



A Value-Based Approach to Qur'anic Exegesis: A Study of Qur'anic Address in Surah Luqman

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Abstract

This study explores the value-based approach in Qur'anic exegesis through a case study of the Qur'anic address to humanity in Surah Luqman (31:33). It seeks to conceptualize this approach as a distinct interpretive perspective that focuses on identifying and elucidating the Islamic values embedded in Qur'anic discourse, whether explicitly or implicitly. The study employs a deductive method to extract values from the selected verse, a descriptive method to classify and organize these values, and an analytical method to examine their contemporary relevance and practical implications. The findings propose a definition of value-based exegesis as an interpretive orientation that highlights the value dimensions of Qur'anic verses to facilitate their contextual understanding and application. The analysis identifies thirteen values within the verse, consisting of eight positive and five negative values, which collectively provide ethical and educational guidance for individuals and society. The study further demonstrates the potential of a value-based approach to contribute to character formation, value-based education, and the practical engagement of contemporary Muslims with Qur'anic teachings. These findings suggest that the value dimension of the Qur'an constitutes a promising area for further exegetical research across a broader range of Qur'anic texts.

Keywords: Value-based approach, Qur'anic address, Surah Luqman, Islamic values.



INTRODUCTION

An observer of trends in exegesis will notice significant diversity in interpreting the Noble Qur'an. We find some works taking a linguistic approach, others a doctrinal approach, a third a jurisprudential approach, a fourth a purposive (maqāsidī) direction, and a fifth following an allusive (ishārī) method, among other exegetical trends (Al-Rūmī, 1997).

What is remarkable, however, is the absence of pure value-based exegetical works. Perhaps this gap is the primary motivation for writing this article, which aims to direct researchers' attention to this exegetical style, especially since it is closely linked to people's lives. It directly addresses human behavior, attempting to elevate it on the ladder of positive values across their various classifications, and distancing it from negative values in all their domains.

Surah Luqman holds a distinguished position in the Qur'anic discourse as a chapter named after a non-prophetic sage, making it a primary text for understanding the Islamic conception of wisdom (ḥikmah) and its practical manifestation in human life (Ibn Kathīr, n.d.). Within this surah, verse 33 appears in the form of divine address to all humanity with the phrase "O mankind" (Yā ayyuhā al-nās), making it particularly suitable for value-based analysis that transcends sectarian or jurisprudential boundaries.

The research problem is summarized in the feasibility of interpreting the Qur'an through a value-based lens via a practical application on the verse of the Qur'anic address to humanity in Surah Luqman. This main problem branches into the following questions: What is meant by the value-based approach in exegesis? What is the practical methodology for value-based exegesis? How can the verse of the Qur'anic address to humanity in Surah Luqman be interpreted within the framework of the value-based approach?

The research aims to clarify the concept of the value-based approach in exegesis and provide a value-based interpretation of the Qur'anic address verse in Surah Luqman.

After research and investigation, I have not found within the scope of my knowledge any study addressing the topic: "The Value-Based Approach in Exegesis through Practical Application on the Verse of the Qur'anic Address to Humanity in Surah Luqman." However, there is a related study by Dr. Fatimah bint Omar Nasif titled: "Let Us Live by the Qur'an: The Value-Based Interpretation of the Noble Qur'an" (2017), which attempts to apply value-based interpretation to Surahs Al-Fatihah, Al-Baqarah, and Al 'Imran. However, it lacks any clarification of the concept of value-based exegesis. Hence, this research sought to provide a qualitative addition represented in proposing a definition for the value-based approach in exegesis and a practical application on the verse of Surah Luqman.

The nature of the research necessitated following the deductive method to deduce values from the verse, especially those requiring contemplation, and the descriptive-analytical method evident in defining and explaining the concept of value-based exegesis, then analyzing, explaining, and commenting on the derived values.

The research plan consists of an introduction, a preamble, a main section, and a conclusion. The preamble defines the key concepts forming the title, while the main section provides the applied study on the verse of the Qur'anic address to humanity in Surah Luqman

METHOD

The methodology employed in this research follows the qualitative textual analysis framework commonly utilized in Qur'anic studies. The

approach is structured to systematically extract and categorize values embedded within the selected Qur'anic verse.

The research adopts a threefold methodological approach. First, the deductive method is employed to derive and reconstruct ethical values embedded in the Qur'anic address within the selected verse. This involves careful reading and contemplation of the text to identify both explicit commands and implicit indications of value systems (Al-Ahdab, 2022). Second, the descriptive method is utilized to define and classify the identified values into positive and negative categories. Third, the analytical method is applied to examine these values, explain their significance, and contextualize them in relation to contemporary realities and human behavior.

The primary source for analysis is verse 33 of Surah Luqman. Classical exegetical works including those of Al-Ṭabarī (2000), Al-Qurṭubī (1964), and Ibn Kathīr (n.d.) are consulted to understand the linguistic and contextual dimensions of the verse. Modern commentaries and value studies provide additional perspectives for the analysis.

The analysis proceeds through two stages. The first stage provides explanation of key vocabulary and the general meaning of the verse to establish the foundation for value extraction. The second stage identifies and discusses the specific values derived from the verse, supported by textual evidence from the Qur'an and prophetic traditions where relevant.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Preamble: Defining Key Concept

This preamble includes defining the most important terms of the research title, as follows:

1. The Concept of "Approach" (Ittijāh)

Linguistically, "ittijāh" carries several meanings, including: opinion, direction, path, and method. In the terminology of researchers in the field of exegesis, Dr. Fahd Al-Rūmī (1997) defined it as: "The goal that exegetes direct themselves towards in their exegeses, keeping it before their eyes as they write." From my perspective, it can be defined as: An organized system expressing the researcher's inclination and goal in approaching a subject.

2. The Concept of "Values" (Qiyam)

Reviewing the root (q-w-m) in linguistic dictionaries refers to meanings including: uprightness, moderation, justice, worth, steadfastness, preservation, and reform. Islamic values can be briefly defined as: The totality of principles, ideals, standards, and rational, emotional, and behavioral choices based on Islamic reference. It is worth noting here that the origin of values is positive; however, the Noble Qur'an may forbid and warn us against negative values, which their adherents might mistakenly believe are positive. Therefore, this study adopts the approach of those who classify values based on the positive/negative dichotomy.

3. Ibn Manzūr (n.d.) states in *Lisān al-'Arab*: "Al-tafsīr: uncovering the intended meaning from a problematic expression." Imam Al-Zarkashī (1957) defined it as a science "through which the Book of God revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is understood, its meanings clarified, its rulings and wisdom extracted." Based on the above, tafsīr is clarifying what is intended by the speech of God Almighty.

4. The Concept of the Value-Based Approach in Exegesis

After clarifying the terms separately, we formulate an operational definition for the value-based approach in exegesis as intended by the current study: It is the exegete's inclination to clarify Qur'anic verses from the perspective of the Islamic values they contain, explicitly or implicitly. It is an exegesis concerned with studying verses of values, giving them special attention. Thus, the task of value-based exegesis is limited to tracking and surveying value-based verses, clarifying the ideals and values they encompass, which the Noble Qur'an aims to instill in the hearts of its readers. It is not necessary for the Qur'an to explicitly state these values; they can be understood implicitly and allusively.

5. Verses of the Qur'anic Address to Humanity

By "verses of the Qur'anic address to humanity" are meant those verses in which God Almighty addresses all people with the phrase "O people" (Yā ayyuhā al-nās).

Value-Based Exegesis of the Qur'anic Address Verse to Humanity in Surah Luqman

In Surah Luqman, one verse appears in the form "O people" (Yā ayyuhā al-nās), which is His saying, the Exalted:

"O mankind, fear your Lord and dread a Day when no parent can avail their child, nor can a child avail their parent at all. Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver." [Luqman: 33]

First Requirement: Explanation of Vocabulary and General Meaning

- "And dread a day": Fear the Day of Resurrection.
- "Can avail" (yajzi): Cannot benefit/profit.

- "Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth": Meaning resurrection and reckoning.
- "The Deceiver" (al-gharūr): With fathāh it refers to Satan; with ḍammah it means the deception of this world and its falsehoods (Al-Ṭabarī, 2000).

The verse contains two commands, two prohibitions, and between them an assertion. The two commands relate to fearing God Almighty and dreading meeting Him on the Day of Resurrection. The two prohibitions are: a prohibition against being deceived by worldly life, and a prohibition against being deceived by Satan's whispers. The assertion relates to informing about the reality of the Day of Resurrection and Recompense.

Second Requirement: Derived Values

The thirty-third verse of Surah Luqman contains four positive values and four negative values, which are examined in detail.

Table 1. Positive and Negative Values in Surah Luqman

No	Positive Values	Negative Values
1	God-Consciousness (Taqwā)	Reliance on Lineage for Salvation
2	Fear (Khashyah)	Deception by Worldly Life
3	Responsibility	Surrender to Satan
4	Fulfilling Promises	False Hope and Procrastination

Sub-section One: The Value of God-Consciousness (Taqwā)

His saying, the Exalted, "O mankind, fear your Lord" affirms the value of taqwā, which is among the greatest values in the Islamic system. It is linked with the word "Lord" (Rabb), indicating that it is the servant's duty to fear his Master and Lord. Just as in this world a servant or employee is

cautious and fears what angers his master or employer, God is more deserving of this fear.

The essence of taqwā is for a person to place a barrier between himself and God's punishment, represented in complying with His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. Imam Al-Muḥāsibī (n.d.) defined it as: "Performing what God Almighty has made obligatory for the sake of God, and abandoning what God Almighty has forbidden for the sake of God."

Let us reflect that those addressed by taqwā in the verse are all people, believers and disbelievers alike. Therefore, the manifestations of taqwā differ between the believer and the disbeliever; for the disbeliever, the command to fear is directed towards protecting himself from disbelief and polytheism initially, while for the believer it extends to avoiding everything that brings God's anger and displeasure (Al-Māturīdī, 2005).

Sub-section Two: The Value of Fear (Khashyah)

The value of fear is derived from His saying, the Exalted, "and dread a Day." God commands us with an order that implies a warning, meaning that we should fear meeting Him on the Day of Resurrection. Fear of something compels a person to prepare for it to face it. God Almighty provided us at the beginning of the verse with the method of preparation for such a day, which is taqwā.

The value of fear (khashyah) is required, which is fear of God Almighty and dread of meeting Him; because this fear is the motivator and incentive to take caution and do everything that pleases God Almighty. It is the bridge to reaching the security that the believers hope for, those "who forsake their beds, supplicating their Lord in fear and aspiration" [Al-Sajdah: 16].

Sub-section Three: Reliance on Lineage for Salvation in the Hereafter - A Negative Value

His saying, the Exalted, "and dread a Day when no parent can avail their child, nor can a child avail their parent at all" means that neither parent nor child will benefit each other on the Day of Resurrection; each is tied to his own deeds, held accountable for his actions.

Imam Al-Ṭabarī (2000) says: "Fear that His wrath may befall you on a day when a parent cannot avail his child, nor can a child avail his parent at all; because the matter there will be in the hands of One who cannot be overpowered, and intercession and means will not benefit before Him, except the means of righteous deeds performed earlier in this world."

This verse teaches us an important value in man's relationship with his Lord: to rely on himself in pleasing Him, the Exalted, and not to rely on his lineage and kinship for salvation in the Hereafter. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "He whose deeds are slow will not be hastened by his lineage" (Muslim, n.d.). The value of self-reliance and not resorting to lineage should extend to our worldly life to achieve the principle of equal opportunity and equality among people.

Sub-section Four: The Value of Responsibility

If His saying, the Exalted, "and dread a Day when no parent can avail their child, nor can a child avail their parent at all" indicates the invalidity of ransom in the Hereafter, then it alerts us to the value of responsibility, without which life cannot be organized. Every individual will stand in the position of the accountable. He, the Exalted, said: "Stop them; indeed, they are to be questioned" [Al-Şāffāt: 24].

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "The feet of a servant will not move on the Day of Resurrection until he is asked about his lifespan: how he

spent it; his knowledge: what he did with it; his wealth: where he earned it and on what he spent it; and his body: how he used it" (Al-Tirmidhī, n.d.). No one will bear the burdens of another, so let us make good choices and decisions because we are responsible for them.

Sub-section Five: The Value of Fulfilling Promises

The value of fulfilling promises is inferred from His saying, the Exalted, "Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth." The indication for this value is describing God's promise as true and truthful. This description is repeated often in the Qur'an, such as His saying: "And the promise of my Lord was true" [Al-Kahf: 98].

Accordingly, a person must have a share of this truthfulness in promises. It is known that keeping promises is a value beloved to all people. We all dislike and despise breaking promises, which is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) counted it among the traits of hypocrisy. From Abū Hurayrah: The Messenger of God (peace be upon him) said: "The signs of the hypocrite are three: When he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he breaks it; and when he is entrusted, he betrays" (Al-Bukhārī, 2001).

Sub-section Six: Deception by Worldly Life - A Negative Value

Since God Almighty informed us that His promise is true and that the Hour is coming without doubt, He warned us against being deceived by worldly life and its pleasures and desires. He, the Exalted, said: "so let not the worldly life delude you." The wise and intelligent person is the one who is aware of the matter of this world, is not deceived by its mirage, and does not give it more than its due worth. He makes it a bridge and a path to cross to the Hereafter, and a farm where he sows righteous deeds.

The reality of this world, which we forget or choose to ignore, is as its Creator described it: "Know that the life of this world is but amusement and

diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children" [Al-Ḥadīd: 20]. How excellent are the words of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may God be pleased with him): "O world, deceive someone else! Your lifespan is short, your danger is little. Alas for the lack of provision, the long journey, and the loneliness of the path!" (Al-Qurṭubī, 1964).

Sub-section Seven: Surrender to Satan - A Negative Value

This negative value is taken from God's prohibition: "and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver." Al-gharūr, as explained by Imams Mujāhid and Al-Ḍaḥḥāk, is Satan (Al-Ṭabarī, 2000). The verse prohibits us from obeying Satan in his deception and whispers, for he is the avowed enemy of the children of Adam. He, the Exalted, said: "Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy. He only invites his party to be among the companions of the Blaze" [Fāṭir: 6]. Therefore, surrender to Satan is a negative value that will bring calamity upon a person in this life and the next.

Sub-section Eight: False Hope and Procrastination - Two Negative Values

The exegetes mentioned another meaning for al-gharūr in His saying, the Exalted, "and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver," which is "false hope and procrastination." The meaning of false hope is explained by the statement of Imam Saʿīd ibn Jubayr: "That you commit sin and hope for forgiveness" (Al-Qurṭubī, 1964). The Prophet (peace be upon him) considered this type of hope to be incapacity and laziness. He said: "The wise person is he who holds himself accountable and works for what is after death; and the incapable person is he who follows his desires and wishes upon God [without action]" (Al-Tirmidhī, n.d.).

Unfortunately, this is the reality for many of us. We only remember His saying: "Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful" [Al-Shūrā: 5] and forget His saying: "Indeed, Allah is Powerful and severe in penalty" [Al-Anfāl: 52], even though God combined forgiveness and punishment in one verse so that Satan would not deceive us.

Another meaning of false hope mentioned by Imam Al-Zamakhsharī (1998) is: "Remembering your good deeds and forgetting your bad deeds." This is our condition: we remember our good deeds and praises and overlook our bad deeds and faults. The value of procrastination is negative in all fields, not only in religious life but even on the level of practical life. We find many people living their lives with a methodology of procrastination: they are late for appointments, delay completing tasks, and are negligent in fulfilling the rights of others.

CONCLUSION

The value-based approach in exegesis is defined as the exegete's tendency to explain Qur'anic verses through the perspective of the Islamic values contained within them, whether explicitly or implicitly. This approach holds significant importance because it contributes to value-based education, shapes human behavior, and helps embody the teachings of the Qur'an in practical life. Therefore, exegesis serves not only as an explanation of textual meaning but also as a means of developing moral character and ethical awareness in society.

The Qur'anic address to humanity in Surah Luqman contains eight major values, consisting of four positive and four negative values. The positive values include God-consciousness (taqwā), fear of Allah (khashyah), responsibility, and fulfilling promises. Meanwhile, the negative values

warned against are reliance on lineage for salvation in the Hereafter, deception by worldly life, surrender to Satan, and false hope accompanied by procrastination. The verse demonstrates that true wisdom, as exemplified by Luqman, lies in the integration of sound theological understanding with practical ethical conduct, sustained by an awareness of ultimate accountability in the Hereafter

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