

Intertextuality (*Al-Tanas*) as a Tool for Resolving Apparent Contradictions in the Qur'anic Text

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Abstract

This study explores the concept of intertextuality (*al-tanas*) in the Qur'anic text and its role in resolving apparent contradictions between verses, adopting a descriptive-analytical methodology grounded in classical exegetical sources and linguistic analysis. Focusing on selected Qur'anic verses commonly perceived as contradictory, the research applies key principles of *usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), particularly *al-'amm al-makhsus* (general and specific) and *al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad* (absolute and qualified), to demonstrate how intertextuality bridges interpretive gaps. The study highlights the importance of understanding these textual relationships within the Qur'an, contributing to a deeper comprehension of Shariah texts and their inherent coherence. A central finding reveals how the Qur'an systematically employs intertextual mechanisms, with *al-'amm al-makhsus* (general and specific) qualifying general statements through specific contexts and *al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad* (absolute and qualified) restricting absolute expressions, thereby resolving apparent contradictions while maintaining theological and legal consistency. The research addresses significant challenges faced by scholars regarding verses concerning disbelievers, repentance, and legal rulings, offering a structured approach to Qur'anic hermeneutics through intertextual analysis. Future studies could expand this framework to examine intertextual applications in thematic tafsīr and comparative scriptural studies.

Keywords: Intertextuality, Al-Tanas, Al-'Amm Al-Makhsus, Al-Mutlaq Al-Muqayyad, Textual Coherence

Introduction

In Qur'anic studies, one recurring concern is the apparent contradiction between certain verses, especially when they seem to deliver conflicting rulings or theological concepts. These perceived inconsistencies can challenge the coherence of the Qur'anic message if not interpreted with appropriate hermeneutical tools. One of the most effective tools for resolving such tensions is the concept of intertextuality (*al-tanāṣ*), which involves examining the textual relationships and semantic interplay among Qur'anic verses.

Intertextuality, as a principle of interpretation, recognizes the Qur'an as an internally referential and self-clarifying text. This research investigates how *al-tanāṣ* can be applied systematically to resolve perceived contradictions by analyzing the syntactic, semantic, and legal connections between relevant verses.

The study addresses the following research question: How can intertextuality function as a methodological tool in reconciling seemingly contradictory Qur'anic verses, especially through the mechanisms of *al-ʿāmm al-makhsūṣ* (general and specific) and *al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad* (absolute and qualified)?

Methodology

This research adopts a descriptive-analytical approach, focusing on selected Qur'anic verses that are commonly perceived to be contradictory. It applies legal principles of *uṣūl al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence) related to *al-ʿāmm al-makhsūṣ* (general and specific) and *al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad* (absolute and qualified) to explore how these contradictions are resolved through intertextuality. The study is grounded in classical exegetical sources and linguistic analysis.

Theoretical Framework: Intertextuality in Arabic and Western Thought

A text should function as a cohesive, unified whole, this is the ideal form it ought to take. One of the essential mechanisms that supports this textual unity is intertextuality, which refers to the interconnectedness between different texts, or even among the internal components of a single text. When recognized by the reader, intertextuality can uncover layers of meaning that might otherwise remain obscure.

Indeed, if we accept the premise that a text is a living, composite entity - at the core of what defines its textuality, then this vitality cannot be understood in isolation from the text's literary and intellectual contexts. Just like a human being, a literary work belongs to a longstanding lineage; it does not arise from nothing, nor does it exist in a vacuum. It is the linguistic and literary product of the entire tradition that precedes it (Al-Ghazhāmī, 1993, p. 111).

A reader of Arabic texts will observe this phenomenon clearly manifested in much of what is read. Prior analyses of texts, particularly their relationships with preceding texts, have been grounded in the principle that intertextuality constitutes a fundamental concept in textual interpretation and analysis. This approach views a text as an open structure, intrinsically linked to its historical context, while simultaneously existing in the present and oriented toward the future. Such a perspective stands in contrast to the concept of a closed structure confined to the immediacy of the present (Al-Ghazhāmī, 1993).

Intertextuality, with its various mechanisms, is a crucial tool for understanding, reading, and interpreting texts. It is imperative for any reader to be aware of this dimension when engaging with texts; otherwise, many aspects of the text may remain inaccessible. The poet, for instance, often traverses time and space, drawing upon elements of heritage that align with the content of his text and resonate with the meanings he intends to convey. He employs this intertextual recall through the lens of his own cultural and intellectual reservoir. Indeed, we cannot create the future except through a moment that is intrinsically connected to both the past and the present (Adūnīs, 1990).

Therefore, intertextuality plays a significant role in comprehending a text and clarifying its meaning. It may occur between parts of a single text, between different texts, within a single poem, between two poems by the same or different poets, within a Quranic surah, or between two surahs. Sometimes, an ambiguous passage in one surah is illuminated by intertextuality with another passage in a different surah, and so on.

Intertextuality in Western Critical Theory

The concept of intertextuality has been defined in diverse, often contradictory ways by scholars, reflecting its complexity within literary theory. Below, various definitions are explored to identify the one most compatible with the Arab cultural perspective.

Kristeva (1997) conceptualizes intertextuality as an intersection and interplay among texts, describing it as "a migration and textual overlapping, where within the space of a given text, multiple utterances intersect and diverge, extracted from other texts" (p. 21). She further posits that "every text is a mosaic of quotations, and every text is an absorption and transformation of other texts" (Hamouda, 2003, p. 15).

This notion of transformation is considered by others as the cornerstone of intertextual thought. One critic defines intertextuality as "the absorption of multiple texts by a central text that retains an excess of meaning" (Baqshī, 2007, p. 15).

Kristeva (as cited in Al-'Allūsh, 1985) elaborates that intertextuality constitutes "one of the essential characteristics of a text, referring to other texts whether prior or contemporary... The text becomes geological layers of writing, achieved through an indefinite reabsorption of textual materials, so that various segments of a literary text appear as transformations of segments taken from other discourses within a broader ideological framework" (p. 215).

In contrast, De Beaugrande (1998) defines intertextuality as "the relationships between a given text and other related texts that fall within the bounds of prior experience, whether directly or indirectly" (p. 104).

Several scholars reinforce the concept of intertextuality, each contributing nuanced perspectives. One aligns closely with Kristeva, asserting that "every text is intertextual, and other texts appear within it at varying levels and in forms not entirely elusive to comprehension... Every text is but a new fabric of prior citations" (Āfāq al-Tanāṣuṣiyyah, 1998, p. 42). Similarly, Angenot (1998) emphasizes the relational nature of textual meaning, stating that "every text coexists in some way with other texts" (p. 64), while Genette (1998) describes intertextuality as "anything that places a text in an apparent or hidden relationship with other

texts" (p. 132), framing it as both structural and interpretive. Miftāḥ (1986) further highlights the reader's role, noting that intertextual recognition depends on "cultural knowledge, breadth of understanding, and ability to discern" (p. 131). Collectively, these scholars portray intertextuality as a dynamic process through which texts engage across boundaries, with meaning emerging through the reader's critical engagement.

Barthes (1998) asserts that "a text is nothing more than a new tissue of past citations" (p. 42), a view closely aligned with his predecessors. He further elaborates that "every text is a repetition of other texts; other texts are present within it at various levels and in nearly recognizable forms, texts from prior and surrounding cultures. Any text is a new fabric of prior excerpts" (Ḥammūdah, 2003, p. 15).

Another scholar characterizes intertextuality as a fundamental attribute of texts, stating that a text is "not an independent entity or unified matter but a series of relationships with other texts" (Al-Ghazhāmī, 1989, p. 15). These perspectives collectively affirm that intertextuality is an inherent quality of all texts.

Notably, the term "intertextuality" is not the sole descriptor of this textual phenomenon. Alternative terms include "textual overlap" (*tadākhul al-nuṣūṣ*), "textual interplay" (*ta'āluq al-nuṣūṣ*), "textual recurrence" (*tawārud al-nuṣūṣ*), "textual interaction" (*tafā'ul al-nuṣūṣ*), "dialogue between texts" (*al-ḥiwār bayna al-nuṣūṣ*), "intertextuality and textuality" (*al-tanāsuṣ wa-al-naṣṣiyyah*), "the absent text" (*al-naṣṣ al-ghā'ib*), and "dialogism" (*al-ḥiwāriyyah*), among others (ʿIdān, 2016).

Ultimately, these definitions underscore that intertextuality manifests as repetition, overlap, intersection, a mosaic of quotations, a series of relationships, or a fabric of prior citations. According to these views, no text exists in isolation from other texts.

Intertextuality in Arabic Rhetoric and Criticism

The phenomenon of intertextuality, in its various forms, was not absent from classical Arabic criticism. On the contrary, the discourse of Arab critics demonstrates their awareness of the mechanisms of this critical concept and their engagement with the issue of intertextuality, whether termed "textual overlap" (*tadākhul al-nuṣūṣ*), "interplay of texts" (*ta'āluq al-nuṣūṣ*), or any other designation. They discussed, analyzed, and elaborated on it within various critical frameworks, such as *al-talmīḥ* (allusion), *al-taḍmīn* (embedding), and *al-sariqāt al-adabiyyah* (literary plagiarism).

No fair-minded scholar familiar with Arabic literary discourse can deny that Arab critics alluded to what is now termed "intertextuality" (*al-tanāṣ*) or "textual interplay" (*tadākhul al-nuṣūṣ*). Their discussions on the matter, as previously mentioned, appeared under different headings and critical inquiries.

If we examine many of the accusations of plagiarism (*sariqāt*) leveled against poets, we find that they fall under what is today called intertextuality. Perhaps the most refined and mature perspective on this issue comes from *Ṣāḥib al-Wasāṭa (al-Jurjānī)*, who, in his discussion of poetic plagiarism (*al-sariqāt al-syīriyyah*), argues that not all influences between poets constitute theft (*sariqah*). He states:

"If you judge fairly, you will realize that the poets of our era and even more so those of subsequent eras are more deserving of excuse and less worthy of blame. Those who came before us have already exhausted most meanings, leaving only remnants either those neglected due to disdain, those overlooked for their difficulty, or those abandoned for their inaccessibility. When one of us exerts himself, strains his intellect, and exhausts his mind to produce a meaning he believes to be original, or composes a line he deems uniquely inventive, yet upon reviewing the anthologies, he inevitably finds it verbatim or something so similar that it diminishes his own work. For this reason, I restrain myself from hastily accusing any poet of plagiarism... However, if I find in a poet's work numerous meanings that I recognize from others, I conclude that some borrowing has occurred though I do not specify exactly what and that some theft is present, even if I cannot distinguish it clearly. Instead, I say: 'So-and-so said such-and-such, but so-and-so preceded him in saying it.' In doing so, I uphold the virtue of honesty and avoid reckless condemnation" (Al-Jurjānī, 1981, pp. 214–215).

This nuanced perspective highlights the inevitability of intertextual connections in literature, acknowledging that true originality is rare and that poetic composition often involves the reworking of preexisting ideas. Arab critics thus engaged with intertextuality long before it became a formalized concept in modern literary theory.

Analysis and Discussion

The Specific General (al-‘āmm al-makhsūṣ) and the Qualified Absolute (al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad) and Their Role in Interpreting Apparent Contradictions Between Texts

Restriction (*taqyīd*) in language plays a vital role in clarifying the meanings of expressions within a text. In this regard, ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī states:

"The essence of the matter is that any utterance that contains something beyond the mere attribution of meaning to a subject is, in fact, intended for a specific purpose. When you say: 'Zayd came to me riding' (*jā’anī Zaydun rākiban*) or 'Zayd did not come to me riding' (*mā jā’anī Zaydun rākiban*), you are not merely affirming or denying his coming in absolute terms, but rather affirming or denying his coming while riding. This is beyond dispute" (Al-Jurjānī, 1992, p. 280).

Based on al-Jurjānī's view in *Dalā’il al-I’jāz* and the perspectives of other scholars, it can be said that restriction (*taqyīd*) and absoluteness (*iṭlāq*) fall under the domain of refined grammatical choice. Whether an action is articulated without constraint, linked to a particular condition, or prioritized with one condition over another, each decision constitutes a distinct linguistic choice, imbued with unique contextual significance (Ṭabl, 2004).

Given these linguistic possibilities and the rich potential that absoluteness and restriction (*iṭlāq wa taqyīd*) offer, scholars of rhetoric have emphasized the significant contribution they make. These mechanisms frequently clarify ambiguous expressions, particularly when the surface of the text appears to suggest contradiction (Al-Subkī, 2003).

Example 1:

For example, the verse:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 6]

«Indeed, those who disbelieve - it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them - they will not believe (al-Baqarah: 6)

may appear to suggest that no disbeliever will ever believe. However, other verses show that some disbelievers do indeed come to faith, such as:

﴿قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ يَعُودُوا فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾ [الأنفال: 38]

«Say to those who have disbelieved [that] if they cease, what has previously occurred will be forgiven for them. But if they return [to hostility] - then the precedent of the former [rebellious] peoples has already taken place (al-Anfāl: 38)

﴿وَمِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ﴾ [العنكبوت: 47]

«And among these [people of Makkah] are those who believe in it (al-'Ankabūt: 47)

To reconcile this apparent contradiction, one must examine the intertextuality (*tanās*) between these verses and the statement:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۖ وَلَوْ جَاءَتْهُمْ كُلُّ آيَةٍ حَتَّى يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ﴾ [يونس: 96-97]

«Indeed, those upon whom the word of your Lord has come into effect will not believe. Even if every sign should come to them, until they see the painful punishment (Yūnus: 96–97)

This reconciliation shows that the verse in *al-Baqarah* is a case of the specific general (*al-'āmm al-makhsūṣ*) or the qualified absolute (*al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad*), referring particularly to those wretched individuals upon whom eternal damnation has been decreed in God's prior knowledge, those mentioned in the verse in Sūrat Yūnus. This interpretation is further supported by the statement (Al-Shanqīṭī, 2005):

﴿خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةً وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ [البقرة: 7]

«Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil. And for them is a great punishment (al-Baqarah: 7)

Example 2:

Another example is the verse:

﴿إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ﴾ [البقرة: 173]

«He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood (al-Baqarah: 173)

which appears to suggest that all forms of blood are prohibited. A similar expression is found in:

﴿إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ﴾ [النحل: 115]

«He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood (al-Naḥl: 115).

However, another verse qualifies the nature of this prohibition, stating that only flowing blood is forbidden:

﴿إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا﴾ [الأنعام: 145]

«Unless it be a dead animal or blood spilled out (al-An'ām: 145).

This exemplifies the principle of the qualified absolute (*al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad*). According to the jurisprudential principles (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) of Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad, when the ruling and its underlying cause are consistent, the absolute (*al-muṭlaq*) must be interpreted in light of the qualified (*al-muqayyad*). Thus, blood that is not flowing, such as residual blood in meat, is not prohibited. This interpretation stems from the principle of reconciling the absolute with the qualified, a method widely endorsed by scholars.

Consequently, resolving apparent contradictions by interpreting the absolute (*al-muṭlaq*) in light of the qualified (*al-muqayyad*), particularly when the ruling and its cause align, serves as a key mechanism of intertextual analysis (*tanāṣ*).

Example 3:

Another example of this form of intertextuality (*tanāṣ*) is the verse:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ أَزْدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَنْ تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ ۝٩٠﴾ [آل عمران: 90]

«Indeed, those who reject the message after their belief and then increase in disbelief - never will their [claimed] repentance be accepted, and they are the ones astray (Āl ‘Imrān: 90).

which suggests that the repentance of apostates who intensify in disbelief will not be accepted. However, other verses affirm that repentance is accepted from anyone who repents before the onset of death or the rising of the sun from the west, as in:

﴿قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ﴾ [الأنفال: 38]

«Say to those who have disbelieved [that] if they cease, what has previously occurred will be forgiven for them. (al-Anfāl: 38)

This indicates that repentance is accepted from anyone who repents before those decisive signs. Moreover, the Qur’an explicitly includes apostates among those whose repentance can be accepted, as seen in the preceding verses:

﴿كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوا أَنَّ الرَّسُولَ حَقٌّ وَجَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٨٦
أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاءُهُمْ أَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ٨٧ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُونَ ٨٨
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ٨٩﴾ [آل عمران: 86-89]

«How shall Allah S.W.T guide a people who disbelieved after their belief and had witnessed that the Messenger is true and clear signs had come to them? And Allah S.W.T does not guide the wrongdoing people (86) Those - their recompense will be that upon them is the curse of Allah S.W.T and the angels and the people, all together (87) Abiding eternally therein. The punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be reprieved (88) Except for those who repent after that and correct themselves. For indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful (89) (Āl ‘Imrān: 86–89).

The exception in His saying, “Except for those who repent after that” (*illā alladhīna tābū min ba’di dhālika*), refers back to those who apostatized (*al-murtaddīn*) after having believed, those who are deserving of punishment and curse if they do not repent. This is also supported by the verse (Al-Shanqīṭī, 2005):

﴿وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ ۚ﴾ [البقرة: 217]

« And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever (al-Baqarah: 217).

since its implication is that if he repents before death, then his repentance will be accepted without restriction (*muṭlaqan*).

The intertextuality between the verse in Āl ‘Imrān:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ أَزْدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَّنْ تَقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ ۙ﴾ [آل عمران: 90]

«Indeed, those who reject the message after their belief and then increase in disbelief - never will their [claimed] repentance be accepted, and they are the ones astray (Āl ‘Imrān:90).

and the earlier verses that affirm when repentance is accepted, and that there can indeed be repentance after disbelief. This intertextual relationship helps us to understand that the negation of repentance in the verse “never will their repentance be accepted” (*lan tuqbal tawbatuhum*) is an absolute negation (*nafy muṭlaq*) that is actually qualified (*muqayyad*), and that it is a negation justified by a specific reason.

The reason is that this particular category of people, whom Allah S.W.T described in the very same verse as “they are the ones astray” (*ulā’ika hum al-ḍāllūn*), do not repent except at the moment of their death and therefore, their repentance is not accepted.

This understanding is reinforced by what Allah S.W.T clarified in other places: that the disbeliever whose repentance is not accepted is the one who persists in disbelief until death overtakes him, and then seeks to repent at that moment. As in His saying:

﴿وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْإِسْلَامَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ﴾ [النساء: 18]

«But repentance is not [accepted] of those who [continue to] do evil deeds up until, when death comes to one of them, he says, "Indeed, I have repented now," or of those who die while they are disbelievers. (al-Nisā’: 18).

Thus, the repentance (*tawbah*) of one who repents at the time of death is regarded the same as the one who dies upon disbelief (*kufr*). This is reflected in the saying of Allah S.W.T:

﴿فَلَمْ يَكْ يَنْفَعُهُمْ إِيمَانُهُمْ لَمَّا رَأَوْا بَاسَنَا﴾ [غافر: 85]

«But never did their faith benefit them once they saw Our punishment. [It is] the established way of Allah S.W.T which has preceded among His servants. And the disbelievers thereupon lost [all](Gāfir:85).

And in the statement about Pharaoh:

﴿أَلَمْ تَكُنْ مِنْ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾ [يونس: 91]

«Now? And you had disobeyed [Him] before and were of the corrupters? (Yūnus: 91).

The general (*iṭlāq*) nature of this verse is to be qualified (*muqayyad*) by the condition of delaying repentance until the moment of death, as it is necessary to understand the absolute

(*muṭlaq*) in light of the qualified (*muqayyad*) as established in principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) (Al-Shanqīṭī, 2005).

Example 4:

Among the examples of *al-‘āmm al-makhsūṣ* (general but specified) or *al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad* (absolute but qualified) is the saying of Allah S.W.T:

﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْبَصَرُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْبَصَرَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ۝۳﴾ [الأنعام: 103]

«Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted (Al-An‘ām:103).

This noble verse might suggest that Allah S.W.T cannot be seen with the eyes. However, other verses indicate that He will, in fact, be seen with the eyes, such as His saying:

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهُهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۝۲۶﴾ [يونس: 26]

«For them who have done good is the best [reward] and extra. No darkness will cover their faces, nor humiliation. Those are companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally (Yūnus :26).

Here, “the best reward” (*al-ḥusnā*) refers to Paradise, and “even more” (*al-ziyādah*) refers to gazing upon the Noble Countenance of Allah S.W.T.

Likewise, His statement about the disbelievers:

﴿كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمْ حُجُّوا ۝۱۵﴾ [المطففين: 15]

«No! Indeed, from their Lord, that Day, they will be partitioned (Al-Muṭaffifin:15).

implies, by the logic of *dalīl al-khiṭāb* (argument from silence), that the believers will not be veiled from seeing their Lord. This understanding may be approached from various perspectives, the most significant of which is:

What is negated in the verse “Vision perceives Him not” (*Lā tudrikuhu al-abṣāru*) is the kind of perception that entails *comprehensive grasp of essence* (*iḥāṭah bi’l-kunh*). As for the mere possibility of *seeing* Allah S.W.T (*ru’yah*), the verse does not negate it. Rather, this is firmly established by other Qur’anic verses, sound Prophetic traditions (*aḥādīth ṣaḥīḥah*), and the unanimous consensus of People of the Sunnah and the Community (*Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamā‘ah*) (Al-Shanqīṭī, 2005).

Example 5:

Another instance of a general verse that is specified (*al-‘āmm al-makhsūṣ*) or an absolute ruling that is qualified (*al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad*) is the statement of Allah S.W.T:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ ۝۱۷۸﴾ [البقرة: 178]

«O you who have believed, prescribed for you is legal retribution for those murdered (Al-Baqarah :178).

This verse appears, in its outward sense, to indicate that *qisās* is mandatory and unavoidable,

as shown by the phrase “prescribed for you” (*kutiba ‘alaykum*), which implies obligation and imposition.

However, the same verse also shows that *qisās* is not always required, for the guardian of the victim has the choice, as indicated in:

﴿فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ﴾ [البقرة: 178]

«And for him who is forgiven somewhat by his (injured) brother (Al-Baqarah:178).

Here, intertextuality (*tanās*) and its mechanism are the carrying of the absolute statement “prescribed for you” (*kutiba ‘alaykum*) upon the qualified statement “And for him who is forgiven somewhat by his (injured) brother” (*Faman ‘ufiya lahu min akhihi shay’un*) which clarifies that the obligation of *qisās* stands only when the heirs of the victim, or some of them, do not pardon (Al-Shanqīṭī, 2005). This is also supported by the saying of Allah S.W.T:

﴿وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيَّهِ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يُسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ﴾ [الإسراء: 33]

« And whoever is killed unjustly - We have given his heir authority, but let him not exceed limits in [the matter of] taking life (Al-Isrā’:33).

The mechanism of intertextuality demonstrates how Qur’anic verses interact to clarify rulings. In the case of *al-qisās* (retributive justice), the general or absolute verses are qualified by a specific condition, such as the option of pardon. However, the text introduces another example involving apostasy, which appears distinct from the discussion of retribution:

﴿وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَتِمَّتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَلُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ﴾ [البقرة: 217]

« And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever - for those, their deeds have become worthless in this world and the Hereafter (Al-Baqarah:217).

Here, the general ruling regarding apostasy (*irtidād*) is qualified by the condition (*fayamut wahuwa kāfirun*) “and dies while he is a disbeliever”. This qualification restricts the consequence of deeds becoming void (*ḥabīṭat a’ māluhum*) to those who die in a state of disbelief. Thus, the absolute (*al-muṭlaq*) is interpreted in light of the qualified (*al-muqayyad*), a principle of jurisprudential analysis (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) that resolves apparent contradictions by prioritizing the qualified ruling.

In summary, the issue exemplifies the principle of reconciling the absolute and the qualified (*ta’āruḍ al-muṭlaq wa-al-muqayyad*). Absolute verses are constrained by their qualified counterparts, such as the condition of dying in disbelief for apostasy or the option of pardon for retribution, ensuring a coherent and contextually precise interpretation of divine rulings.

Conclusion and Key Findings

This study has demonstrated that intertextuality (*al-tanās*) is not merely a literary phenomenon, but a robust methodological tool for Qur’anic interpretation. Through the analytical exploration of Qur’anic verses, several significant findings have emerged:

1. The Qur'an systematically employs intertextuality, whether through references to earlier scriptures or allusions to familiar narratives, to reinforce its discourse and clarify its intended messages.
2. The Qur'an utilizes precise interpretive mechanisms, such as *takhsīs* (specification) and *taqyīd* (restriction), to reconcile verses that may initially appear contradictory. These mechanisms guide readers toward a coherent and context-sensitive understanding.
3. Intertextuality functions as a key tool for textual coherence, enabling interpreters to read verses in light of one another, thereby uncovering deeper layers of meaning and resolving semantic tensions.
4. The study provides concrete examples from the Qur'an, illustrating how intertextual connections, especially through principles such as *al-'āmm al-makhsūs* (general and specific) and *al-muṭlaq al-muqayyad* (absolute and qualified), help clarify rulings, beliefs, and theological nuances.
5. Intertextual analysis opens up new avenues for interpreting verses that might seem ambiguous, offering clarity and consistency within the Qur'anic message. It affirms the Qur'an's nature as a self-interpreting text, in which one part explains another.

In conclusion, this study affirms that intertextuality enhances both the semantic clarity and hermeneutical integrity of Qur'anic interpretation. Future research may expand on this framework to explore its applications in thematic tafsīr, legal reasoning, or comparative scriptural studies, thereby contributing to a deeper engagement with the Qur'anic text in contemporary scholarship.

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