the multifaceted approaches that underlie these subjects, it becomes apparent that a comprehensive research endeavour dedicated to the concept of *kalimāt* is imperative. Such an endeavour should ideally encompass a synthesis of *riwāyat* criticism, theological and rational interpretations, and a

consideration of the Sufi perspective regarding the concept. The findings of the present survey underscore the immense significance of delving deeper into this subject matter. Subsequent research endeavours have the potential to significantly enhance our understanding of the Islamic worldview and the ontological dimensions that define the universe. Consequently, it is evident that further scholarly exploration into the concept of *kalimah* stands as a promising avenue for advancing our knowledge of these crucial facets of Islamic thought.

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