

9566 - What is the difference between the 'Arsh of the Lord and His Kursiy?

the question

What is the difference between Arsh and Kursi of Allah ?

Detailed answer

The Kursiy is the footstool of the Most Merciful, according to the most correct of the scholarly opinions on the matter. The 'Arsh (Throne) is the greatest of all things that Allaah has created, over which our Lord rose in a manner that befits His Majesty. It has pillars and is carried by bearers who are angels of immense size.

The evidence for the above is given below, along with the comments of some of the scholars.

It was narrated that Ibn Mas'ood said: Between the first heaven and the one above it is (a distance of) five hundred years. Between each of the heavens is (a distance of) five hundred years. Between the seventh heaven and the Kursiy is (a distance of) five hundred years. Between the Kursiy and the water is (a distance of) five hundred years, and the Throne is above the water. Allaah is above the Throne, and nothing whatsoever of your deeds is hidden from Him. (narrated by Ibn Khuzaymah in al-Tawheed, p. 105; by al-Bayhaqi in al-Asmaa' wa'l-Sifaat, p. 401).

This report was classed as saheeh by Ibn al-Qayyim in Ijtima' al-Juyoosh al-Islamiyah, p. 100; by al-Dhahabi in al-'Uluw, p. 64).

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen said:

This hadeeth stops at Ibn Mas'ood (it is mawqoof), but this is one of the matters concerning which there is no room for personal opinion, so it comes under the heading of marfoo' [ahaadeeth whose isnaad goes back to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah

be upon him)], because Ibn Mas'ood is not known to have taken anything from the Israa'eeliyyaat [reports derived from Jewish sources].

(al-Qawl al-Mufeed Sharh Kitaab al-Tawheed, 3/379)

Imaam Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhaab said, in the list of points noted from this hadeeth:

.....(9) The great size of the Kursiy in relation to the heavens.

(10)The great size of the Throne in relation to the Kursiy.

(11)That the Throne is something other than the Kursiy and the water.

(Sharh Kitaab al-Tawheed, p. 667, 668).

The Throne of the Most Merciful is the greatest and most vast thing in His creation.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So Exalted be Allaah, the True King: Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne!

[al-Mu'minoon 23:116]

“and He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne” [al-Tawbah 9:129]

“Owner of the Throne, the Glorious” [al-Burooj 85:15]

Al-Qurtubi said:

The Throne is mentioned on its own because it is the greatest thing that Allaah has created; everything else is also included in this.

(Tafseer al-Qurtubi, 8/302, 303).

Ibn Katheer said:

“and He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne” [al-Tawbah 9:129 – interpretation of the meaning] means, He is the Sovereign and Creator of all things, because He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne which is the roof of creation. All created things, the heavens and the earth and all that is in them and in between them are beneath the Throne of Allaah and are subject to His power. His knowledge encompasses all things and His power controls all things, and He is Watcher over all things.

(Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 2/405)

And he said (may Allaah have mercy on him):

“Owner of the Throne” [al-Burooj 85:15 – interpretation of the meaning] means, the Master of the Mighty Throne which is above all created things. “The Glorious” – there are two readings of this word (al-Majeed). If it is nominative (al-Majeedu) it is an adjective referring to the Lord, may He be glorified, and if it is genitive (al-Majeedi), it is an adjective referring to the Throne. Both meanings are correct.

(Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 4/474).

Majeed means vast and mighty in power.

It was narrated from Abu Sa’eed that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The people will fall unconscious on the Day of Resurrection; I will be the first to regain consciousness, and Moosa will be there, holding on to one of the pillars of the Throne. I do not know whether he woke up before me or if he was exempted because he had fallen unconscious at the Mount of Sinai.” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 3217)

The Throne has bearers who carry it.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Those (angels) who bear the Throne (of Allaah) and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allaah) (saying): ‘Our Lord! You comprehend all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive

those who repent and follow Your way, and save them from the torment of the blazing Fire!’”

[Ghaafir 40:7]

They are of immense size:

It was narrated from Jaabir ibn ‘Abd-Allaah that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

“I have been granted permission to speak about one of the angels of Allaah, one of the bearers of the Throne. The space between his earlobes and his shoulders is the distance of seven hundred years’ travelling.”

(Narrated by Abu Dawood, 4727)

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar said concerning this hadeeth: its isnaad meets the conditions of being saheeh.

(Fath al-Baari, 8/665)

The Throne is above the Kursiy, and is above all of creation. Ibn al-Qayyim said:

If Allaah is separate from His creation, then either He is encompassing them or He is not. If He is encompassing them, then He must be above them, because that which encompasses must necessarily be above that which is encompassed. Hence because the heavens encompass the earth, they must be above it, and because the Kursiy encompasses the heavens, it must be above them, and because the Throne encompasses the Kursiy, it must be above it. Whatever encompasses all of that must necessarily be above it. This does not imply that there is physical contact with anything that He encompasses; neither is there any similarity or resemblance between Him and that which He encompasses.

(al-Sawaa’iq al-Mursalah, 4/1308)

The Throne is neither Sovereignty (al-Mulk) nor the Kursiy

Ibn Abi'l-'Izz al-Hanafi said:

What would those who distort the word of Allaah and say that the Throne is an expression referring to al-Mulk or sovereignty say about the following aayat? –

“...and eight angels will, that Day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them” [al-Haaqqah 69:17 – interpretation of the meaning]

“...and His Throne was on the water...” [Hood 11:7 – interpretation of the meaning]

Will they say that eight angels will, that Day, bear the Sovereignty of Allaah, and that His Sovereignty was on the water? Will Moosa be holding on to one of the pillars of Allaah’s sovereignty? Can any same person who knows what he is saying utter such things?

Concerning the Kursiy, Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“His Kursiy extends over the heavens and the earth” [al-Baqarah 2:255]

It was said that this is the Throne, but the correct view is that it is something else. This was transmitted from Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with them both) and others. Ibn Abi Shaybah narrated in Sifat al-‘Arsh, and al-Haakim narrated in his Mustadrak that [the following report] meets the conditions of the two Shaykhs [al-Bukhaari and Muslim] although they did not narrate it: (it was reported from) from Sa’eed ibn Jubayr that Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with them both) said, concerning the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

“His Kursiy extends over the heavens and the earth” [al-Baqarah 2:255]:

The Kursiy is the footstool, and no one can comprehend how vast the Throne is except Allaah.

This was transmitted as a marfoo’ report (attributed to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)), but the correct view is that it is mawqoof, stopping at Ibn ‘Abbaas...

Abu Dharr (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say: “The Kursiy in relation to the Throne is like an iron ring thrown out into empty land.”

And, as one of the Salaf said, before the Throne it is like a step.

(Sharh al-‘Aqeedah al-Tahhaawiyah, p. 312, 313).

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen said:

There are those who say that the Kursiy is the Throne because of the hadeeth, “Allaah will set up His Kursiy on the Day of Resurrection.” They think that the Kursiy is the Throne.

Similarly, some people claim that the Kursiy is Allaah’s knowledge, and say that the aayah (interpretation of the meaning)

“His Kursiy extends over the heavens and the earth” [al-Baqarah 2:255] refers to His Knowledge.

The correct view is that the Kursiy is a footstool, and the Throne is that which the Most Merciful rose above (istiwa’). And knowledge is the attribute of the knowledgeable one by means of which he understands that which he knows.

(al-Qawl al-Mufeed Sharh Kitaab al-Tawheed, 3/393, 394).

And Allaah knows best.