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Aqsam al-Qur'an: An Analysis of Its Meaning and Implications for Tafsir Understanding

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the concept of *Aqsam al-Qur'an* (oaths in the Qur'an) and its implications for the understanding of Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir). The research aims to analyze the meaning, structure, types, and functions of Qur'anic oaths, as well as their role in strengthening the interpretation of Qur'anic verses. This study employs a qualitative approach through library research, focusing on classical and contemporary scholarly works in the field of *'Ulum al-Qur'an*. The findings reveal that *Aqsam al-Qur'an* is a significant rhetorical device used by Allah to emphasize essential truths, attract human attention, and reinforce moral and theological messages. Structurally, Qur'anic oaths consist of three main elements: *adat al-qasam* (particle of oath), *muqsam*

bih (object of the oath), and *jawab al-qasam* (the statement affirmed by the oath). Furthermore, Qur'anic oaths can be classified into oaths by the name of Allah, by His creation, and by specific places or events. The study also finds that understanding *Aqsam al-Qur'an* contributes significantly to tafsir by helping readers identify the emphasis of verses, uncover deeper meanings, and appreciate the linguistic and rhetorical miracle (*i'jaz*) of the Qur'an. Therefore, *Aqsam al-Qur'an* is not only a linguistic feature but also a crucial tool for enhancing interpretative understanding and strengthening faith-based values.

Keywords: *Aqsam al-Qur'an, Meaning Analysis, Tafsir Understanding*

A. Introduction

The discipline of *Aqsam al-Qur'an* (the study of oaths in the Qur'an) is one of the important branches of Qur'anic sciences that holds a significant role for students and for Muslims in general. When the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) conveyed the Qur'an to his people, some of the disbelievers from the Quraysh attempted to challenge it by composing expressions and poetry intended to rival and oppose the message brought by the Prophet. As a result, the Prophet faced considerable opposition and challenges from the Quraysh disbelievers at that time. Nevertheless, a number of them eventually accepted the truth of Islam brought by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) [Fauzi, 2021: 145].

From this, it can be understood that when the human soul is pure and free from blameworthy traits, it becomes more receptive to truth, regardless of its source. A purified heart remains open to the guidance and teachings contained in the words of Allah سبحانه وتعالى. In conveying the truth, it is not always necessary to rely on complex arguments or justifications for it to be accepted. However, for individuals whose hearts are filled with negative qualities such as envy and arrogance, the truth becomes difficult to accept. Therefore, when presenting the message of truth to such individuals, various approaches and rational arguments are often required so that they may come to recognize and accept it [Nurhayati, 2022: 55].

B. Literature Review

The study of *Aqsam al-Qur'an* has long been an important topic within the discipline of *'Ulum al-Qur'an*, particularly in relation to the rhetorical and linguistic aspects of the Qur'an. Classical scholars such as Manna' Khalil al-Qattan, in *Mabahith fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an*, emphasize that Qur'anic oaths are not merely stylistic expressions but serve as a powerful means of affirming the truth of divine revelation. According to him, the use of oaths in the Qur'an reflects a communicative strategy aimed at strengthening the certainty of the message delivered to humankind.

Similarly, Nashruddin Baidan highlights that *Aqsam al-Qur'an* plays a crucial role in guiding readers toward the core message of a verse. He explains that the presence of oaths often indicates the importance of the statement that follows, thereby assisting interpreters in identifying the central themes within a surah. This perspective reinforces the idea that understanding Qur'anic oaths is essential for a more accurate and contextual interpretation of the text.

M. Quraish Shihab, in his work on principles of tafsir, further elaborates that the oaths in the Qur'an demonstrate the depth of its linguistic beauty and rhetorical excellence (*balaghah*). He argues that Allah's use of various objects such as time, natural phenomena, and sacred places serves to direct human reflection toward signs of divine power and wisdom. In this sense, *Aqsam al-Qur'an* not only functions as a form of emphasis but also as a medium for spiritual contemplation. In addition, Ahsin

W. Al-Hafidz explains that the elements of Qur'anic oaths, including *adat al-qasam*, *muqsam bih*, and *jawab al-qasam*, form a structured system that enhances the coherence and clarity of the message. This structural analysis supports the understanding that Qur'anic oaths are systematically arranged to create a strong impact on the audience.

Contemporary studies also indicate that *Aqsam al-Qur'an* can be approached through modern linguistic and rhetorical analysis. Researchers argue that these oaths function as discourse markers that signal emphasis, attract attention, and create a persuasive effect on readers or listeners. This aligns with the broader view that the Qur'an employs diverse communication strategies to convey its teachings effectively.

Based on the existing literature, it can be concluded that the study of *Aqsam al-Qur'an* encompasses both classical and modern perspectives, integrating theological, linguistic, and rhetorical dimensions. These perspectives collectively highlight the importance of Qur'anic oaths in enhancing the understanding of tafsir and demonstrating the inimitable nature of the Qur'anic discourse.

C. Research Method

The methodology of this study is designed to provide a systematic framework for examining and analyzing the *tafsir maudhu'i* method. This research employs a qualitative approach, with a primary focus on literature review and textual analysis. The study begins with the collection and critical examination of relevant literature on *tafsir maudhu'i*. The sources utilized include academic journal articles and scholarly works by Muslim intellectuals who have discussed this method. Through this approach, the study is expected to offer a comprehensive overview of the *tafsir maudhu'i* method, as well as its contribution to the understanding and application of Qur'anic teachings in the modern era.

D. Results and Discussion

1. The Definition of *Aqsam al-Qur'an*

Linguistically, the word *aqsam* (أقسام) is the plural form of *qasam* (قسم), which means an oath or a sworn statement. In the terminology of *'Ulum al-Qur'an*, *Aqsam al-Qur'an* refers to the oaths used by Allah سبحانه وتعالى in the Qur'an to emphasize matters of great importance, so that human beings pay attention to and firmly believe in the messages conveyed. Oaths in the Qur'an are not merely expressions of promise or reinforcement of speech; rather, they carry a strong rhetorical function as a means of affirming the truth of divine revelation.

Allah does not swear out of need for emphasis, but these oaths are directed toward humanity so that they may understand and reflect upon the meanings of His verses. Thus, *Aqsam al-Qur'an* represents one of the aspects of the Qur'an's linguistic beauty, demonstrating the majesty of its structure and the depth of meaning contained within it [Rizki, 2023: 101].

2. The Elements of *Aqsam al-Qur'an*

In the study of *'Ulum al-Qur'an*, Qur'anic oaths consist of several essential elements that form the structure of a *qasam*. These elements include:

a. **Adat al-Qasam (أداة القسم)**. *Adat al-qasam* refers to the particles or expressions used to initiate an oath. In the Qur'an, the most frequently used form is the particle *waw* (و), which means "By" or "By (the oath of)." For example: *"By the sun and its brightness."* (QS. Ash-Shams: 1). In addition, there are also oaths introduced by the particles *ba'* (ب) and *ta'* (ت), although they are less commonly used than *waw*.

b. **Muqsam Bih (المُقْسَم به)**. *Muqsam bih* is the object by which the oath is made. In the Qur'an, Allah سبحانه وتعالى swears by various elements of His creation, such as the sun, the moon, the night, time, the sky, and even specific places. This serves to highlight that these creations are signs of Allah's power and contain lessons for humankind. For example: *"By the night when it covers (the light)."*

c. **Muqsam 'Alaih/Jawab al-Qasam (المُقْسَم عليه / جواب القسم)**. *Muqsam 'alaih* or *jawab al-qasam* refers to the content or conclusion of the oath, namely the statement that Allah سبحانه وتعالى intends to affirm. This part usually represents the core message of the verse that follows the oath. For example: *"By time. Indeed, mankind is surely in loss."* (QS. Al-'Asr: 1-2). In this verse, the oath by time (*al-'asr*) is used to emphasize the condition of human beings, who are generally in a state of loss unless they possess faith and perform righteous deeds [Suryani, 2020: 33-34].

3. Types of *Aqsam* in the Qur'an

Based on the object of the oath, *Aqsam al-Qur'an* can be classified into several categories, including:

a. **Oaths by the Name of Allah سبحانه وتعالى**. This type of oath is made directly by mentioning the name of Allah. It reflects the greatness and absolute authority of Allah as the ultimate source of truth. For example: *"Then by the Lord of the heaven and the earth, indeed, what you are promised is true."* (QS. Adh-Dhariyat: 23) This verse affirms that the promises of Allah are an undeniable and certain truth.

b. **Oaths by the Creation of Allah**. This type of oath is the most frequently found in the Qur'an, including oaths by the sun, the moon, the stars, time, the night, the day, and others. The purpose of these oaths is to encourage human beings to reflect upon the signs of Allah's greatness manifested through His creation. For example: *"By the sun and its brightness."*. (QS. Ash-Shams: 1). *"By the morning brightness (dhuha)."* (QS. Adh-Duha: 1) Swearing by created things does not imply elevating them above Allah; rather, it indicates that these creations are signs of His power and majesty.

c. **Oaths by Places or Events**. The Qur'an also contains oaths by certain places that possess spiritual significance and historical value in the religious tradition. For example: *"By the fig and the olive, by Mount Sinai, and by this secure city (Makkah)."* (QS. At-Tin: 1-3). These oaths signify that such places are closely connected to the history of the prophets and the propagation of monotheism (*tawhid*) [Rudi, 2021: 201].

4. Functions and Wisdom of *Aqsam* in the Qur'an

Based on an analysis of Qur'anic oath verses, it can be observed that oaths serve several important functions, including:

a. **Affirming the Truth of Revelation**. Oaths are used to emphasize that what is conveyed in the Qur'an is true and undeniable. This is particularly evident in Makkan surahs, which frequently discuss *tawhid* (monotheism) and the Hereafter. For example: *"So by your Lord, We will surely question them all."* (QS. Al-Hijr: 92-93). This verse affirms that all human beings will inevitably be held accountable for their deeds.

b. **Attracting Attention and Reinforcing the Message**. Oaths in the Qur'an function to capture the attention of readers or listeners. When Allah swears by something, it prompts people to reflect on the relationship between the oath and

the message that follows. For example:*"By the dawn and the ten nights."* (QS. Al-Fajr: 1-2). This verse draws attention to sacred times filled with acts of worship and serves as a reminder of the Hereafter [Deni, 2022: 77].

c. **Demonstrating the Greatness of Allah's Creation**. When Allah swears by His creation, it indicates that these creations possess unique qualities and reflect signs of His greatness. This strengthens human awareness that the universe is a manifestation of divine power. For example: *"By the moon when it follows it."* (QS. Ash-Shams: 2). This verse encourages reflection on the order and harmony of the natural world.

d. **Emphasizing the Urgency of Moral and Faith Values**. Qur'anic oaths are often followed by moral messages, such as the importance of faith, righteous deeds, and the avoidance of misguidance. For example: (QS. Al-'Asr: 1-2). This surah emphasizes that humanity is in loss except those who believe and perform righteous deeds, thereby reinforcing the moral message through the oath [Aisyah, 2023: 120].

5. Analysis of *Aqsam al-Qur'an* in Selected Surahs

a. **Surah Al-'Asr**. In Surah Al-'Asr, Allah swears by time (*al-'asr*). Time is chosen because it witnesses all human actions, whether good or bad. The response to the oath states that humanity is in loss except those who believe, perform righteous deeds, and encourage one another in truth and patience. This indicates that time is a blessing that must be utilized optimally.

b. **Surah Adh-Duha**. In Surah Adh-Duha, Allah swears by the morning brightness (*dhuha*) and the night. This oath relates to the psychological state of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who experienced sadness when the revelation temporarily ceased. The response to the oath reassures that Allah has not abandoned the Prophet. This demonstrates that oaths can serve as a form of consolation and reinforcement of faith.

c. **Surah At-Tin**. Surah At-Tin contains oaths by the fig, the olive, Mount Sinai, and Makkah. These objects symbolize regions associated with the prophets and the centers of monotheistic propagation. The response to the oath explains that human beings are created in the best form, yet they may fall to the lowest state if they lack faith. This highlights the relationship between the oath and the message concerning human dignity and the importance of faith [Fajar, 2024: 66].

6. Implications of *Aqsam al-Qur'an* for Tafsir Understanding

The study of *Aqsam al-Qur'an* contributes significantly to a deeper understanding of the Qur'an, particularly in its linguistic and rhetorical aspects (*balaghah*). Understanding Qur'anic oaths helps readers identify points of emphasis within a surah and grasp the primary message that Allah سبحانه وتعالى intends to convey [Yuni, 2021: 98].

Moreover, these oaths demonstrate the extraordinary linguistic power of the Qur'an, making them a form of *i'jaz* (miraculous inimitability) that cannot be replicated by human works. By understanding *aqsam*, readers can more easily comprehend the meanings of verses, their wisdom, and the educational values related to faith and morality embedded within them [Salim, 2022: 41].

E. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, *Aqsam al-Qur'an* represents one of the rhetorical styles of the Qur'an that functions to affirm the message of revelation, attract human attention, and demonstrate the greatness of Allah's creation. The structure of Qur'anic

oaths consists of *adat al-qasam*, *muqsam bih*, and *jawab al-qasam*. These oaths serve essential purposes, particularly in strengthening faith (*aqidah*), reminding humanity of the Hereafter, and reinforcing the values of belief and righteous deeds.

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