

RESOLVING APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS IN QURANIC VERSES: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES AND EXAMPLES

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ABSTRACT

The issue of the apparent contradiction (Obscure) between the verses of the Holy Qur'an is one of the major topics in Qur'anic studies. This subject has drawn significant attention from scholars since ancient times and continues to hold a prominent place in contemporary studies. The importance of this topic stems from its impact on understanding the Qur'an and its interaction with reality and the ever-changing challenges of life. It addresses a fundamental question related to the sanctity and credibility of divine revelation, raising central questions about whether there is a real contradiction between Qur'anic verses or whether what initially appears as a discrepancy is, in fact, a superficial difference arising from a lack of understanding or shallow interpretation. In addressing this issue, the researchers adopt an inductive approach by tracing and analyzing Qur'anic verses, followed by applying an analytical method to examine and interpret the texts in light of the integrated Qur'anic context. Through this approach, two conclusions can be reached: First, what appears to be a contradiction between the verses is, in most cases, a superficial discrepancy that requires deep reflection and a comprehensive understanding of the context. Second, the Holy Qur'an is free from any real contradictions; rather, it is a flawless book that reveals apparent contradictions in the minds of the recipients, not in its text.

Keywords: Apparent, contradiction, discrepancy, verses, Holy Qur'an.

INTRODUCTION

The scholars of this Ummah, particularly the exegetes of the Holy Qur'an, have continually sought to adopt sound scientific methodologies to address what is perceived as ambiguities or apparent contradictions between the verses of the Qur'an. Many scholars devoted

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themselves to compiling specialized works and developing a unique field on this topic, naming it "The Science of Obscure Qur'anic Verses," similar to what the Hadith scholars did in authoring works on the science of problematic or differing Hadiths. This attention arose due to the critical nature of this issue within Qur'anic sciences and its exegesis. It is indeed a serious matter, as misunderstandings about supposed contradictions might lead some to doubt the credibility of the miraculous Book of Allah, which is free from falsehood, neither from the front nor from behind. Therefore, when doubts arise, and skepticism begins to spread, it becomes necessary to confront these issues, especially when people start describing the Qur'an as inconsistent or unstable. This work aims to dispel the doubts of those who are skeptical or fearful.

Moreover, as time advances and life present new challenges, discussions around the issue of apparent contradictions in the Qur'an become even more pressing. Thus, the purpose of this science is to eliminate the illusion of contradictions and discrepancies between the verses of the Noble Book. Among the most prominent scholars who made significant contributions to this field, raising the banner of defending the Qur'an, are Abu Abdullah al-Qurtubi, al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir, and Qadi Ibn Atiyyah, may Allah have mercy on them.

A thorough examination of the works of these exegetes reveals a consensus that the Qur'an provides decisive guidance on various aspects of life and is capable of addressing all new developments. Despite this, some individuals still attempt to find genuine contradictions within the verses of the Wise Book.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) used to convey the Qur'an to his companions, and they would naturally understand it. If any verse confused them, they would ask the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), and he would clarify it for them. This is illustrated in a narration found in both Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, where some companions asked the Prophet (pbuh) about the verse:

﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ﴾ [الأنعام: 82]

"Those who believe and do not mix their faith with injustice, those will have security, and they are rightly guided" [Al-An'am: 82]. When this verse was revealed, it was difficult for them to grasp, and they asked, "Who among us does not wrong himself?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) responded, "It is not as you think; it refers to what Luqman said to his son:

﴿يَبْنِي لَا تَشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ [لقمان: 13]

'O my son, do not associate others with Allah. Verily, associating others with Him is a great injustice.'" [Luqman: 13].¹

It is worth noting that "the occurrence of ambiguity in the interpretation of verses is relative; a verse may seem problematic to some and not to others."² Despite the unequivocal declaration that Allah's Book is free from contradictions and discrepancies, as affirmed in the verse: "Do they not then reflect on the Qur'an? Had it been from other than Allah, they would have found therein much discrepancy." [An-Nisa': 82].

Al-Zamakhshari says: "Had it been from other than Allah, its structure, eloquence, and meanings would have varied. Some parts would have reached the level of miraculousness, while others would have fallen short and been open to opposition."³

Thus, this study seeks to explore and achieve its goal by addressing the misconceptions some hold regarding a supposed real contradiction between Qur'anic verses. It also aims to methodically demonstrate ways to defend the Qur'an and provides examples of verses that may seem contradictory to some, showing their harmony and complementarity.

This research is divided into an introduction, three main sections, and a conclusion:

- First Section: A cognitive reading on the illusion of contradiction and discrepancy in the Qur'an.
- Second Section: A historical review of the efforts to compile works on issues related to the illusion of contradiction and discrepancy, along with examples of problematic verses.
- Third Section: A methodological analysis of scholars' approaches in addressing the apparent contradiction between texts, including the conditions for contradictions, their causes, and the wisdom behind their occurrence in the Qur'an. A summary of the issue is provided.

First Section: A Cognitive Reading on the Illusion of Contradiction and Discrepancy in the Qur'an.

This section is divided into several key points as follows:

First: Definition of Contradiction

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, the Book of Friday, Chapter: Perfume for Friday, Vol. 8, p. 427, Hadith No. 3360, and by Muslim in his Sahih in the Book of Faith, Chapter: The Truthfulness of Faith and Its Sincerity, Vol. 1, p. 80, Hadith No. 342.

² Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Mansour, *The Problematic Verses of the Holy Quran*, (Dammam: Dar Ibn Al-Jawzi, 1st ed., 1426 AH), p. 6.

³ Abu Al-Qasim Mahmud bin Omar Al-Zamakhshari Al-Khwarizmi, *Tafsir al-Kashshaf*, edited by Abdul Razzaq Al-Mahdi (Beirut: Dar Ihya Al-Turath Al-Arabi, n.d.), Vol. 1, p. 571.

Linguistic Definition of Contradiction: The word "contradiction" (التعارض) is derived from the verb ta'ārada (تعارض). It is said that something "contradicts" (ta'ārada) when two or more things participate in the act of contradiction, meaning it requires at least two participants. When we say "two pieces of evidence contradict," it means the two evidences share in the contradiction that occurred between them.⁴ The root of the word traces back to the root letters "ع. ر. ض" ('a. r. ḍ), with the addition of the letters alif and ta on the pattern ifta'ala, as in the lexicon Lisan al-'Arab: "Al-'arḍ is the opposite of length; its plural is a'rāḍ, and to present something ('araḍtu) is to make it wide."⁵ For example, Allah says: "He is one full of broad supplication" [Fussilat: 51]. Al-Qurtubi said: "'Broad' here means abundant, and the Arabs use the terms 'length' and 'breadth' to signify abundance. For example, it is said: 'So-and-so lengthened in speech and broadened in supplication,' meaning he increased it⁶." Additionally, 'araḍ refers to abundant wealth⁷. To object to someone (i'taraḍa) means to reject their words or actions⁸. One of the linguistic meanings of this concept: Through an extensive study of this concept, I found that it encompasses several meanings, from which I have chosen the following:

The meaning of comparison (counterpart): Ibn Manzur said, "'Āraḍa (عارض) something with something else means to compare it. To 'Āraḍtu (عارضت) my book with his book means I compared it⁹."

This is exemplified in the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ): "Indeed, Jibril (Gabriel) would review the Qur'an¹⁰ with him once every year, but this year he reviewed it with him twice¹¹." It is also said, "He confronted him with the strongest confrontation," and i'taraḍa means to meet or confront him personally¹².

One of the meanings of ta'ārud (contradiction) is affliction (الآفة):

The events of life are numerous, including death, illness, or being afflicted by disease or possession by jinn. It is said: "A calamity ('araḍ) befell me" or "a calamity ('āraḍa) occurred," meaning an affliction has appeared in something. Hence, the term shubha 'ārīda

⁴ Sami Atta Hassan, "The Claim of Contradiction Between the Texts of the Holy Quran," An-Najah University Journal for Research (Humanities), Vol. 24, No. 2, An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine, 2010, pp. 587-620.

⁵ Jamal Al-Din Hamad bin Makram Ibn Manzoor Al-Afriki Al-Masri, *Lisan Al-'Arab*, (Beirut: Dar Sader, 3rd ed., 1414 AH), Vol. 7, p. 165.

⁶ Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Ansari Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, (n.d.: Dar Uloom Al-Quran, n.d.), Vol. 15, p. 264.

⁷ Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 7, p. 165.

⁸ Ibrahim Mustafa — Ahmed Al-Zayyat — Hamid Abdul Qadir — Muhammad Al-Najjar, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Wasit*, edited by the Arabic Language Academy (n.d., Publisher: Dar Al-Da'wah, n.d., n.d.), Vol. 2, p. 594.

⁹ Same source, Vol. 7, p. 165.

¹⁰ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, the Book of Creation, Chapter: Mention of the Angels, Hadith No. 3048.

¹¹ *Sahih Muslim*, the Book of the Virtues of the Companions, Chapter: Fatimah the Daughter of the Prophet (pbuh), Hadith No. 6467.

¹² Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 6, p. 188.

(a passing doubt) is used to describe a fleeting uncertainty that enters the heart¹³. This is mentioned in the hadith of 'Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Zubayr and his wife: "He refrained from her¹⁴, meaning he was struck by an affliction, such as illness, that prevented him from approaching her¹⁵. It is also said: "Some of so-and-so's camels experienced an affliction," meaning they became ill¹⁶.

One of its meanings is also the concept of prevention and obstruction: It is said, "al-i' rād from something means turning away from it, and a' raḍa means to turn away or block." Ibn Manzur states: "'araḍa means something stands up and obstructs (i' tarāḍa), like a piece of wood standing in a river or road, preventing travelers from passing¹⁷." Anything that prevents you from engaging in work or other matters, including illness, is called an 'āriḍ (obstruction). The phrase "'araḍa 'āriḍ" means an obstacle appeared and prevented something. This is seen in Allah's saying: "And do not make [your oath by] Allah an excuse against being righteous and fearing Him and making peace among people" [Al-Baqarah: 224], meaning: "Do not make your oaths by Allah an obstacle to practicing righteousness, maintaining family ties, or reconciling between people if you have sworn to abandon such acts¹⁸." Clouds are called 'āriḍ because they obstruct the horizon, preventing sunlight from reaching the earth¹⁹. Similarly, in the context of legal theory and jurisprudence, objections raised against analogy or other proofs are called i' tirāḍāt because they obstruct reliance on the evidence. Additionally, contradictory statements are called ta' āruḍ because each one obstructs the other and prevents its effect²⁰.

The term i' tirāḍ (objection) also conveys the meanings of emergence, prominence, and appearance. It is said, "Something a' raḍa laka from afar means it became visible and appeared. When it is said 'araḍa lahu amr kadhā, it means a certain matter appeared to him. And when you say 'araḍtu 'alayhi amr kadhā, it means you presented or revealed the matter to him, and 'araḍtu lahu al-shay means I showed it to him and made it manifest. Similarly, 'araḍtu al-shay' fa-a' raḍa means I revealed it, and it became apparent²¹." This is seen in Allah's saying: "And We will present Hell that Day to the disbelievers, on display" [Al-

¹³ Ibid, Vol. 6, p. 181.

¹⁴ Ahmad bin Al-Husayn Abu Bakr Al-Bayhaqi, *Sunan Al-Bayhaqi Al-Kubra*, edited by Muhammad Abdul Qadir Atta (Makkah: Maktabah Dar Al-Baz, 1414 AH/1994 CE), Vol. 7, p. 375.

¹⁵ Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 6, p. 192.

¹⁶ Ibid, Vol. 6, p. 187.

¹⁷ Ibid, Vol. 7, p. 165.

¹⁸ Muhammad Al-Amin bin Muhammad Al-Mukhtar Al-Shanqiti, *'Aḍwā' al-Bayān fī Īdāḥ al-Qur'ān bil-Qur'ān*, (Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 1415 AH/1995 CE), Vol. 1, p. 425.

¹⁹ Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 7, p. 165.

²⁰ Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, *Al-Mawsu'ah al-Fiqhiyyah*, (Kuwait: Dar Al-Salasil, 2nd ed., 1404 AH/1983 CE), Vol. 12, p. 184.

²¹ Ibid, Vol. 7, p. 165.

Kahf: 100], meaning: "We will reveal and display it so that the disbelievers will see it." The side of the cheek is also called 'ārid because of its visibility²².

The term "i'tirād" also conveys the meaning of presentation. This is reflected in Allah's saying: "And He taught Adam the names, all of them; then He presented them to the angels" [Al-Baqarah: 31]. Allah also says: "The Fire they are presented to morning and evening; and the Day the Hour appears [it will be said], 'Make the people of Pharaoh enter the severest punishment'" [Ghafir: 46]. Additionally, Allah states: "And you will see them presented before it, humbled from humiliation, looking from a concealed glance" [Ash-Shura: 45]. Al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated from Ibn Umar that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "When one of you dies, his place will be presented to him in the morning and evening. If he is from the people of Paradise, he will see his place in Paradise; and if he is from the people of Hell, he will see his place in Hell, and it will be said, 'This is your place,' until Allah resurrects him to it on the Day of Judgment"²³.

Alignment and adjacency (المحاذاة والمجاورة) :

It is said 'he moved alongside ('ārada) in the journey,' meaning he walked parallel to and beside it.²⁴

It is also said, 'he looked at it in opposition (mu'ārada) or from the side ('urḍ or 'urud),' meaning from the side. In the hadith: 'He came to the Jamrah of 'Aqaba, then he entered the valley and approached it from its side ('arḍan),'²⁵

meaning he came to it from its side²⁶.

Al-Zarkashi said: it is a verbal form (tafā'ul) derived from 'al-'urḍ' (with a ḍamma on the 'ayn), which means the side or the direction. It is as if the opposing speech (al-kalām al-muta'ārid) stands at the side of each other, meaning from its side and direction, preventing it from progressing to where it was directed²⁷.

Strengthening and intensifying (التقوية والتشديد) :

Allah SWT said:

²² Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 7, p. 165.

²³ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, the Book of Creation, Chapter: What is Mentioned About the Description of Paradise and That It Is Created, Hadith No. 6723. Narrated by Muslim in his *Sahih* in the Book of Paradise and Its Bliss and Inhabitants, Chapter: The Presentation of the Deceased's Place from Paradise or Hellfire, and the Establishment of the Punishment of the Grave and Seeking Refuge from It, Hadith No. 937.

²⁴ Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 6, p. 190.

²⁵ Narrated by Muslim in his *Sahih*, in the Book of Hajj, Chapter: Throwing the Jamrah of Aqabah from the Bottom of the Valley with Makkah on His Left and Saying Takbir with Every Pebble, Hadith No. 3192.

²⁶ Ibid, Vol. 6, p. 186.

²⁷ Badr Al-Din Muhammad bin Bahadur Al-Zarkashi, *Al-Bahr Al-Muhit fi Usul Al-Fiqh*, edited by Dr. Muhammad Muhammad Tamer, (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, n.d., 1421 AH/2000 CE), Vol. 4, p. 407.

﴿وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ﴾ [البقرة: 224].

And do not make Allah an obstacle by your oaths" is that you should not make Allah a source of strength for your oaths, meaning that you should not reinforce them by invoking the name of Allah²⁸.

It is as if the one swearing insists on his opinion and strengthens it by mentioning Allah, refusing to turn away from it. They said: The strongest part of the house is the central beam, and Ibn Manzur mentioned, "It is called the middle of the house 'urūd' because the central beam is in the middle of the structure. The house of poetry is built in form like the inhabited house for the Arabs, so the essence of the poetic line is its 'urūd,' just as the essence of the house is the central beam in its middle²⁹. It is also said: 'She is 'urda for husbands,' meaning strong in relation to her husband, and 'he is 'urda for evil,' meaning strong in facing it³⁰.

الإبراز والإظهار بهدف الإصابة (بالمكروه):

It is said, "the thing 'a'raḍa to you from afar," meaning it appeared and became visible. Thus, the meaning of "'urda" is something that people are exposed to and affected by harm. Allah says:

﴿وَعَرَضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَرَضًا﴾ [الكهف: 100].

"And We shall present Hell that Day to the disbelievers, plain to view" [Al-Kahf: 100].

Al-Tabari says: "We shall bring Hell forward on the Day the Trumpet is blown, and make it visible to the disbelievers in Allah, so they see it and witness it³¹. Ibn Manzur said: "So-and-so 'ta'arraḍa' to me or 'a'raḍa' to me, meaning he insulted and harmed me." Al-Layth said: "It is said, 'So-and-so exposed himself to me with something I dislike³².

Equality and similarity (المساواة والمماثلة):

It is said, "'araḍa 'arḍahu" or "i'taraḍahu" when someone criticizes, insults, fights, or equals another in lineage or status³³. It is also said, "'āraḍtuhu" (I opposed him) with the same thing he did³⁴, meaning I responded to him in the same way he acted and did as he

²⁸ Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 6, p. 188.

²⁹ Ibid, Vol. 6, p. 192.

³⁰ Ibid, Vol. 6, p. 187.

³¹ Al-Tabari, *Jami' Al-Bayan*, Vol. 8, p. 291.

³² Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 6, p. 193.

³³ Ibid, Vol. 6, p. 181.

³⁴ Muhammad Al-Murtadha Al-Zabidi, *Taj Al-Arous*, (Cairo: Al-Khayriyah Press, 1st ed., n.d.), Vol. 5, p. 51.

did³⁵. From this, the term "mu'āraḍa" (opposition) is derived. This is the logical analogy, as the action (ʿarḍ) one performs is similar to the action (ʿarḍ) that was done to him³⁶.

Evasion (Tawriya): Ta' rīḍ (indirectness):

Ta' rīḍ (indirectness) is the opposite of being explicit. It is said, "'arraḍa li-fulān" or "bi-fulān," meaning to say something while implying that person. From this comes ma' ārīḍ in speech, which refers to implying one thing while meaning another (evasion). The proverb says: "Indeed, in ma' ārīḍ (evasive speech) there is an alternative to lying," meaning there is ample room for avoiding falsehood³⁷.

Based on this, the definition of ta' āruḍ (conflict or contradiction) revolves around the following meanings: Prevention, Appearance, Opposition and Equality and similarity. The meaning of prevention is the one intended in the context of ta' āruḍ in this study³⁸.

Definition of Conflict

The concept of conflict has been addressed by various scholars, particularly usulists (principles of jurisprudence). One of them defined it as: 'the mutual exclusion between legal evidence in general, such that one necessitates the negation of what the other necessitates³⁹.' Alternatively, it can be described as 'the confrontation of two pieces of evidence in a manner that implies opposition.'⁴⁰

Al-Nasafi explained the concept of conflict as follows: 'Some scholars have referred to the conflict we discussed as contradiction, stating that if two statements differ in affirmation and negation, they are called contradictory. This means that one must be false if the other is true. He then added that this contradiction can only be realized if there is unity in the subject being judged⁴¹.

Accordingly, the meaning of conflict in the Quran is that two verses face each other in such a way that the meaning of one prevents the application of the meaning of the other, at least superficially. For example, one may affirm something while the other denies it. This is why

³⁵ Ibn Manzoor, *Lisan Al-Arab*, Vol. 6, p. 193.

³⁶ Abu Al-Husayn Ahmad bin Faris bin Zakariya, *Mu'jam Maqa'is al-Lughah*, edited by Abdul Salam Muhammad Haroun. (Dar Al-Fikr, 1399 AH - 1979 CE), Vol. 4, p. 272.

³⁷ Muhammad bin Abu Bakr bin Abdul Qadir Al-Razi, *Mukhtar Al-Sihah*, edited by Mahmoud Khater (Beirut: Library of Lebanon Publishers, New Edition, 1415 AH/1995 CE), Vol. 1, p. 467.

³⁸ Ahmad bin Abdul Aziz bin Muqrin Al-Qasir, *The Problematic Hadiths in the Interpretation of the Holy Quran*, (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Dar Ibn Al-Jawzi, 1st ed., 1430 AH), pp. 27-28.

³⁹ See: Abdul Latif Al-Barzanji, *Contradiction and Preference Between Legal Evidences*. (n.d.: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, 1417 AH), Vol. 1, p. 23.

⁴⁰ Al-Zarkashi, Al-Bahr Al-Muhit in Usul Al-Fiqh, Vol. 4, p. 407.

⁴¹ Abdullah bin Ahmad Al-Nasafi Abu Al-Barakat, *Kashf al-Asrār Sharḥ al-Muṣannif 'alā al-Manār*, (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, n.d.), Vol. 5, p. 185.

Al-Asnawi al-Shafi'i stated: 'When the evidences conflict, if none has an advantage over the others, it is considered an equal conflict⁴².

The author of 'Al-Tahbir' in his commentary on 'Al-Tahrir' said: 'This occurs when one piece of evidence indicates permissibility while the other indicates prohibition; thus, the evidence for permissibility prevents prohibition, and the evidence for prohibition prevents permissibility. Each of them opposes and contradicts the other⁴³.' It is stated in the 'Jurisdictional Encyclopedia': 'The mutual exclusion between the two pieces of evidence is absolute, such that one necessitates something different from what the other necessitates⁴⁴..'. In other words, it is: 'The confrontation of two pieces of evidence in a manner that prevents each from realizing the implications of the other⁴⁵.

This term has been used by several hadith scholars, such as Ibn Hibban, Al-Tahawi, and Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdadi. Al-Khateeb even dedicated a chapter to conflict in his book 'Al-Kifayah.' The hadith scholars use a term synonymous with conflict, which is 'differing reports.' Their usage suggests that there is no distinction between the two terms. They have defined differing reports in various ways, all of which essentially relate to the meaning of conflict⁴⁶, including: 'Any two or more accepted hadiths that appear to contradict each other in meaning⁴⁷.

Most Quran scholars address it under the term 'apparent disagreement and contradiction⁴⁸,' meaning those that suggest conflict and divergence. Therefore, conflict or disagreement in the Quran means that the meanings of one verse apparently contradict the meanings of another verse. This is an illusory matter that comes to mind but does not exist in reality.

⁴² Jamal Al-Din Abdul Rahman bin Al-Hassan Al-Asnawi, *Nihāyatu as-Sūl (Sharḥu Minhāji al-Wuṣūl fī 'Ilmi al-Uṣūl)*, 1st ed., Bulaq, Vol. 3, p. 361.

⁴³ Ala Al-Din Abu Al-Hassan Al-Hanbali, *At-Taḥbīr Sharḥ at-Tahrīr fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, edited by Abdul Rahman Al-Jabreen, Awad Al-Qarni, Ahmad Al-Sarah, (Riyadh: Maktabah Al-Rushd, n.d., 1421 AH/2000 CE), Vol. 1, p. 4126.

⁴⁴Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, *Fiqh Encyclopedia* (Kuwait: Dar al-Salasel Printing, 2nd ed., 1404 AH/1983 CE), vol. 12, p. 184.

⁴⁵Saud bin Abdullah Al-Funaisan, *The Causes and Effects of Divergence among Interpreters* (Riyadh: Center for Studies and Media, Dar Ishbiliyah, 1st ed., 1418 AH/1997 CE), p. 195.

⁴⁶Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, *Fiqh Encyclopedia* (Kuwait: Dar al-Salasel Printing, 2nd ed., 1404 AH/1983 CE), vol. 12, p. 184.

Saud bin Abdullah Al-Funaisan, *The Causes and Effects of Divergence among Interpreters* (Riyadh: Center for Studies and Media, Dar Ishbiliyah, 1st ed., 1418 AH/1997 CE), p. 195.

See: Al-Qasir, *The Problematic Hadiths in the Interpretation of the Holy Quran*, p. 28.

⁴⁷Muhammad Abu al-Layth Al-Khairabadi, *Ulūm al-Ḥadīth Aṣīluhā wa Mu'āṣiruhā*, (Selangor: Dar al-Shakir, 4th ed., 1426 AH/2005 CE), p. 307.

⁴⁸Khalid bin Abdullah bin Omar Al-Damiji, *Refuting the Illusion of Contradiction in Verses Related to Belief in the Messengers and Predestination*, (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Umm Al-Qura University, a thesis submitted for the Master's degree, 1428 AH), p. 14.

Real conflict between evidence is established when the following conditions are met:

1. Complete and total opposition between the two pieces of evidence.
2. The legal authority of both conflicting evidences.
3. Equality between the conflicting pieces of evidence in strength, as one cannot equate strong evidence with a weak one, nor can one equate definitive evidence with presumptive evidence.
4. Unity of conflicting evidence in time and place⁴⁹.

If real conflict were established, it would lead to an obligation that cannot be fulfilled: If there were contradiction and disagreement among the texts, it would result in an obligation that cannot be borne. This is because if the legislator commanded a person to perform a specific action and also prohibited him from performing that same action, then asked him to do both at the same time—i.e., to perform the action and not perform it simultaneously, in the same situation, for the same reason—it would be an obligation that cannot be fulfilled. It is inconceivable that the legislator would command something that cannot be borne, as stated in His saying:

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾ [البقرة: 286].

"Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear." [Al-Baqarah: 286]. "

Definition of Disagreement

The definition of disagreement linguistically: It is a noun derived from the verb اِخْتَلَفَ (ikhtalafa), and follows the pattern of 'iftعال'. Its root is related to the root letters خ.ل.ف. It is said that something has differed when it experiences اِخْتِلَافًا (ikhthilafan); hence, it is مُخْتَلِفٌ (mukhtalif). Disagreement is the opposite of agreement⁵⁰. It is mentioned in 'Al-Lisan' that خَلَفَ (khalaaf) is the opposite of قَدَّمَ (quddām)⁵¹. It is said that a man promised me but خَلَفَنِي (khalafani), meaning I found him to be one who breaks promises, which is taken from His saying:

⁴⁹ See: Abdul Majid Al-Soswah, The Method of Reconciliation and Preference among Various Hadiths, p. 60. And see: Sami Ata Hassan, The Claim of Contradiction among the Texts of the Holy Quran, An-Najah National University Journal for Research (Human Sciences), vol. 24, no. 2, An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine, 2010, p. 592.

⁵⁰ Ibn Manzur, Lisan al-Arab, vol. 3, p. 181. And see: Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Fiqh Encyclopedia, vol. 2, p. 291.

⁵¹ The competent and adequate Abul Qasim Ismail bin Abbas bin Ahmad bin Idris Al-Talibani, Al-Muhit in Language, edited by Sheikh Muhammad Hassan Al-Yasin (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub, 1st ed., 1414 AH/1994 CE), vol. 4, p. 345.

﴿فَرَحَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خِلَافَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ﴾ [التوبة: 81]

“Those ‘hypocrites’ who remained behind rejoiced for doing so in defiance of the Messenger of Allah”

Meaning in opposition to him. It is also said: 'A man is خَالِفٌ (khalifah) if he is one who frequently engages in disagreement⁵².'

It is mentioned in 'Tahdhib Al-Lughah': 'Al-Kisai said: It is said that for every two things that differ, they are called خلفان (khalafan) and خِلْفَتَان (khilfatan). They can also be referred to as two boys خلفان and خِلْفَتَان, or two servants خلفان, if one is tall and the other short, or if one is white and the other black⁵³.' This is also related to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): 'Align your rows and do not differ, lest your hearts differ⁵⁴.'

Based on this, the term 'disagreement' in the language indicates several meanings, the most important of which are: the opposite of 'quddām' (forward), distance, delay, opposition, and inequality. The type of disagreement intended in this research is opposition or that which does not equal or agree.

Definition of Disagreement (الاختلاف):

It is when each of the parties in disagreement expresses their intended meaning using different phrases. For example, in the interpretation of the 'straight path,' some say it is the Quran, while others say it is Islam. These two statements are in agreement, as the religion of Islam is to follow the Holy Quran. Similarly, the statement of those who say it is the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah also reflects this⁵⁵.

The meaning of disagreement in the terminology of Quranic sciences is what is mentioned in the saying of Allah:

﴿وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا﴾ [النساء: 82]

'And if it had been from other than Allah, they would have certainly found within it much contradiction' [An-Nisa: 82]. This means that if this Quran were fabricated and invented, as the ignorant among the polytheists and hypocrites claim in their

⁵²Ismail bin Hamad Al-Jawhari (d. 393 AH), Al-Sihah; The Crown of Language and the Authentic Arabic (Beirut: Dar Al-Ilm lil-Malayin, 4th ed., 1990 CE), vol. 5, p. 41.

⁵³ Abu Mansour Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Azhari, Tahdhib al-Lughah, edited by Muhammad Awad Mur'ab (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-Arabi, 1st ed., 2001 CE), vol. 7, p. 170.

⁵⁴ See: Al-Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Al-Jami' Al-Sahih Al-Mukhtasar, edited by Dr. Mustafa Dib Al-Bagha (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir, 2nd ed., 1407 AH/1987 CE), vol. 1, p. 254. Book of Prayer, Chapter on Aligning the Rows as Part of the Prayer, Hadith no. 690.

⁵⁵ Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Fiqh Encyclopedia, vol. 2, p. 292.

hearts, they would have found much turmoil and opposition within it. However, this Quran is not such; it is from Allah⁵⁶.

Al-Shatibi pointed to the importance of this meaning, stating: 'The disagreement among those obligated in certain meanings or issues does not necessitate that there is disagreement within the issues themselves. The nations have differed regarding prophethood and in many matters of the sciences of monotheism, yet their disagreement was not evidence of actual conflict in the matters they disagreed upon. The same applies to our discussion; if this is established, it is correct to assert that the Quran itself has no disagreement within it⁵⁷.

According to Al-Sharawi, disagreement in its essence is when one soul leans toward something different from what another soul leans toward⁵⁸. This is a definition we adopt due to its validity and correctness.

Section Two: Presentation of some examples that may seem contradictory and different. Among these examples that may give the impression of conflict are the following:"

A METHODOICAL READING OF THE SCHOLARS' APPROACHES IN ADDRESSING APPARENT CONFLICTS BETWEEN TEXTS

First: Conditions for Contradiction Between Legal Texts

Scholars have outlined several conditions that must be met to rule that a contradiction exists between legal texts. These conditions are:

1. Unity of Time: This condition means that the conflicting texts must have been revealed within the same time frame. If one text was revealed in one period and the other in another, they would fall under the category of abrogation (naskh), assuming they pertain to legal rulings, and therefore, no contradiction would exist. It is an established logical principle that for contradiction to occur, the texts must share the same temporal context⁵⁹, as illustrated by the verse: "And indeed, Hell is their promised place, all of them" (Al-Hijr: 34). Abu Hayyan Al-Andalusi comments: "This is an inclination towards the view of those who argue that 'all of them' implies unity of time, but the correct interpretation is that its meaning is 'all of them'." ⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Mansour, *The Problematic Aspects of the Holy Quran* (Cairo: Dar Ibn Al-Jawzi, 1st ed., 1426 AH), p. 234.

⁵⁷ Abu Ishaq Al-Shatibi, *Al-I'tisam*. First edition: edited by Saleem bin Eid Al-Hilali (Saudi Arabia: Dar Ibn 'Iffan, 1st ed., 1412 AH). Second edition: edited by Mashhour bin Hasan Al-Suleiman (Bahrain: Library of Tawheed, 1st ed., 1421 AH), vol. 3, p. 381.

⁵⁸ Muhammad Mutawally Al-Sha'rawi, *Tafsir Al-Shaarawi* (n.p., n.p., n.d.), vol. 1, p. 881.

⁵⁹ Abu al-Hasan Taqi al-Din Ali bin Abdul Kafi Al-Subki, *Fatawa Al-Subki* (Beirut: Dar Al-Ma'rifah, n.d.), vol. 2, p. 116.

⁶⁰ Abu Hayyan Al-Andalusi, *Tafsir Al-Bahr Al-Muhit* (n.p.: Dar Al-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 5, p. 370.

2. Unity of Subject: If the subject or matter of the two texts differs, there is no contradiction. For example, marriage makes permissible (halal) the spouse, but prohibits (haram) the spouse's mother. Hence, there is no contradiction between the verse "Your women are a tilth for you, so come to your tilth as you wish" (Al-Baqarah: 223) and the verse "Prohibited to you are your mothers" up to "and the mothers of your women" (An-Nisa: 23), due to the different subjects to which permissibility and prohibition apply.

3. Existence of Difference and Opposition Between the Texts: This would imply one text affirms a matter while the other negates it, or one text declares something permissible while the other states it is forbidden. Such a situation is impossible, as the Qur'an is not the product of human intellect but rather from Allah, the Most Exalted, who possesses the most beautiful names.

4. Certainty in Both the Transmission and the Meaning of the Texts (Equality in Transmission and Meaning): For a text to be considered certain in its transmission, it must be transmitted through mutawatir (mass transmission) such as the Qur'an and mutawatir hadith, or through a continuous and authentic chain of transmission in the case of a single-chain narration (ahad). Furthermore, the meaning must be explicit and clear, so that no contradiction is presumed between the apparent meaning of one text and the clear meaning of another. The apparent meaning of a text is definitive, unlike the inferred meaning (istiqra')⁶¹.

If these conditions are met between two texts, the door to preferring one over the other would be closed, making it impossible to reconcile or choose between them. Claims of abrogation (naskh) would be refuted, as it would be evident that if the texts share unity in time, place, and subject, neither can be considered to abrogate the other. The Imam Shatibi said: The Shari'ah contains no contradiction whatsoever. Whoever truly adheres to it is in harmony with its commands, and thus, no contradiction should arise for them. For this reason, you will never find two pieces of evidence upon which all Muslims have agreed to be contradictory in such a way that would necessitate suspension of judgment. However, since individual mujtahids are not infallible and are susceptible to error, the appearance of contradiction between evidences may occur for them⁶². Additional to that, Ibn Qayyim said: As for two authentic and explicit hadiths that are completely contradictory in every aspect, with neither abrogating the other—such a case does not exist at all. And God forbid that it

⁶¹ See: Muhammad Al-Hafnawi, *Conflict and Preference among the Usuli and Its Impact on Islamic Jurisprudence* (Mansoura: Dar Al-Wafa, 4th ed., 1428 AH/2007 CE), pp. 38-40.

⁶² Abu Ishaq Ibrahim bin Musa Al-Shatibi (d. 790 AH), *Al-Muwafaqat*, Edited by: Abu Ubaidah Mashhur bin Hasan Al-Salman, Foreword by: Bakr bin Abdullah Abu Zayd, Publisher: Dar Ibn Affan, First Edition, 1417 AH / 1997 CE. Vol 5. P341.

could be found in the speech of the Truthful and Trustworthy (the Prophet ﷺ), who does not utter anything but the truth⁶³.

CAUSES OF APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS AND DIFFERENCES IN THE QURAN

1. Variability Between General and Specific Expressions

At times, Shariah texts appear in a general form, while at other times, they adopt a specific form. In certain cases, a general text is intended to be specific, or a specific text is meant to carry a broader meaning. This may create the illusion of contradiction, yet in reality, there is none.

A general term can be specified by a particular one, thus eliminating any contradiction. A general statement intended to be specific can have its specific meaning inferred from contextual clues within the text itself or through external evidence. Similarly, a specific term intended to be general can be understood in the same way.

2. The Relationship Between Absolute and Restrictive Texts

Another reason for the appearance of differences is that one text may be absolute, while another introduces restrictions or conditions. This can give the impression of inconsistency.

By interpreting the absolute in light of the restrictive, the true meaning becomes clear, eliminating any apparent contradiction. The absolute ruling is not negated but rather refined and contextualized through the restrictive text.

3. Errors in Transmission of Hadith

Sometimes, an apparent contradiction arises due to a misreporting or misunderstanding by a narrator who attributes a problematic hadith to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him).

4. Limited Comprehension of a Jurist or Scholar

At times, the perception of contradiction arises not from the text itself, but from a jurist's lack of complete understanding of the Shariah rulings. Even the Companions (may Allah

⁶³ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, (691–751 AH), *Zad al-Ma'ad fi Hady Khayr al-'Ibad*, Publisher: Dar 'Ata'at al-'Ilm (Riyadh) – Dar Ibn Hazm (Beirut), 3rd Edition, 1440 AH / 2019 CE, Vol4, P214

be pleased with them) experienced moments of misunderstanding during the Prophet's time.

For example, Umm Mubashshir reported that she heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) say in the presence of Hafsa: "None of those who pledged allegiance under the Tree will enter the Fire, if Allah wills." Hafsa responded, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah!" He rebuked her, and Hafsa recited: "And there is none of you except that he will pass over it" [Maryam: 71]. The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied by reciting the following verse: "Allah said: 'Then We will save those who feared [Allah] and leave the wrongdoers within it, kneeling'"⁶⁴ [Maryam: 72].

5. Different Contexts Leading to Different Rulings

A major reason for the impression of contradiction is that some texts refer to different circumstances and thus indicate varying rulings. This difference is not a contradiction but a reflection of the divine wisdom in addressing different situations.

For example, the ruling on alcohol. Initially, it was tolerated to drink (al-Baqarah: 219), then partially made haram (Nisa': 43), and finally made totally haram (Al-Ma'idah: 90-91)

6. Abrogation (Naskh) of Certain Texts

Another cause of apparent contradiction is when one text abrogates (replaces) another, but some jurists may not be aware of which text is abrogating (Nasikh) and which is abrogated (Mansukh). This can create the impression of a contradiction when, in reality, one ruling has replaced another as part of the evolving guidance of divine law.⁶⁵

EXAMPLES OF APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN VERSES AND THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO RESOLVE THEM

The Quran, as the holy scripture of Islam, is regarded as the ultimate source of guidance for humanity. However, at times, certain verses may appear to be contradictory when viewed superficially. These apparent contradictions often lead to questions about their coherence and unity. To address such issues, scholars have developed a methodological approach that ensures consistency and understanding of the divine message. This approach involves analyzing the context, meanings, and specific conditions of the verses to resolve

⁶⁴Narrated by Imam Muslim in his Sahih; see: Book of the Virtues of the Companions, Chapter on the Virtues of the People of the Tree of Pledge of Ridwan (may Allah be pleased with them), vol. 7, p. 169, Hadith no. 6560.

⁶⁵Al-Qasir, *The Problematic Hadiths in the Interpretation of the Quran*, pp. 37-38.

apparent discrepancies. This article explores examples of these apparent contradictions and outlines the systematic ways in which they are addressed and reconciled.

Example One: Allah SWT says:

﴿وَإِذْ وَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً﴾ [البقرة: 51]،

'And when We appointed for Moses forty nights' [Al-Baqarah: 51],

At first glance, it appears that this verse contradicts and differs from the verse of Surah al-A'raf as follows:

﴿وَوَاعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَتَمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرِ فَتَمَّ مِيقَاتُ رَبِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً﴾ [الأعراف: 14]

'And We appointed for Moses thirty nights, then We completed them with ten, so the appointment of his Lord was forty nights' [Al-A'raf: 14]. Al-

Zarkashi said that Imam Al-Hasan Al-Basri reconciled between them by stating: 'The meaning in the verse from Al-A'raf is not to be taken literally, suggesting that the promise was for thirty nights followed by ten, but rather that he was promised forty nights altogether⁶⁶.' Al-Shanqiti said: 'It is not specified here whether it was promised to him all together or separately. However, it is clarified in Surah Al-A'raf that it was separate, with an initial promise of thirty, which was then completed with ten, as stated in the verse: 'And We appointed for Moses thirty nights, then We completed them with ten, so the appointment of his Lord was forty nights' [Al-A'raf: 14].⁶⁷

'It has also been said that the verse from Al-A'raf is to be taken at face value, indicating that the promise was for thirty, followed by the completion of ten, leading to the established total of forty, and then it was mentioned in the verse from Al-Baqarah what was established⁶⁸.

To demonstrate that the Qur'an is free from contradictions, we need to understand how the verses in question relate to each other and reconcile any apparent differences in their descriptions. Below is an analysis of the verses in question with supporting evidence to prove their coherence:

Verses Under Refelctions:

⁶⁶Badr al-Din Muhammad bin Abdullah Al-Zarkashi, *Al-Burhan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an*, edited by Muhammad Abu Al-Fadl Ibrahim (Cairo: Library of Dar Al-Turath, 3rd ed., 1404 AH/1984 CE), vol. 2, p. 45.

⁶⁷ Muhammad Al-Amin bin Muhammad Al-Mukhtar Al-Shanqeeti (d. 1393 AH), *Adwa' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an bi al-Qur'an*, (Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr , 1415 AH/1995 CE), vol. 1, p. 37.

⁶⁸ Al-Zarkashi, *Al-Burhan*, vol. 2, p. 45.

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:51): “And when We appointed for Moses forty nights”.

Surah Al-A'raf (7:142): “And We appointed for Moses thirty nights, then We completed them with ten, so the appointment of his Lord was forty nights.”

Initial Observations:

At first glance, it might seem that there is a discrepancy between these two verses. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:51) states that the period of appointment was forty nights, while Surah Al-A'raf (7:142) breaks it down as thirty nights initially, followed by an additional ten nights to complete the forty.

Reconciling the Verses:

The Qur'an, when understood in its entirety and context, provides a coherent explanation that these verses are not contradictory but complementary. Here are the evidences and interpretations that resolve the apparent contradiction:

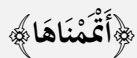
Explanation by Al-Hasan Al-Basri:

Al-Hasan Al-Basri stated that the verse in Surah Al-A'raf should not be taken to mean that the forty nights were separated into two distinct periods of thirty and ten nights. Rather, he interpreted that Moses was promised forty nights as a whole, which included both the thirty and ten nights. This means that the promise of forty nights was fulfilled through the combination of thirty and ten, not as two separate periods.

Clarification by Al-Shanqiti:

Al-Shanqiti pointed out that the verse in Surah Al-A'raf indicates that the initial promise was for thirty nights, which were then completed with an additional ten nights, confirming that the total duration was forty nights. This interpretation suggests that Surah Al-Baqarah (2:51) summarizes the overall period (forty nights) while Surah Al-A'raf (7:142) provides the breakdown of how that period was fulfilled (thirty plus ten).

The Meaning of "Completed":



The word “completed” in Surah Al-A'raf (7:142) implies that the thirty nights were not the end of the appointment but rather the starting point, which was then complemented with an

additional ten nights to reach the full forty nights. This shows that the appointment of forty nights was continuous and unified, as opposed to being separate, thus aligning with the statement in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:51).

Contextual Understanding:

When interpreting these verses, it is important to consider that the Qur'an often uses a style of repetition and elaboration. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:51) provides an overarching statement about the appointment of forty nights for Moses, while Surah Al-A'raf (7:142) offers a more detailed account, specifying that it was thirty nights initially and then completed by ten more.

Supporting Evidence:

Consistency in the Qur'anic Theme: The Qur'an often states general truths in one verse and provides more details in another. This is not a contradiction but a method to convey complete understanding.

Narrations and Scholarly Interpretations: Scholars like Al-Hasan Al-Basri and Al-Shanqiti provide explanations that reconcile the apparent differences. Their interpretations align with the Qur'anic principle that God's word is consistent and without contradiction.

The verses in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:51) and Surah Al-A'raf (7:142) do not contradict each other. Rather, they complement each other by presenting different aspects of the same event: the appointment of forty nights for Moses. Surah Al-Baqarah provides a general statement, while Surah Al-A'raf breaks it down into the stages that made up the total period. This comprehensive understanding proves that the Qur'an is free from contradictions when viewed holistically and with proper thought and reflection.

Example Two: The Creation of Adam in the Qur'an

Allah describes the creation of Adam using different terms: **dust, clay, sticky clay, and dry clay like pottery**. While these descriptions may appear varied, they actually represent different **stages** in the creation process.

For instance, Allah states about the creation of Adam in different places of the Qur'an:

﴿كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ﴾ [آل عمران: 59]

'Like Adam, He created him from dust' [Al-Imran: 59].

At another point, He said:

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا﴾ [الفرقان: 54]

'And He is the One who created from water a human being' [Al-Furqan: 54].

He also said:

﴿أَلَمْ نَخْلُقْكُمْ مِنْ مَّاءٍ مَهِينٍ﴾ [المرسلات: 20]

'Did We not create you from a despicable fluid?' [Al-Mursalat: 20].

﴿وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ طِينٍ﴾ [السجدة: 7]

'And He began the creation of man from clay' [As-Sajda: 7]

﴿إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ لَازِبٍ﴾ [الصافات: 11]

'Indeed, We created them from sticky clay' [As-Saffat: 11],

That refers to adhesive and cohesive clay. He also said:

﴿مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ﴾ [الحجر: 26]

'From dark, foul-smelling mud' [Al-Hijr: 26],

referring to black, rotten clay, and once more:

﴿خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ﴾ [الرحمن: 14]

'He created man from dry clay like pottery' [Ar-Rahman: 14],

This refers to clay baked in fire, known as earthenware, with pottery being a description of the dry clay.

These terms differ and their meanings vary, depending on the different stages of human creation. The creation of man underwent various conditions; for dust, when mixed with water, becomes wet clay. Then it is left for a period to ferment into foul-smelling, dark mud, before being left to dry into hard clay, which is the dry clay that makes a sound when struck. Pottery becomes hollow after being subjected to fire. However, they all ultimately refer back to one essence: dust, from which these conditions gradually progressed⁶⁹.

It is also stated that Allah said in the creation of people:

⁶⁹ See: Al-Zarkashi, vol. 2, p. 54.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى﴾ 'O mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female' [Al-Hujurat: 13]. This noble verse indicates that the creation of mankind began from a male and a female. However, other verses indicate their creation from different origins, such as Allah's saying: ﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ﴾ 'He is the One who created you from dust' [Ghafir: 67].

The answer is clear: dust is the initial stage of creation. Allah said: ﴿وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا﴾ [14:نوح]'And He has created you in stages' [Nuh: 14]. Allah has detailed the stages of human creation from its beginning to its end with His saying: ﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ﴾ [13 [12:المؤمنون]] ﴿نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ﴾ And indeed, We created man from a extract of clay, then We made him a sperm drop in a firm lodging' [Al-Mu'minun: 12-13]."

Addressing the Perceived Contradiction:

The apparent contradiction between these descriptions can be resolved by understanding that they do not refer to separate, conflicting origins; but rather to different stages or aspects of the same creation process. Here's how:

Stages of Creation:

The Qur'an describes the creation of man as occurring in stages. In Surah Al-Mu'minun (12-13), it states: "And indeed, We created man from an extract of clay, then We made him a sperm drop in a firm lodging." This verse highlights the initial creation from clay, which is the first stage.

The term "dust" (turab) and "clay" (tine) can be seen as different stages of the same material. Dust, when mixed with water, becomes clay, which later can evolve into sticky mud and eventually hardens into dry clay or pottery after it undergoes further stages.

Different Descriptions for Different Conditions:

The Qur'an's varied descriptions reflect different conditions of the material at various points. For instance:

"From sticky clay" [As-Saffat: 11] and "dark, foul-smelling mud" [Al-Hijr: 26] refer to the state after the mixture becomes wet and ferments.

"Dry clay like pottery" [Ar-Rahman: 14] refers to the clay after it has dried and hardened, becoming more like baked pottery.

Unity of Essence:

All these descriptions ultimately point back to the same essence: the initial material that began as dust. This essence undergoes changes that are described in these different terms, highlighting various stages of the creation process.

The verse “And He has created you in stages” [Nuh: 14] confirms this understanding, indicating that creation is a gradual process.

Clarifying the Verse About Creation from Male and Female:

The verse “O mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female” [Al-Hujurat: 13] does not contradict the earlier descriptions but adds a detail about human procreation and the continuation of humanity. This verse emphasizes the process through which humans are created after Adam's initial creation, which is described in other verses.

The Qur'an's verses on the creation of Adam and humanity are not contradictory but rather complementary when examined as descriptions of different stages of the same process. The different stages—from dust, clay, and water to various forms like sticky clay and dry pottery—represent the progression of creation. The essence of creation remains consistent, indicating that these verses collectively show a coherent, step-by-step process rather than an irreconcilable contradiction.

Third Example: Allah SWT says:

قوله تعالى: ﴿وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا﴾ [مریم: 71].

There is not one of you but will pass over it; this is upon your Lord an inevitability decreed." [Maryam: 71]

This noble verse indicates that all people will inevitably pass over the Fire. However, another verse indicates that some people will be kept far away from it, not even hearing its sound. Allah says:

﴿أُولَئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا﴾ [الأنبياء: 101-102]

Those will be removed far from it. They will not hear its slightest sound⁷⁰.

⁷⁰ Al-Shanqeeti, *Refuting the Illusion of Contradiction in the Verses of the Book*, p. 150.

The response, as mentioned by Al-Alusi and others, is that the meaning of Allah's words "removed far from it" refers to being kept away from the torment and suffering of the Fire.⁷¹

It has also been said that the intended meaning is their removal from the Fire after being near it. The first interpretation is supported by a narration reported by Imam Ahmad, Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Al-Mundhir, Al-Hakim (who authenticated it), and others, from Abu Samiyyah. He said:

*"We differed regarding the concept of 'passing over it.' Some of us said: A believer will not enter it. Others said: All will enter it, and then Allah will save those who were righteous. I met Jabir bin Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) and mentioned this to him. He said—pointing with his two fingers to his ears: 'May my ears be deaf if I did not hear the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) say: 'There will not remain a righteous or wicked person except that they will enter it. However, it will be coolness and safety upon the believers, just as it was for Ibrahim (peace be upon him), to the extent that the Fire will make a roaring sound due to its coolness upon them. Then Allah will save those who were righteous.'"*⁷²

A group of narrators reported from Ibn Mas'ud that the "passing over the Fire" refers to "crossing over it."⁷³ This is because people pass over the Sirat, which is a bridge set over the surface of Hell. 'Abd bin Humaid, Ibn Al-Anbari, and Al-Bayhaqi narrated from Al-Hasan that the "passing over" refers to crossing over it without entering it.⁷⁴ This was also narrated from Qatadah, as mentioned by Al-Alusi⁷⁵ Those who argued that the "passing over" refers to actual entry provided evidence⁷⁶

Those who argued that "passing over" means being near it without entering it cited the verse:

﴿وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَاءَ مَدْيَنَ﴾ [القصص: 23]

"And when he arrived at the water of Madyan..."⁷⁷.

⁷¹ Mahmoud Al-Alusi Abu Al-Fadl, *Tafsir al-Alusi*, (Beirut: Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-Arabi, n.d.), vol. 16, p. 122.

⁷² Abdul Azim Al-Mundhiri Abu Muhammad, *Al-Tarhib wa al-Tarhib*, edited by Ibrahim Shams Al-Din (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, 1st ed., 1417 AH), vol. 4, p. 231, Hadith no. 5491, narrated by Ahmad with trustworthy narrators, and Al-Bayhaqi with a good chain.

⁷³ Muhammad Abdul Rahman bin Abdul Rahim Al-Mubarakfuri Abu Al-Ala, *Tuhfat al-Aḥwadhī bi-Sharḥ Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, n.d.), vol. 8, p. 481. And see: Al-Shanqeeti, vol. 3, p. 481. And see: Al-Shanqeeti, *Refuting the Illusion of Contradiction in the Verses of the Book*, p. 150.

⁷⁴ *Tafsir Al-Alusi*, vol. 16, p. 122.

⁷⁵ Al-Shanqeeti, *Refuting the Illusion of Contradiction in the Verses of the Book*, pp. 150-151.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 151.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 151.

After analyzing and discussing these two verses, it can be established that the Qur'an is free from contradiction. The response to apparent contradiction is that the phrase "removed far from it" in Surah Al-Anbiya refers to being kept away from the suffering of the Fire, not from passing over it. This means that while all people will cross over the Fire (as mentioned in Surah Maryam), those who are righteous will be spared from its heat and torment, making their experience different from that of the wicked. The seeming conflict between the two verses is resolved by understanding that while all individuals will pass over the Fire, those who are righteous will be protected from its torment. This interpretation aligns with the consistent message in the Qur'an that the righteous are rewarded with safety and protection by Allah.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we summarize the key findings that the researchers have reached in this paper as follows:

The Book of Allah, the Almighty, is free from contradiction and discrepancy. However, it may seem to the reader that there is an apparent conflict or contradiction in some verses, which is an illusion.

A. The perceived contradiction between verses of the Qur'an is resolved, and what may appear as a contradiction is only due to one's own understanding and not because the Qur'an itself is contradictory. Any rational believer knows that there is no place for contradiction in the Book of Allah, as Allah, the Exalted, says: "Do they not reflect upon the Qur'an? Had it been from other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction" [An-Nisa: 82]. Contradiction and discrepancy are traits of imperfect, weak humans. The Qur'an holds a position of divine honor and distinction, adorned with the most beautiful attributes ascribed by Allah. He has safeguarded it from any alteration or contradiction, preserving its perfection for all time.

B. Reflecting on the context of the verses and seeking the understanding of scholars is essential for correct comprehension. Numerous works have been authored by Muslim scholars to dispel apparent contradictions and differences in the Qur'an. Allah, whose name is the Wise, is characterized by perfect wisdom, free from any futility in His actions and speech. If one does not grasp the wisdom behind His actions or words, they should reflect on it, asking Allah for assistance and understanding and seeking the guidance of scholars. If Allah grants understanding, that is good; otherwise, one should leave it to Allah.

C. Correct understanding of the Qur'an is only attainable for those who possess the means of comprehension, which are numerous, including knowledge of the language in which the Qur'an was revealed and the method of the predecessors in interpreting the Book. If one's knowledge is deficient in some of these areas, doubts and ambiguities may arise in their heart.

D. The Arabs at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) were masters of the Arabic language, highly eloquent and expressive. The Qur'an challenged them in many verses to match its exalted style, but they were unable to do so, nor did it ever occur to them to make claims of contradictions in the Qur'an. They were meticulously discerning and vigilant in searching for any flaw in the Qur'an. This indicates the ignorance that prevails in the minds of those who raise such objections, as they are unaware that their objections reveal their ignorance and lack of knowledge.

The notion of apparent contradiction and discrepancy is not a modern issue. Some companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and early scholars found it difficult to understand certain verses, and scholars and esteemed imams addressed and resolved these misunderstandings to dispel contradictions and discrepancies.

Scholars have established rules for prioritizing and resolving apparent contradictions and discrepancies, such as understanding abrogation, the chronological order of verses, Meccan and Medinan distinctions, and the meanings of expressions, among other rules that assist the reader in understanding what appears confusing and dispelling what is ambiguous.

The variety in words, surahs, and recitations within the Qur'an does not indicate disparity, contradiction, or conflict between them, as it is a divine revelation from Allah, the Almighty.

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