

QURANIC STORIES: OBJECTIVES, CHARACTERISTICS, AND WISDOM OF THEIR REPETITION

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Abstract

This article explores the proposed objectives, encompassing the portrayal of educational, ethical, and missionary goals within Quranic stories, as well as the pretense of rhetorical elements and stylistic beauty in the Quran, achieved through an analysis of its storytelling methods. The study delves into key topics, including the linguistic and terminological interpretation of the term "Qasas" (stories) based on insights from linguistic scholars and Quranic experts. Additionally, it thoroughly examines the diverse types of Quranic stories concerning content and themes. The unique qualities and attributes of Quranic stories, such as divinity, appropriateness, reality, balance, and communicative nature, are discussed separately. Moreover, the article presents a detailed exposition of fifteen significant objectives underlying Quranic stories. It also investigates the wisdom behind their repetition, exploring its philosophy under sixteen subheadings and culminating in a comprehensive summary of the discussion.

Keywords: Story, Quran, Objectives, Characteristics, Wisdom, Repetition

Introduction

The Holy Qur'an is a book of miracles and wisdom of the Lord, which is a beacon of guidance and a lamp that illuminates the darkness of misguidance and ignorance. It has been revealed to the last of the prophets Mohammad son of Abdullah, peace be upon him; the purpose of the revelation of the Qur'an has been explained by the language of the Qur'an itself:

﴿الرَّكَّاتُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ﴾⁽¹⁾

Translation: (Qur'an) is a book that we sent down to you to bring people out of darkness (disbelief and polytheism) to the light (faith), by the permission of their Lord, to the path of the Most Merciful.

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The themes of the Noble Quran, as interpreted by scholars of exegesis and Quranic experts, encompass various subjects such as commands, prohibitions, promises, threats, news, parables, descriptions of Paradise and Hell, stories, and more. Quranic stories constitute a significant portion of these themes, constituting around one-fourth or one-sixth of the Noble Quran, depending on differing opinions. While these stories appear to be narratives of the histories, situations, and events related to past nations and individuals, they are not merely historical accounts but carry diverse objectives and unique characteristics. Moreover, some of these stories are repeated in one or more chapters, and the reasons behind these repetitions will be discussed and analyzed with the help of Allah's guidance in this writing.

Research Questions: This research addresses the following questions regarding Quranic stories:

1. What objectives do Quranic stories pursue?
2. What characteristics do Quranic stories possess?
3. How are Quranic stories categorized into different types?
4. What is the wisdom and philosophy behind the repetition of Quranic stories?
5. How do Quranic stories differ from historical narratives?

Research Objectives: The research on Quranic stories, which constitute a significant part of the themes of the Noble Quran, holds great importance and is a purposeful endeavor. This research aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Presenting the fictionalization of educational, ethical, and missionary objectives within Quranic stories.
2. Emphasizing that Quranic stories are not mere historical narratives of past nations and peoples but contain numerous instructive messages and lessons.
3. Highlighting unique characteristics and distinctive features found only in these stories.
4. Demonstrating some of the miraculous aspects of the Quran evident in the structure and eloquence of the story narratives.
5. Explaining the profound wisdom and philosophy behind the repetition of Quranic stories.
6. Revealing the rhetorical aspects and stylistic beauty of the Quran through the analysis of its storytelling methods.
7. Elucidating the ultimate consequences of polytheism, disbelief, and atheism, leading to downfall and severe punishment in this world and the hereafter.
8. Clarifying the position of monotheism and the believers, along with the followers of the prophets, as victorious in this world and destined for paradise in the hereafter – as reflected in the themes of these stories.

With this in mind, the research will delve into the core subject matter and, in order to examine all aspects comprehensively, will be divided into the following topics:

The First Topic: Concept of Qessa (story):

1- The concept of Qessa (story) in the word: Qessa (story) means present, news, honor, work, report, story, hadith and story that is written, and its plural is Qesas and Aqasis.² Moin has also stated the meaning of qessa (story) as follows: 1- anecdote, story. 2- News, hadith. 3- Expression of the present and state of affairs. 4- Petition, expressing the status, speech³) and (Qessa) means story in the dictionary of terms.⁴ Al-Mujam ul-Wasit said about the literal meaning of the qessa (story): "القصة" رواها" the qessa (story) he told,, it is said "قص عليه الرؤيا" that he narrated the dream to him: he told him his dream and "استقصه" Istaqasse means that he asked him to inform about the person who committed a crime, "الأقصوة : القصة الصغيرة" al-Aqsusa: the small story, "القاص الذي يروي القصة على وجهها والذي يصنع القصة" al-Qas, the one who tells the story in its true form and the one who creates story.⁵

In the Al-Mujam ul-Ma'ani Al-Jami', the literal meaning of qessa is as follows:

"القصص لغة مصدر قص وهو تتبع الخبر وجمعه ونقله وسرده واعلامه"⁶ Al Qessas is the infinitive of qassa, and it means following and asking for news, collecting of that and its transmission, mentioning and informing of it.

2- Idiomatic Meaning of Qessa (Story): The author of Al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an said about the definition of story: "القصص: الأخبار المتتابعة"⁷ Al qessas (stories) are the news that are followed and tracked. , and Manavi said about the definition of qessa (story): "القصص: تتبع الوقائع بالإخبار عنها شيئاً بعد شيئاً على ترتيبها في معنى قص الأثر"⁸ Qessas (story): is the following of events, incidents, and events with their passage, that has gradually taken place one after another;, and the qessa is in the meaning of Qass ul-Athar (it is taken from it) and it means following the footprints and traces of footsteps until it leads to the place where the owner of the steps is located. Dr. Suleiman Al-Ashqar says about the definition of the qessa (story): "إنها فن حكاية الحوادث والأعمال بأسلوب لغوي ينتهي إلى غرض مقصود"⁹ It means that qessa (story) is the art of telling the story of events. And the actions in the literal style lead to the intended purpose. That is, story is the art of narrating events and actions with a lexical style that leads to the desired goal.

Razi says:

"إنها مجموع الكلام المشتمل على ما يهدى الى الدين ويرشد الى الحق ويأمر بطلب النجاة"¹⁰

It means that qessa is the collection of the words that consist of issues which guide towards religion and the truth, and give orders to those who seek salvation.

From all past definitions, a specific definition that includes the salient points of all past definitions can be mentioned for qessa (story): Qessa (story) is a speech that tells about new events and past news that is not related to a specific time and limited to a specific lexical style in order to achieve a desired goal.

The Second Topic: Types of Quranic Stories:

When we look closely at the concept of Qur'anic stories, we find that the Qur'anic stories are divided into three types:

1. The stories of the Prophets, peace be upon them. In these stories the call of the Prophets and the miracles that Allah Almighty gave to confirm them, the position of their opponents from their nations who did not believe in them but opposed them, the stages of the call and its development, and the end of those who believed in them and those who denied them, have been discussed. For example, the stories of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, peace be upon them, and other prophets, such as Yaqub, Yusuf, Zakaria, Yahya, peace be upon them, and other prophets, that the story of some of them with detail and some of them briefly mentioned in the holy Quran.
2. Stories and anecdotes related to past events and incidents and their news and situations have been discussed, such as the story of those who left their cities for fear of death while their number reached thousands, and like the story of Talot and Goliath, the story of The children of Adam and the story of the Companions of the Cave, Zul-Qarnain, Qarun, Companions of Saturday, Maryam, Companions of the Akhdod, etc. Some of these stories are mentioned in detail and some are a little brief in the Holy Quran.
3. Stories and anecdotes related to the incidents and events that happened during the time of the Messenger of Allah, Mohammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as the Battle of Badr, Ahud, Hunain, Tabuk, Ahzab, and the story of the migration and Al- Isra and Al- Miraj of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, which is mentioned in the Qur'an Karim. It must be said that Quranic stories can never be separated from these three types. ⁽¹¹⁾

The Third Topic: Characteristics of Quranic Stories:

Undoubtedly, Quranic stories differ significantly from human-made stories. They do not conform to the usual patterns and methods found in human stories, where events and incidents are often invented, and their styles and approaches are mundane, with achieving only a few of their intended objectives. Moreover, the primary purpose of human-made stories is often not to convey goodness or serve a profound purpose. However, Quranic stories are characterized by the following distinct features:

1. **Divinity:** Divinity is one of the characteristics of Quranic stories, and this attribute persists until the Day of Resurrection, as Allah Almighty has guaranteed the protection and preservation of His divine book. Therefore, Quranic stories are of divine origin,

revealed by the Creator of the worlds, and remain immune from any form of distortion.

2. **Balance:** Another characteristic of Quranic stories is maintaining balance in all affairs, in Quranic stories, excesses on one side and negligence on the other are not seen. In fact, maintaining balance means achieving success in this world and the hereafter, as Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَاتَّبِعْ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنَ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾ (12)

Translation: and seek by means of what Allah has given you the future abode, and do not neglect your portion of this world, and do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you, and do not seek to make mischief in the land, surely Allah does not love the mischief-makers.

3. **Reality:** One of the other characteristics of the stories of the Holy Qur'an is that they are real; It means that the stories that are mentioned in the Quran are true and have a real existence, the verses of the Holy Quran do not interact with intellectual concepts that do not exist in the real world, because the Holy Quran discusses the history of the Prophets, peace be upon them, and the past nations which all are the facts that happened in the past, and the Qur'an has mentioned them for the high educational purposes, and these stories carry the ways of spreading the call to God, lessons and admonitions for the Prophet and the believers, as Almighty Allah says:

﴿وَكُلًّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَجَاءَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾¹³

Translation: and all we relate to you of the accounts of the messengers is to strengthen your heart therewith; and in this has come to you the truth and an admonition, and a reminder to the believers

The Qur'an mentions the incidents and events of the past without bias and without decreasing and increasing and highlights the objective side of the story in a clear way, for example, it says about the story of the Companions of the Cave:

﴿وَحُنَّ نَفُصٌ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَرَدَّنَاهُمْ هُدًى﴾¹⁴

Translation: we relate to you their story (the story of the Companions of the Cave) with the truth; surely they were youths who believed in their lord and we increased them in guidance.

This interpretation shows that the story is true and has come true; and the narration is not based on imagination, so both the narration and the quote are right, and thus it is understood that one of the characteristics of the Quranic stories is that they are real and their results are actual.⁽¹⁵⁾

4. **Positiveness:** It means that the positiveness of the stories of the Holy Quran is one of their characteristics. The texts of the verses of the Quranic stories always encourage

people to work continuously in all aspects of life; they call to reform the affairs of this world and to be saved in the hereafter.

The call of the Prophets (peace be upon them) was an explicit and clear invitation for goodness and guidance, and for the establishment of trustworthiness in interaction and social reform. Allah Almighty says about the story of Shoaib (peace be upon him):

﴿وَيَا قَوْمِ أَوْفُوا الْمِكْيَالَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ﴾ (16)

Translation: and, oh my people! Give full measure and weight fairly, and defraud not men their things, and do not act corruptly in the land, making mischief.

With careful attention to this story, several positive points can be observed:

A. Justice in commercial transactions, observing fairness and justice in all matters, especially in business dealings, is of utmost importance and necessity.

B. Avoiding the violation of rights, both material and spiritual, as Islam strongly rejects any form of unjust and negative actions.

C. Prohibition of corruption in all its forms and rejecting any involvement in corruption and destruction on Earth, which is clearly emphasized and accepted in the story of Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him).

5. Introduction to Foresight: The characteristics of the stories of the Holy Quran are that in the Quran, the end of a story is revealed from the beginning; and the story from the very beginning; follows its normal routine; It goes step by step; until it ends. What an elegance and beauty that the reader knows the end from the beginning, while seeing the overall result, various questions make his mind curious and call him to follow from many angles, for example, we read the story of Moses and Pharaoh in Surah Qasas, which at the beginning; Allah says about Pharaoh's performance in short and miraculous sentences:

﴿إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يَتَّبِعُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحِبُّ نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾ (17)

Translation: surely pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into parties, weakening one party from among them; he slaughtered their sons and let their women live; surely he was one of the mischief makers.

After the conclusion of this introduction, the story slowly goes into detail and follow the birth, the appearance of Moses and the events after his prophethood and ends the story with separate discussions.¹⁸⁾

6- Repetition: One of the characteristics of Quranic stories is their repetition and widespread mention. Those who deal with Quranic sciences know that there is no story in the Quran except the story of Yusuf, peace be upon him, in a complete form and it has not been mentioned in the form of a story in one piece. But every story has been mentioned and repeated in many places of the Qur'an with different expressions,

these repetitions are because the Qur'an is not a book of history that mentions events and incidents once and does not go back to them, but rather it is a book of guidance, education and human development which pursues educational and guidance goals by mentioning stories and anecdotes, and it is clear that educational issues require that the issue be repeated again and again and seen from different dimensions and angles and conclusions be drawn from different directions.⁽¹⁹⁾

So repeating the stories of the Holy Qur'an is actually not a pointless repetition; Rather, it is a kind of renewal of the meaning to pursue the goal, in the light of which the meaning and purpose are completed, and the word cannot be without it, therefore, the repetitions of the Qur'an are for the great purposes of education and guidance, and are not meaningless and useless, but to complete the meaning. ⁽²⁰⁾

7- Confrontation: One of the characteristics of Qur'anic stories is confrontation and comparison, it means that in one place and in the same context the story of the righteous and the bad is mentioned, and in the same place, the end of the righteous and the end of the bad are explained, for example, when the story of a prophet or an inviter is discussed in these stories; the hardships, hard tasks and labors that they have seen and endured in the beginning are told, and then it is mentioned that at the end of the work, Allah's help has reached them, and they have been approved by Allah Almighty and has given him honor and dignity, at the same time, another way or aspect is mentioned: the history of those who turned to evil and were deceived by the life of the world to rebel, pride and arrogance and disobeyed Allah's commandments and turned to sin, It won't be long before the divine eagle reaches them, and they suffer an irreversible painful torment, so that the end of their work is damage and destruction.

This feature is one of the usual methods of Qur'anic stories, which always deal with the way of confronting and comparing the two opposite sides, so that the reader is constantly placed between the elements of warning and tidings, promise and threat, fear and hope, So that moderation and mediocrity in his situations, moods, actions and possessions are dominated and not to fall into excess and negligence.⁽²¹⁾

8- Selective Presentation of Instructive Scenes: The Quran does not narrate every historical event that occurred in the past like history books; rather, it focuses on specific scenes and incidents that align with its ultimate purpose, which is guidance. For example, the story of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) is extensively mentioned in 28 different chapters of the Quran, but details such as his birth date, death date, the date of his migration from Egypt to Median, and his return from Median to Egypt are not explicitly mentioned in the Quran. Instead, the Quran emphasizes on sensitive and instructive aspects of Moses' story, such as the divine inspiration to his mother to put him in a basket and place him in the river, the tranquility it brought to her heart, the glad tidings of his return after growing up and reaching the status of prophethood, Moses' voluntary service to the daughters of

Shuaib, their father's humility in offering hospitality to Moses, and the observance of their chastity and modesty. The Quran also highlights Moses' encounter with Shuaib and the way he was chosen to be a trustworthy and competent helper in his work. Furthermore, it elaborates on Moses' observation of a fire and his journey towards it, witnessing a divine light and hearing the monotheistic words of Allah from a tree. The Quran selectively presents these scenes to convey important lessons and guidance for humanity.

9- Conveying Messages: One of the key characteristics of Quranic stories is their message-driven nature. The primary focus in Quranic stories is on delivering messages, and these stories are positively instructive. No deviant message can be found in any instance of Quranic stories; in fact, those who deviate from the right path were already inclined towards deviation from the beginning, and it is they who misinterpret the Quranic teachings. The stories sometimes culminate with a message of guidance and education at the end, and at other times, within the story itself, where the protagonist realizes the lesson being conveyed. These stories skillfully and precisely present their guiding and educational messages in a unique, clear, and innovative manner to their audience.

10- Diversity in the ways of presenting the story: Variety in Narrative Styles: Diversity in the presentation of stories is another characteristic of Quranic stories. Quranic stories are generally mentioned in four different ways:

A- summarized form, where previously mentioned details are briefly recounted, as seen in the story of the Companions of the Cave.

B- Initially, the ultimate outcome and purpose of the story are mentioned, and then the story is presented from the beginning, with a detailed account until its conclusion, as seen in the story of Moses in Surah Qasas.

C- The story begins with symbolic or allegorical expressions, and after introducing the characters of the story, it elaborates on the events and incidents that occur. Sequential presentation of events without explicitly indicating the start of a new story, as observed in various stories throughout the Quran. These different narrative styles contribute to the richness and depth of Quranic stories, engaging the audience and conveying profound messages in various ways. ⁽²²⁾

A story without summarization or prior mention enters the scene directly, such as the story of Mary and Jesus (peace be upon them). Additionally, these various and diverse styles incorporate numerous miraculous events that cannot be found in non-Quranic stories. Quranic stories are uniquely presented, capturing the imagination of the readers and conveying profound meanings and teachings through the use of various narrative techniques.

These were some of the features of Quranic stories that were presented in a condensed form.

The Fourth Topic: Objectives of Quranic Stories

Due to their unique nature and various aspects, Quranic stories have specific objectives reflected in their direction and style. These objectives are so numerous that attempting to limit or define them becomes challenging. The goals of these stories are so interconnected with the essence of the Quran that they encompass all its objectives. It is worth noting that these goals are exclusive to the stories within the Quran, and other narratives lack such profound purposes. In this context, we will explore some of these objectives as presented in the Holy Quran.

1- Strengthening the Prophet's heart and confirming his mission: The Holy Qur'an has expressed this very eloquently:

﴿وَكَلَّا نَقْصُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُنَبِّئُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَجَاءَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾²³

And We relate to you 'O Prophet' the stories of the messengers to reassure your heart. And there has come to you in this 'sûrah' the truth, a warning 'to the disbelievers', and a reminder to the believers.

in fact, in the stories of A Qur'an is a consolation for the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, and his companions and followers after him, so that if they ever face trials and tests, they will be patient like those who believed before them and were the followers of the previous prophets. They were patient until help and support reached them, as Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا وَأَوَدُّوا حَتَّىٰ آتَاهُمْ نَصْرُنَا وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكَ مِنْ نَبِيِّ الْأُمْسَلِينَ﴾⁽²⁴⁾

Translation: Indeed, messengers before you were rejected but patiently endured rejection and persecution until Our help came to them. And Allah's promise 'to help' is never broken. And you have already received some of the narratives of these messengers.

2: The Quranic stories serve a crucial purpose of imparting valuable lessons to the readers. Within the Holy Quran, these stories recount the experiences of various individuals and groups, both virtuous and corrupt, offering insights from which the readers can learn. Ultimately, the consequences each group faced were a direct result of their actions, reliance, and determination. Those who acted with righteousness and followed the prophets found success, while those who persisted in destructive behavior met their downfall. Each narrative within the Quran becomes a valuable lesson, a sermon, and an exemplar for the reader, as affirmed by Allah Almighty Himself:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَكِنْ تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾⁽²⁵⁾

Translation: In their stories there is truly a lesson for people of reason. This message cannot be a fabrication, rather 'it is' a confirmation of previous revelation, a detailed explanation of all things, a guide, and a mercy for people of faith.

3- Eliminating neglect: One of the goals of Quranic stories is to remove neglect and to raise awareness. Allah Almighty has said:

﴿نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ﴾ (26)

Translation: We relate to you 'O Prophet' the best of stories through Our revelation of this Quran, though before this you were totally unaware 'of them'.

In this noble verse, one of the objectives of Quranic stories is clearly stated.

4- Emphasizing the common principles of the prophets' missions: Undoubtedly, this is also a fundamental objective of Quranic stories. The core foundation of every prophet's mission revolves around three essential elements: monotheism, prophethood, and resurrection. This profound truth is evident in the Quranic narratives, thereby highlighting that one of the primary purposes of these stories is to underscore the significance of belief and faith. By delving into the historical accounts of the prophets, we discover a consistent pattern where all of them emphasized, propagated, and adhered to the central principle of recognizing and submitting to the one true God. This principle stands as the pivotal axis around which the mission of all prophets revolves. May peace be upon them. The following verses elucidate this truth:

27)

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾ (25) ﴿أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾ (28)

Translation: Surely We sent Noah to his people. 'He said, ' "Indeed, I am sent to you with a clear warning. that you should worship none but Allah. I truly fear for you the torment of a painful Day."

He says about the people of Aad:

﴿أَوَلَيْ عَادِ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا مُفْتَرُونَ﴾ (2)

Translation: And to the people of 'Âd We sent their brother Hûd. He said, "O my people! Worship Allah. You have no god other than Him. You do nothing but fabricate lies 'against Allah'. He says about the people of Thamud:

﴿وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ هُوَ أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَاسْتَعْمَرَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ ثُمَّ تَوْبُوا إِلَيْهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي قَرِيبٌ مُجِيبٌ﴾ {3}

Translation: And to the people of Thamûd We sent their brother Şâliḥ. He said, "O my people! Worship Allah. You have no god other than Him. He 'is the One Who' produced you from the earth and settled you on it. So seek His forgiveness and turn

to Him in repentance. Surely my Lord is Ever Near, All-Responsive 'to prayers'." The same issue is also introduced in Surah Anbiyyah

﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾⁽⁴⁾

Translation: 'O prophets!' Indeed, this religion of yours is 'only' one, and I am your Lord, so worship Me 'alone'.(5)

5- One of the objectives of the Noble Qur'an is to promote contemplation and deep thinking. When the reader explores the stories of past nations and historical events, they become aware of their downfall and destruction. It is essential to ponder and contemplate why Pharaoh and his people met their end, or why Nimrod, the people of Lot, faced the worst fate. At this point, the reader must engage in contemplation, ponder the lessons, and take heed. These stories serve as a lesson, demonstrating the consequences of arrogance, defiance, and rebellion. Allah Almighty says:

﴿فَأَفْضُصْ أَفْصَحَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾⁽⁶⁾

Translation: So narrate 'to them' stories 'of the past', so perhaps they will reflect.

6- Proving the truthfulness of the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the validity of his message is one of the objectives of Quranic stories. Because the call of the prophets, their beliefs, and their methodology are all interconnected. Allah Almighty says:

﴿قُلْ مَا كُنْتُ بِدَعَاٍ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَمَا أَدْرِي مَا يُفْعَلُ بِي وَلَا بِكُمْ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾⁽⁶⁾

Translation: Say, "I am not the first messenger ever sent, nor do I know what will happen to me or you. I only follow what is revealed to me. And I am only sent with a clear warning."

7- Proving the reality of revelation and the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), as well as the truthfulness of Islam, is achieved through the fact that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was unlettered, having never learned to read or write, and he did not receive formal education from any teacher. Despite this, the Noble Qur'an provides detailed and comprehensive accounts of the histories and stories of various nations and communities. This itself indicates and serves as evidence that the revelations brought forth by the Prophet (peace be upon him) are from the Almighty Creator, and the knowledge and information about these authentic events, with all the specifics and details, could only be known by a person who has received divine revelation, even though he was unlettered and unacquainted with any previous books or writings.^{29}}

8— Stirring emotions and arousing conscience in people's hearts are essential objectives of Quranic stories. When listening to or reading these stories, hearts are filled with hope and fear, and a strong desire arises within the souls to attain the blessings that Allah Almighty has prepared for the obedient and dutiful. The limbs and faculties of human beings incline toward humility and submission to their Creator. It is at this point that certainty, conviction, and faith become firmer and more steadfast in the heart.³⁰⁾

9—**Statement of divine rewards on the Prophets:** For example, in the stories of Yunus and Zakaria, peace be upon them, this goal is clearly seen, as Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَدَا التُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُعَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَعْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ ﴿87﴾ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مِنَ الْعَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿88﴾ وَزَكَرِيَّا إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿89﴾ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ زَوْجَهُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رِعَبًا وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ ﴿90﴾ ﴿31﴾

Translation: And 'remember' when the Man of the Whale stormed off 'from his city' in a rage, thinking We would not restrain him.1 Then in the 'veils of' darkness2 he cried out, "There is no god 'worthy of worship' except You. Glory be to You! I have certainly done wrong." So We answered his prayer and rescued him from anguish. And so do We save the 'true' believers. And 'remember' when Zachariah cried out to his Lord, "My Lord! Do not leave me childless, though You are the Best of Successors." So We answered his prayer, granted him John, and made his wife fertile. Indeed, they used to race in doing good, and call upon Us with hope and fear, totally humbling themselves before Us.

10- The manifestation of miracles and extraordinary occurrences that have taken place, such as the miraculous creation of Adam and Jesus (peace be upon them), undoubtedly indicates the demonstration of Allah's Almighty power. He can create a human being without a father and mother, just as He can bring forth a child into existence without a father, as Allah, the Most High, has stated.

﴿إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾ ﴿32﴾

Translation: Indeed, the example of Jesus in the sight of Allah is like that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, "Be!" And he was!

11— Setting examples for educational purposes: The Noble Qur'an introduces commendable role models and condemnable examples through its own stories to encourage emulation of the virtuous and avoidance of the blameworthy. These praiseworthy role models are referred to as "الْأُسْوَةُ الْحَسَنَةُ" (al-uswah al-hasana) in the

interpretation of the Qur'an and this phrase is used in three instances in the Qur'an. 1- For the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), it is stated:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾

Translation: "Indeed in the Messenger of Allah, you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah abundantly." (Quran, Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:21) 2- For Abraham (peace be upon him) and 3- his followers, Allah says:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَمِيدُ﴾

Translation: "Certainly, there is an excellent example for you in them, for anyone who has hope in Allah and the Last Day. But whoever turns away, then Allah is the Self-Sufficient, the Most Praiseworthy." (Quran, Surah Al-Mumtahanah, 60:6) These examples serve as inspirations for those who seek hope in Allah and the Hereafter, and they remind people to remember Allah frequently. Conversely, for those who deviate from the right path, Allah is Independent and Worthy of all praise.

12— Expressing Divine traditions and the philosophy of history: The purpose of employing Divine traditions in the Quran is to provide moral lessons for humanity. Divine traditions always emphasize three fundamental truths:

- A. Universality and immutability: They are not subject to alteration or change.
- B. Divine origin: These traditions are attributed to Allah in the Quran and are referred to as "سنة الله" (the way of Allah).
- C. The role of human will and choice within them.

Divine traditions can be defined as the constant laws set by Allah, which have been continuously observed and repeated in societies and past nations, and are unchangeable. They are presented at a level of understanding accessible to all for the purpose of imparting moral lessons. Raghb Işfahānī, regarding the "سنة الله" (way of Allah), states: "It refers to the method of His wisdom and the way of His obedience." This means that the way of Allah is sometimes applied in accordance with His wisdom and the method of obedience, and Divine traditions in the universe are, in fact, the laws by which Allah governs the cosmos and existence.

13-Expressing methods of life: In the Quranic narratives, one can learn various methods of living. One essential aspect of human life is the constant struggle throughout one's existence. This struggle and conflict may sometimes be with oneself, as seen in the story of the owner of the garden who said:

﴿وَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا﴾

Translation: "I wish I had not associated with my Lord anyone." (Quran, Surah Al-Kahf, 18:42)

At other times, the struggle is with other individuals, as exemplified in the story of Cain and Abel (Habil and Qabil) and their conflict. It can also be a struggle with nature, such as the battle of Prophet Joseph (Yusuf) against drought. Additionally, it may involve a struggle with one's own society. The Quranic stories present living examples of various scenarios, allowing individuals to learn valuable lessons from them and shape their own way of life accordingly.³³⁾

14- Methods of preaching and argumentation: In the Quranic stories, various styles of preaching can be found, and Allah Almighty commands:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِ لَهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾

Translation: "Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided." (Quran, Surah An-Nahl, 16:125) The Quran employs different storytelling techniques as a means of preaching. It uses stories as a powerful tool to stimulate emotions alongside consciousness, making it one of the most effective and impactful methods of preaching.

15- Deriving Jurisprudential Rulings: The verses and chapters of the Noble Qur'an are interconnected, making it impossible to categorize them definitively into different sections of beliefs, laws, ethics, and narratives. In many cases, within the context of narrative verses, discussions about laws and ethics are presented. Therefore, one of the benefits and objectives of the narratives is to derive jurisprudential rulings from certain narrative verses. For example, in the story of Harut and Marut, scholars have engaged in detailed juristic discussions on whether magic is considered disbelief, and whether a magician becomes a disbeliever. Fakhr al-Razi in his Tafsir al-Kabir and Qurtubi in his Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an raised this issue and mentioned the views of some jurists and imams of different schools of thought on the matter.

Similarly, in the verse mentioning the works of the people of David (Dawud), where they were instructed to "make coats of mail and measure accurately the links of the chainmail and work [all of you] diligently. Indeed, I am Seeing of what you do," (Quran, Surah Saba, 34:10-11), scholars have debated whether taking images is prohibited or permissible. Some exegetes have stated that the images refer to the statues of angels and prophets that were made for use in mosques, and taking such images was not forbidden during the time of Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him).

Alternatively, these images might have been inanimate objects, like trees, or, according to some narrations, the images of two lions.

These are just a few examples of the other objectives that exist in mentioning Quranic narratives, and it is not possible to cover all of them in this brief article.

The fifth topic is the wisdom of repeating stories:

The stories and narratives found in the Holy Quran are reiterated for various purposes, encompassing wisdom and concealed meanings, with some of the key reasons being as follows:

1- Demonstrating the eloquence and linguistic splendor of the Holy Quran: the repetition of stories highlights the Quran's supreme eloquence and the remarkable beauty of its words. As the same story is mentioned in multiple contexts within the Quran, it unfolds in new and distinct ways, revealing fresh lessons and implications for the reader. This constant renewal of insights serves to captivate and engage the reader, inspiring them to continue reciting and contemplating the profound verses of the Holy Quran. ⁽³⁴⁾

2- Ensuring the desired comprehension and understanding as intended by Allah Almighty: Through the repetition of stories, the Holy Quran ensures that people grasp and internalize the intended messages deeply within their hearts and minds. By reinforcing the information and presenting it in various contexts, the Quran seeks to consolidate the knowledge and wisdom it imparts, ensuring a profound and lasting impact on individuals' understanding of its teachings. This repetitive approach serves to solidify the significance of the stories and allows people to grasp the divine guidance with clarity and sincerity. ⁽³⁵⁾

3- Spreading the message of Islam to a broader audience: The scattered and gradual revelation of verses in the Holy Quran occurs at different times and in diverse manners. Some verses serve as a warning, reminding the audience of the consequences faced by past communities due to their disobedience or adherence to righteousness. Others focus on persuasion and encouragement towards what is right and just. This approach caters to the varied audiences of the Quran, encompassing individuals from different backgrounds and cultures. Islam's message is not confined solely to the people of Muhammad (peace be upon him) or the Arab community, but it is intended for the entire world. The Quran, with its multifaceted approach, aims to reach and touch the hearts of people from all walks of life, fostering a greater understanding and acceptance of its universal teachings. ⁽³⁶⁾

4- Consoling and supporting the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, and strengthening him in carrying the weight of his divine mission: The Almighty God emphasizes in the Quran:

وَكُلًّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ ۖ وَجَاءَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَقُّ ۚ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۙ ١٢٠

“And We relate to you ‘O Prophet’ the stories of the messengers to reassure your heart. And there has come to you in this ‘sûrah’ the truth, a warning ‘to the disbelievers’, and a reminder to the believers.”³⁷⁾

The Quranic stories vividly depict the trials and persecutions faced by God's prophets at the hands of their own people. These narratives also highlight the actions of those who opposed the prophets and rejected their message. Conversely, the Quran also showcases God's divine assistance and support for the prophets and their faithful followers who believed in them and adhered to their guidance. These stories carry profound messages and serve as a warning for those who have accepted the signs and teachings of Allah and His divine laws.³⁸⁾

5-The Quran presents incidents and events repeatedly to serve as valuable lessons and to console and strengthen the heart of the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him. However, it is important to note that no story of any prophet is fully and entirely recounted in the Holy Quran, except for the complete narrative of Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him, which is detailed in Surah Yusuf.³⁹⁾ Also, one of the wisdoms of repeating stories is to repeat the wording of many stories for the purpose of arguing about an event or a matter that Allah Almighty has asked, and strengthened it.⁴⁰⁾

6- One of the wisdoms behind the repetition of stories in the Quran is to provide examples and proverbs. Through the retelling of these stories, the Quran offers valuable lessons and moral guidance by presenting real-life situations and outcomes. These examples serve as proverbs that can be applied to various situations and challenges faced by individuals and communities.⁴¹⁾

7- Another advantage of repeating stories in the Quran is the continuous reminder and reinforcement of the message and its contents in the hearts and minds of the readers. By retelling the same story in different places and surahs, the Quran ensures that important lessons and teachings are not overlooked or forgotten. This repetition serves as a means to emphasize key points and prevent any neglect or oversight of crucial matters.⁴²⁾

8- The emphasis and repetition of a topic necessitate giving it attention and priority, as the storytelling style is one of the favorite and engaging methods, and the Quranic stories possess this quality to the fullest. Hence, it urges Muslims to listen, read, and repeat them. Allah Almighty says, "Certainly there has come to them a lesson that has in it a deterrence—Profound in wisdom; but warning does not avail them." (Surah Al-Qamar, 54:4-5). In this verse, the message is clear that the stories contain profound wisdom and lessons for the Muslims' way of life. Therefore, it urges them to pay heed and take them to heart, as mere warnings are not sufficient for those who persist in

stubbornness. Hence, everything found in the Quran is meant to offer important wisdom for the lives of Muslims.⁴³⁾

9- The repetitions in most cases are not performed in a uniform manner; rather, they exhibit significant differences both in terms of wording and content. The storytelling style varies, the words and sentence lengths differ. This signifies that the essence and truth of the story are conveyed through various precise interpretations and diverse descriptions.⁴⁴⁾

10- One of the wisdoms of repeating stories lies in the exquisite beauty and eloquence of the Quran's expression, as well as the mention of its most miraculous challenges and the reminder of its most beneficial rhetorical methods. Therefore, the repetition of a story in various forms, diverse styles, and different words demonstrates the utmost excellence in rhetorical techniques and exudes tremendous beauty. From the perspective of inimitability (i'jaz), presenting a theme in multiple and varied forms - a feat that Arabs were unable to replicate - strengthens the challenge, even though Arabs excelled in rhetorical skills at that time and had surpassed everyone in the field of eloquence. Their eloquence and rhetoric had gained worldwide renown.

Furthermore, it should be emphasized that each repetition of a story captivates our attention and informs us of its significance, reinforcing and firmly establishing its credibility within the human soul.⁴⁵⁾ Scholars of expression and eloquence have established that in the repetition of Quranic stories, there are miraculous expressions and wondrous wisdoms that only the knowledgeable and wise can comprehend. However, this fact remains absent from the minds of the ignorant and foolish.⁴⁶⁾

11- One of the reasons for repeating a story in multiple instances is that the Noble Quran was revealed over a period of 23 years, and each story holds specific lessons and unique insights within its designated context. Therefore, it cannot be labeled as mere repetition.⁴⁷⁾

12- Among the benefits of repeating a story, and similar stories with different words, is that Allah Almighty repeats the meaning so that the Quraysh does not say to the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace: How do you challenge us that we shall bring similar stories as you are telling us about Noah, Moses and Abraham? While there is no other word for these stories except the word that you started and brought, and if we bring the exact same word, you will say: This is the same word and phrase that I call upon you, and I challenge you to it. And if you demand another word from us, while there is no other word for this story and the meaning of which you have given such weight to the words and surpassed us, then you are demanding the impossible thing?! And as you can see, this can be a strong doubt.

But Allah the Most High wanted to cut off the Arabs' desires in connection with this issue completely, so he repeated a story and similar stories with the same meaning in different words in the form of a sea and weight, which is the weight of the Qur'an, so

that God the Most High could express His power and the great eloquence of His words to them. He made them pretend to be a challenge, make them suspicious, sedition and chaos, busy and make them crazy.⁴⁸⁾

13- The repetition of stories in the Quran serves as a glimpse into the limitless and boundless eloquent secrets embedded within them. Some general characteristics of this repetition can be highlighted as follows:

Firstly, no story is repeated in exactly the same manner in two or more places; each occurrence maintains its own uniqueness and style.

Secondly, the repetition of Quranic stories often alternates between shorter and longer versions.

Thirdly, the repeated stories are inevitably presented in a fresh form, both in terms of structure and content, distinct from other stories, with clear differences.

Fourthly, each mode of repetition is suitably applied in its specific context and place, designed to serve its purpose effectively. (49)

14- Sometimes, the repetition of stories serves to reaffirm the religious objectives and has a psychological impact. However, the repetition does not encompass the entire story from beginning to end. Rather, it highlights a specific segment of the story that conveys the intended moral lesson, using an approach that is appropriate for its purpose.⁵⁰⁾

15—Ibn Ashur also provides some statements regarding the repetition of stories in the Noble Quran, which can be summarized briefly as follows:

a) Repetition of stories helps firmly establish them in the minds of the audience.

b) Another benefit of repetition is to showcase the eloquence of the Quran. When a speech is repeated for a single purpose, it may become heavy and unappealing to a skilled individual. However, when subsequent statements build upon previous ones with artistry in meanings, using varied styles of expression such as metaphors, similes, and allegories, employing eloquent words and compositions, and expanding the vocabulary through the use of synonyms and employing artistic linguistic and semantic innovations, then it reaches the highest level of eloquence. This is one of the most significant aspects of the Quran's miraculous nature.

c) Not all Muslims can memorize the entire Quran, and some may only memorize specific surahs. In this case, someone who memorizes a certain surah that contains a story gains knowledge of that story, just as someone who memorizes another surah containing the same story gains the same knowledge.

d) In these stories, the narration of a single story is presented in different ways. Some aspects of a story may be mentioned in one narration, while others may not be mentioned in another. This happens due to certain reasons:

Some narrations avoid elaboration on certain aspects of the story and focus only on the lessons to be learned, while other narrations mention different aspects of the story, resulting in a complete and comprehensive depiction.

Some stories are presented at appropriate places for the desired effect on the listeners. Thus, certain stories are mentioned in different contexts according to their relevance. For example, the story of Moses' prophethood is detailed in Surahs Ash-Shu'ara and Ta-Ha, while it is briefly mentioned in Surah Al-Furqan (verses 35 and 36). (51)

16—the repetition of stories in the Noble Quran serves specific purposes at various points and may not have the same implications in other places. The least thing that repetition accomplishes is reinforcing and firmly establishing the lessons derived from that story in the mind of the audience. In the Quran, a mere repetition of a story in two or multiple places is never observed because a story is never repeated in the same context. Therefore, the implication and intended message might vary, leading to different lessons being emphasized at different points.⁵²⁾

There are indeed philosophies, secrets, and wisdoms behind the repetition of stories and narratives in the Holy Quran. To avoid prolonging the discussion, we suffice with the few reasons mentioned earlier.

Conclusion

Based on the points mentioned, the Quranic stories hold great significance and are considered one of the fundamental tools for moral upbringing and guidance of humans towards the right path in the Quran. These stories, characterized by features such as divinity, reality, positivity, and confrontation, effectively convey instructive and moral messages to the readers. Numerous Quranic stories contain valuable ethical lessons and inspirations for daily life and spiritual growth of individuals. Moreover, the repetition of stories and their selective narration not only adds to the rhetorical beauty of the Quran but also emphasizes their educational and guiding purposes, utilizing the richness and freshness of their content. These types of stories invite the audience to contemplate and ponder, directing them towards purposeful living. Furthermore, Quranic stories, presented in various styles of narration, not only clarify religious concepts and teachings but also encourage readers to delve deeper into the meanings and reflections of divine verses. Therefore, in the endeavor to fully understand the messages of the Quran, studying and contemplating its stories is crucial and invaluable.

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