

COMPARATIVE REVELATION: THE QU'RAN AND THE CHRIST

by Justin Holcomb

Muslims and Christians have been alienated partly by the fact that both have misunderstood each other's faith by trying to fit it into their own patterns. If one is drawing parallels in terms of the structure of the two religions, what corresponds in the Christian scheme to the Qur'an is not the Bible but the person of Christ - it is Christ who is for Christians the revelation of (from) God.¹

I. Introduction: Thesis and Method

The controversy in Islam over the problem of whether the Qur'an was created or uncreated is analogous to the Christian controversy over the problem of whether the pre-existent Christ was created or uncreated. A comparison yields many interesting comparative parallels and differences. The Qur'an and Jesus represent the primary form of revelation in Islam and Christianity respectively. The debates concerning the nature of the Qur'an are very similar to the issues dealt with in many of the church councils and creeds. A major issue concerning the Qur'an is its createdness or uncreatedness. Is the Qur'an eternal or created? A similar debate concerning the nature of Jesus took place at the council of Nicea. The issue for both religions is the ontological status of its revelation.

This account of the comparative venture will follow three steps. First, the justification for comparing the Qur'an to Jesus will be presented. Why not compare Jesus to Mohammed or the Bible to the Qur'an? Why a person and a text? The second step will be the comparison of the Qur'an and Jesus through the theological debates in the respective traditions. Thirds, the implications for both the parallels and differences will be presented with an eye to a responsible form of comparative theology that writes with both hands. On one hand, seeing, describing and arguing for the similarities and on the other hand, keeping in mind that Christianity and Islam are different religions and systems of thought.

II. Justification for the Comparison

One requirement of any interaction in a pluralistic context is that we understand each other. Both Muslim and Christian scholars have recognized that we must be careful in the comparisons we make between the two religious traditions. Initially, one would assume that a comparison of revelation between the two traditions would consist of comparing sacred texts (Qur'an and Bible) and founders (Mohammed and Jesus). What are the similarities and differences

¹ W. C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 17-18.

between the Qur'an and the Bible? What are the respective doctrines of scripture? Modes of transmission? Inerrancy? Dictation? How is the role of Mohammed in Islam similar and dissimilar to the role of Jesus in Christianity?

Wilfred Cantwell Smith, a lifelong scholar of Islam and its relation to other religions in general and Christianity in particular, pointed out that even comparing Jesus, as he is understood in Christianity, and Mohammed, as he is understood in Islam, is misleading. According to Smith, a more fruitful comparison would be between Jesus as Christians know him and the Qur'an as Muslims know it.

Muslims and Christians have been alienated partly by the fact that both have misunderstood each other's faith by trying to fit it into their own patterns. The most usual error is to suppose (on both sides) that the roles of Jesus Christ in Christianity and of Muhammad in Islam are comparable... If one is drawing parallels in terms of the structure of the two religions, what corresponds in the Christian scheme to the Qur'an is not the Bible but the person of Christ - it is Christ who is for Christians the revelation of (from) God.²

Seyyed Hussein Nasr picked up on Smith's analysis and carried the comparative model further:

One could of course make a comparison between Islam and Christianity by comparing the Prophet to Christ, the Quran to the New Testament, Gabriel to the Holy Spirit, the Arabic language to Aramaic, the language spoken by Christ, etc. In this way the sacred book on one religion would correspond the sacred book in the other religion, the central figure in one religion to the central figure in the other religion and so on. This type of comparison would be of course meaningful and reveal useful knowledge of the structure of the two religions. But in order to understand what the Quran means to Muslims and why the Prophet is believed to be unlettered according to Islamic belief, it is more significant to consider this comparison from another point of view. The Word of God in Islam is the Quran; in Christianity it is Christ.³

With this understanding of the role the Qur'an and Jesus play as revelation from God, numerous comparisons could be made. One could compare the means of revelation. The Qur'an was the result of Gabriel's recitation of the words to Mohammed and the Holy Spirit visited Mary of she was miraculously with child. The means of revelation is also used to prove the miracle of the revelations. The illiterate prophet Mohammed was given a flawless and beautifully written book. His illiteracy defended against the possibility corruption of the text and proves the Qur'an a miracle. Mary's virginity similarly proves the miracle of Jesus' conception and birth. There are many possible comparisons that could be made, but this analysis will focus on two: first, the nature of the revelation as divine, eternal, created, or uncreated; second, the divine/human relationship involved in the respective forms of revelation. After these two comparisons are made the theological implications will be described and compared.

² W. C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, pp. 17-18.

³ Seyyed Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 43.

III. The Qur'an and Jesus

The Arian controversy remains a landmark in the development of classical Christology. Certain aspects of the history of the controversy remain obscure, and are likely to remain so, despite the best efforts of historians to clarify them. It must be stressed that we know Arius' views mainly in the form in which his opponents have mediated them to us, which raises questions about the potential bias of their presentation. What follows is an attempt to present Arius' distinctive Christological ideas as fairly as possible, on the basis of a few reliable sources now available.

Arius emphasizes the self-subsistence of God. God is the one and only source of all created things; nothing exists which does not ultimately derive from God. This view of God, which many commentators have suggested is due more to Hellenistic philosophy than to Christian theology, clearly raises the question of the relation of the Father to the Son. In his *Against the Arians*, Arius' critic Athanasius represents him as making the following statement:

God was not always a father. There was a time when God was all alone, and was not yet father; only later did he become a father. The Son did not always exist. Everything created is out of nothing ... so the Logos of God came into existence out of nothing. There was a time when he was not. Before he was brought into existence, he did not exist. He also had a beginning to his created existence.⁴

These statements are of considerable importance, and bring us to the heart of Arianism.

The following points are of special significance. The Father is regarded as existing before the Son. "There was a time when the Son was not." This decisive affirmation places the Father and Son on different levels, and is consistent with Arius' rigorous insistence that the Son is a creature. Only the Father is "unbegotten"; the Son, like all other creatures, derives from this one source of being. However, Arius is careful to emphasize that the Son is not like every other creature. There is a distinction of rank between the Son and other creatures, including human beings. Arius has some difficulty in identifying the precise nature of this distinction. The Son, he argued, is "a perfect creature, yet not as one among other creatures; a begotten being, yet not as one among other begotten beings." The implication seems to be that the Son outranks other creatures, while sharing their essentially created and begotten nature.

An important aspect of Arius' distinction between Father and Son concerns the unknowability of God. Arius emphasizes the utter transcendence and inaccessibility of God. God cannot be known by any other creature. Yet, as we noted above, the Son is to be regarded as a creature, however elevated above all other creatures. Arius presses home his logic, arguing that the Son can not know the Father. "The one who has a beginning is in no position to comprehend or lay hold of the one who has no beginning." This important affirmation rests upon the radical distinction between Father and Son. Such is the gulf between them, that the latter can not know

⁴ Athanasius, *Contra Arianos*, I.5, in *The orations of St. Athanasius against the Arians*. London : Griffith Farran Okeden & Welsh, 1960.

the former unaided. In common with all other creatures, the Son is dependent upon the grace of God if he (the Son) is to perform whatever function has been ascribed to him. It is considerations such as these that have led Arius' critics to argue that, at the levels of revelation and salvation, the Son is in precisely the same position as other creatures.

The Arian controversy had to be settled somehow, if peace was to be established within the church. Debate came to center upon two terms as possible descriptions of the relation of the Father to the Son. The term *homoiousios*, "of like substance" or "of like being," was seen by many as representing a judicious compromise, allowing the proximity between Father and Son to be asserted without requiring any further speculation on the precise nature of their relation. However, the rival term *homoousios*, "of the same substance" or "of the same being," eventually gained the upper hand. Though differing by only one letter from the alternative term, it embodied a very different understanding of the relationship between Father and Son. The fury of the debate prompted Gibbon to comment that never had there been so much energy spent over a single vowel.⁵ The Nicene creed declared that Jesus was "of the same substance: with the Father."

Martin and Woodward make the point that the issue of the createdness or uncreatedness of the Qur'an is similar to debates in early Christianity, "Structurally, the issue is not unlike the Christological debates of early Christianity - the struggle to locate the revelation (Christ) primarily in the nature of humanity, on the one side, or in the nature of the his divinity, on the other hand."⁶ And they continue:

That which had been the unresolved problematic of divine/human encounter in the vessel of revelation for the great councils of early Eastern Christendom was quickly seen as challenge and insult to traditionalist Muslims... How can the transcendent and eternal divine exist in historical, human context? For Christians, the problem centered on a person, Jesus Christ. For Muslims, it centered on a book, the Qur'an.⁷

It is precisely in the comparison with the Nicene debate of Arianism that their point is exemplified. There are two distinct views in Islam that are parallel in the Christological debates. The first position, uncreatedness and eternity of the Qur'an, is similar to the Nicene view of Christology that placed emphasis upon the divinity and eternity of Jesus' existence. The second position, that the Qur'an was created is comparable to the Arian view of the pre-existent created Jesus. In Islam there were two views concerning the createdness of the Qur'an. One held that the Qur'an was pre-existent to the rest of creation but was itself created on the Preserved Tablet, the other argued that the Qur'an was not pre-existent and was created at the point of revelation.⁸

Muslims had always held that the Qur'an was the word or speech of God, for this was implied by some of the verbal forms of the text. For a century it did not occur to ask whether the

⁵ Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. New York : Harcourt, 1960.

⁶ Richard C. Martin and Mark R. Woodward, *Defenders of Reason in Islam: Mu'tazilism from Medieval School to Modern Symbol* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1997), p. 71.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

⁸ See Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Kalam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 263-278 for a more detailed report on this distinction.

Qur'an was created or uncreated; at least there is no record of the question. To say that the Qur'an was created meant that it was not an essential expression of God's nature, since God might presumably have created it otherwise; and a corollary would be that a divinely-inspired leader might properly at times override the principles stated in the Qur'an. On the other hand, if the Qur'an is the uncreated word of God, it expresses God's essential nature, and no one who is divinely-inspired can go against it.

In the eighth century the question began to be discussed whether the Qur'an was the uncreated speech of God, or whether it was a speech which God had created. The teaching for which the Mu'tazilites are notorious is that the Qur'an was not eternal but created. It has been well established that their thesis in this regard "was only a logical consequence of their denying eternal qualities [to God] as well as of their denying the eternal decree."⁹ Watt describes this problem: "For those who held that the speech of God is uncreated, further problems presented themselves. One was connected with the unity of God. Upholders of the created Qur'an might argue that, if the Qur'an is the uncreated speech of God, we have two eternal and uncreated beings, God and his speech, and have therefore abandoned monotheism."¹⁰

Though rationalistic argument was advanced by both sides to support their respective positions, what was at stake was far more than the formulation of an intellectually acceptable theory. If the Qur'an were allowed to be created, the danger was great that it might next be alleged by those steeped in Neoplatonist thought that God's word as revealed to Mohammed through the mediation of an angel shared with all created things the imperfection arising from their association with matter. Watt contends that there are epistemological questions raised by this debate:

In some way the Qur'an, as the speech of God, must be an expression of his eternal essence, where as vast multitudes of created things are clearly not expressions of God's nature, *and so there is no certainty that a created speech would express his essence*, though it might be an illustration of his creative power.¹¹

In support of an uncreated Qur'an, al-Ash'ari enlisted Qur'anic authority: "The only words we say to a thing, when we desire it, is that we say to it, 'Be,' and it is."¹² Upon the thread of that slender text he mastered as ingenious argument. "If the Qur'an had been created, God would have said to it 'Be!' But the Qur'an in His speech, and it is impossible that His speech should be spoken to. For this would necessitate a second speech, and we should have to say of this second speech and its relation to a third speech what we say of the first speech and its relation

⁹ A.J. Wensick, *The Muslim Creed: Its Genesis and Historical Development* (London: Frank Cass, 1965), p. 77.

¹⁰ W. M. Watt, *Islamic Revelation in the Modern World* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1969), p. 104.

¹¹ Ibid. Italics mine. Watt continues with further implications of the debate: "Since the Qur'an was revealed at certain points in time, and since it refers to temporal events, it would have been natural to suppose that it was temporal and therefore created. On the other hand, if it really is the speech of God, it must somehow share in his eternity. The point at issue between the two parties would seem to be how fundamental the Qur'an is. Those who say that the Qur'an was an expression of God's eternal being, whereas their opponents made it something dependent on his will, and therefore capable of being changed."

¹² Qur'an 16.42

to a second speech. But this would necessitate speeches without end- which is false. And if this be false it is false that the Qur'an is created."¹³ By the form of argument, al-Ash'ari attempted to show the utter absurdity of believing the teaching of the created Qur'an.

Ibn Kullab also agreed that the Qur'an was uncreated. He states that "the speech of God is a attribute which subsists in Him and that Speech and the Word are co-eternal."¹⁴ Ibn Hanbal claims that "the speech of God is His eternal knowledge and hence it is uncreated."¹⁵ As stated above, al-Ash'ari held to a view in the uncreated Qur'an, and similarly, many of his followers held to the same view. Ibn Hazm reported that the Asharites held that "the speech of God is an attribute of essence, eternal, uncreated ... and God has only a single Word."¹⁶ Ibn Hazm also believed that the word of God is God's eternal knowledge and therefore uncreated. It is not absurd to notice a similarity in this language used to describe the nature of the Qur'an and the Nicene approach to understanding the nature of Jesus.

Wolfson claims that "there had already been current in Islam a belief in the existence of a Koran before its revelation and even before the creation of the world."¹⁷ This belief had its basis in three passages from the Qur'an itself. First, the Qur'an's self-description is that of "an honorable Qur'an, in a Hidden Book."¹⁸ Second, it describes itself as "a glorious Qur'an, on a Preserved Tablet."¹⁹ Third, it describes itself as "an Arabic Qur'an ... in the Mother of the Book."²⁰ These texts have been taken to mean that prior to its revelation, the Qur'an had existed in a sort of heavenly Qur'an described as a "Hidden Book," "Preserved Tablet," or "Mother of the Book." Concerning this pre-existent Qur'an Wolfson writes:

A survival of this original belief in a created pre-existent Koran is to be discerned in a tradition handed down in the name of the Prophet that the Preserved Tablet was created by God prior to His creation of the world... The upshot of our discussion is that the belief in a pre-existent uncreated Koran was a revision of an original belief in a pre-existent created Koran and that, while the original belief in a pre-existent created Koran was based directly upon the teaching of the Koran itself, the revised belief in a pre-existent uncreated Koran was an offshoot of the belief in eternal uncreated attributes.²¹

Abu al-Hudhayl is reported to distinguish between the creative word "Be" and the word in the sense of the Qur'an. While the word "Be" is created by God not in an abode, the word in the sense of the Qur'an is created by God in an abode.²² Shahrastani describes the Mu'tazilites as maintaining that "God is a speaker by means of a speech which He created in an abode."²³ In one

¹³ Quoted in R. J. McCarthy, *The Theology of al-Ash'ari* (Beirut: Imprimatur Catholique, 1953), pp. 237-238.

¹⁴ Ashari, *Kitab Makalat al-Islamiyin wa-Ihtilaf al-Musallin*, p. 584, 11.9-13. Quoted in Wolfson, p. 248.

¹⁵ Ibn Hazm, *Kitab al-Fisal fi al-Milal wa'l-Nihal*, p. 5, II.5-6. Quoted in Wolfson, p. 251.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Wolfson, p. 238.

¹⁸ Qur'an 56.76,77

¹⁹ Qur'an 85.22

²⁰ Qur'an 43.3

²¹ Wolfson, pp. 239-241.

²² 'Abd al-Kahir Ibn Zahir Baghdadi, *Al-Fark bain al-Firak*, p. 108, II.15-18. Quoted in Wolfson, p. 264.

²³ Shahrastani, *Nihayat al-Ikdam fi 'Ilm al-Kalam*, p. 269, 1.18. Quoted in Wolfson, p. 248.

passage, al-Ash'ari reports in the name of Ja'far ibn Harb and many of the Baghdadian Mu'tazilites that "the speech of God is an accident and that it is created."²⁴ He also writes that Ja'far ibn Harb and Ja'far ibn Mubashshir and their followers held that "the Koran was created by God on the Preserved Tablet."²⁵ Wolfson argues that from passages like these one can infer that there was a created abode in which the word of God was created prior to its revelation. In this sense, the Qur'an existed before the creation of the world but was still created. There is much similarity between this view and the Arian view of Jesus.

There was also a belief taught that the Qur'an was not pre-existent and was created. Recent scholarship has evidence that this may have been the majority position of the Mu'tazilites. In his *Kitab al-Usul al-Khamsa*, al-Jabbar hints towards his view that the Qur'an is created and not eternal. Al-Jabbar employs Qur'anic verses to support his view that the revelation was created at a specific place and time. The Qur'an is part of creation, but because Allah created it humans marvel at it in its inimitability. Martin and Woodward describe his argument: "After defending the revelation as one of God's favors, he goes on in paragraph 42 to say that just as God created His creatures, and hence His doing good is a created thing, so His speech, the Qur'an, is one of His favors and it is a created thing."²⁶ Al-Jabbar writes that "His speech is contingent" and that "everything other than God is contingent, hence it follows necessarily that the Qur'an and the rest of God's speech is other than He."²⁷

The similarity between the debate about the nature of the Qur'an and the Nicene debate centers in the issue of createdness. Christologically, the Arian position argued for the belief in a pre-existent Jesus: Jesus existed before all creation, but he himself was created before the rest of creation. Some Mu'tazilites similarly believed in a pre-existent Qur'an that was created prior to the creation of the world. Their denial of an eternal and uncreated Qur'an was in support of the divine unity and transcendence of God. This is a significant point of comparison that has similarity in the Arian position. The debates about Jesus and the Qur'an point to debates about the very nature of the Christian and Islamic conceptions of God.

The denial of the uncreated Qur'an corresponds to a denial of *eternal attributes*. And in their opposition to an eternal, uncreated Qur'an, as in their opposition to the reality of eternal attributes, the Mu'tazilites argued that such a belief was contradictory to the conception of *the divine unity of God*. This is why Caliph al-Ma'mun wrote in a letter that "he has no belief in God's unity who does not confess that the Koran is created."²⁸ In the problem of attributes in general, those who denied their reality interpreted all terms attributed to God as mere names. In this they developed a view which corresponds to that of the Sabellian or Arian position in the Christological controversy.²⁹ In the problem of the particular attribute of the Word, in the sense of the pre-existent Qur'an, those who denied its uncreatedness did not deny its reality; they only denied its eternity, maintaining that it was created. Thus they developed a view which corresponds to the Arian position in the Nicene debate.

²⁴ Ash'ari, *Makalat*, p. 192, II.8. Quoted in Wolfson, p. 267.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 599, 1.16. Quoted in Wolfson, p. 267.

²⁶ Martin and Woodward, p. 76.

²⁷ Quoted in Martin and Woodward, pp. 101-102

²⁸ Quoted in Wolfson, p. 264.

²⁹ See Appendix I

III. Concluding Comparative Implications

The debates about the nature of revelation have dealt with eternity, temporality, uncreatedness, and createdness; and much of the discussion in both religions was focused on the nature of God in the sense of God's unity and transcendence. Arius wanted to defend both the transcendence and unity of God as did the Mu'tazilites. The divinity of Jesus was a barrier to these priorities for Arianism. Similarly, the Mu'tazilites supported the transcendence of God and God's unity by denying the uncreatedness and eternality of the Qur'an. Defending these two points proved to be the motivation for both the Arian and the Mu'tazilite views.

The Arians argued for the pre-existent nature of Jesus prior to his revelation on earth. In contrast to this, many of the Mu'tazilites did not argue for a pre-existent Qur'an. The Qur'an, rather, was created either at the moment of revelation or when it is recited, written down, or memorized. Arians also argued that Jesus is a special created being, similar to creation in his createdness but unlike creation in his importance and role. According to the Arians, Jesus was not just an average human, but a man with a miraculous existence. Arius did not claim that Jesus was just like all other humans. He argued that God created Jesus before all else and that he was a pre-existent and marvelous being. Mu'tazilites similarly held that the Qur'an was miraculous. The Mu'tazilite denial of the uncreatedness and eternality of the Qur'an does not result in the belief that the Qur'an is "just another book." As a matter of fact, it is the Mu'tazilites who claimed the miraculous nature of the Qur'an and its inimitability.³⁰

Despite the similarity between Jesus and the Qur'an, there are some serious differences. Up to this point, the comparison has been between specific similarities and differences within the development and understanding of modes revelation. It is important to mention briefly a "system to system" comparison. Once the respective modes of revelation are discussed in the context of the larger religious system to which they are considered revelation, the discussion takes a new tone. For example, in Christianity Jesus' role as revelation was to redeem sinful humans from their sin and the consequences of sin. Because of this soteriological nature of the revelation, the theologians and councils of the Christian tradition argued that Jesus' divinity and humanity were necessary to accomplish his purpose. The human condition influenced the understanding of the revelation. In Islam, the human condition or theological anthropology is different. The problem is not sin and its consequences but forgetfulness and ignorance. Humans forget that they are creatures of Allah and are to submit to God's will; but, humans are also ignorant of how to submit properly. How believers live this life will determine their eternity, hence, during this one life believers must submit to the will of Allah. The Qur'an reveals God's will to humanity and what they must do to remedy the problem in the human condition. In this respect, the epistemological aspect of the Qur'anic revelation becomes "soteriological." In contrast to Christianity, Islam's revelation need not have two natures in one book. In other words, the Qur'an can reveal whether it is considered created or uncreated. Either way, the Qur'an is from God. If uncreated it is an eternal attribute of God that has been made accessible to humans. If created it is the inimitable

³⁰ This point could itself be the topic of another comparison. For more on the inimitability of the Qur'an see Martin and Woodward, pp. 37, 76-80, 102, and 113.

miracle of God revealing God's will and having it preserved, recited, inscripturated, and memorized.

For Christianity, the soteriological role of the revelation has epistemological implications. The structure of the revelation in Jesus explicitly connects the divine to the human, a belief that is a necessary precondition for the intelligibility and possibility of knowledge of God. But, because of the salvation offered through Jesus, humans are rightly related to God, the barrier between God and human (sin) is overcome, and the difference between God and human (human finitude) is bridged. Hence, the primacy of the soteriological role of the revelation in Jesus has secondary epistemological implications. As mentioned previously, the role of revelation is different in Islam. It is not proper for us to expect the Qur'an to take the same mode or structural form (divine nature and human nature together in one book) if the goal of that revelation is different. For Christianity, the revelation is primarily soteriological but has epistemological implications. For Islam, much of the role of revelation is concerned with knowledge about God and God's will; and, the effects of this revelation counter the human problem of forgetfulness and ignorance.

In any comparison it is important to acknowledge both similarities and differences. There is a temptation to see commonality where there may be none and to devise a figment of our comparative imagination. The other extreme is to be blind to parallels and consider the two religions as incommensurable, forfeiting the comparative venture. If anything, this analysis erred on the side of imaginative similarities. But, that only serves the comparative project all the more, for now the fine-tuning is necessary.

Appendix I

The main stages in the history of the Church's Christology are as follows:

1. The Council of Nicea in AD 325 affirmed that Jesus Christ is truly God, opposing the Arians.
2. The Council of Constantinople in AD 381 affirmed that Jesus Christ was perfectly human, opposing the Apollinarians whose teaching impaired the perfect humanity of Christ.
3. The Council of Ephesus in AD 431 affirmed that Jesus Christ is one person, opposing the Nestorians who divided Christ into two persons.
4. The Council of Chalcedon in AD 451 affirmed that in Jesus Christ there are two distinct natures in one person, and that in the one person of Jesus they were hypostatically united unconfusedly, inconvertibly, indivisibly, and inseparably. This was affirmed against the Eutychians and Nestorians.
5. The Council of Constantinople in AD 680 asserted that Jesus Christ possessed a human will as well as a divine will, against the Monothelites who asserted that in Jesus Christ there was only one single will.

Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things, visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, Who because of us men and because of our salvation came down and became incarnate, becoming man, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and will come in judge the living and the dead;

And in the Holy Spirit.

But as for those who say, There was when He was not, and, before being born He was not, and that He came into existence out of nothing, or who assert that the Son of God is from a different hypostasis or substance, or is created, or is subject to alteration or change - these the Catholic Church anathematizes.

Chalcedonian Creed:

In agreement, therefore, with the holy fathers, we all unanimously teach that we should confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, the same perfect in Godhead and the same perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, the same of a rational soul and body, consubstantial with the Father in Godhead, and the same consubstantial with us in manhood, like us in all things except sin; begotten from the Father before all ages as regards His Godhead, and in the last days, the same, because of us and because of our salvation begotten from the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, as regards His manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, made known in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation, the difference of the natures being by no means removed because of the union, but property of each nature being preserved and coalescing in one prosopan and one hypostasis - not parted or divided into two prosopa, but one and the same Son, only-begotten, divine Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets of old and Jesus Christ Himself have taught us about Him and the creed of our fathers has handed down.