

The Understanding of *Shaykh* Abd Allah Bin Foduye and *Badiuzzaman* Sa'id Nursi on the Harmonisation among the Verses and Chapters of the Glorious Qur'an

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Abstract: - Al-Qur'an, as a compendium Book, contains knowledge dealing with issues for guidance to all human endeavours. It is the message from Allah to humankind and therefore it is of utmost importance to us. To properly grasp the teachings of the Qur'an one needs first of all to understand its content. Therefore, some special knowledge of the circumstances that engulf the Glorious Qur'an is also necessary for fuller understanding of its meaning and implications. For this purpose, the paper discusses the Understanding of *Shaykh* Abd Allah Bin Foduye *Badiuzzaman* Said Nursi in one important aspect or science of the (that is Harmonisation among the verses and chapters of the Glorious Qur'an). This paper attempts to discuss the little background of these two prominent scholars that is *Shaykh* 'Abd Allah bin Foduye who was born in the year 1179A.H/1766-7.C.E and (d. 1829 C.E), and *Badiuzzaman* Sa'id Nursi who was born in 1877 C.E in the small village of Nurs in the province of Bitl is in eastern Anatolia of the old Ottoman Empire (modern day Turkey) and (d. 1960 C.E). This paper also underlines the definition of the term *Tanasubor Munasabat* (Harmonisation) and bring out the views or understanding *Shaykh* Abd Allah bin Foduye and *Badiuzzaman* Said Nursi and on Harmonisation among the verses and chapters of the Glorious Qur'an. The method used in this research is analytical method. This paper also explicit the two great scholars have expresses this aspect of Harmonisation among the verses and chapters of the Glorious Qur'an in details.

Keywords: Understanding, *Shaykh* Abd Allah Bin Foduye, *Badiuzzaman* Sa'id Nursi, Harmonisation, and Glorious Qur'an.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
The Glorious Qur'an is the word of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) within the twenty three years of his mission, through Angel Jibril (A.S) purposely to guide the entire life of mankind (Aboki and Shun, 2015). It is the source of all knowledge in Islam, be it spiritual, social, scientific, moral, legal, or philosophical, and the guide to all truth. It has four main purposes; demonstrating Allah's Existence and Unity, establishing Prophethood and the afterlife, promulgating the worship of Allah, and setting

forth the essentials of justice (Muhammad, 2015). It is the object of reflection for those who are thoughtful. There is everything in it, small and great except if our limited intellectual capacity cannot comprehend them for our benefits. This underlines the distinct nature of the Qur'an as clearly affirmed in the following verse where Allah (the exalted) says:

And We have revealed the Book (the Qur'an) to you as an explanation of everything, guidance, mercy, and good news for the Muslims (Qur'an 16:89).

To the life of every Muslim, the Qur'an is held in high esteem. The need to appreciate the greatness of the Qur'an by every Muslim is highly emphasized by the fact that the concept of belief in the revealed scriptures (the Qur'an and other revealed Books) is among the conditions of *Iman* (Faith) in Islam and foundation of the religion.

II. BACKGROUND OF SHAYKH ABD ALLAH BIN FODUYE

Shaykh Abd Allah Foduye was born in the year 1179A.H/1766-7.C.E (Gwandu, 1977). *Shaykh* 'Abd Allah bnFoduye under the guidance of his parents memorized the Glorious Qur'an to heart very early in life. He learnt other branches of knowledge and jurisprudence from his elder brother, *Shaykh* 'Uthmanbn Foduye. On attaining the age of maturity he studied Hadith together with his brother under the counsel of their uncle, *Shaykh* Muhammad Raji in the year 1201A.H (Gwandu, 1977). He acquired the science of *Usulfiqh* from *Shaykh*'s uncle, Mustafa. He enriched himself with Arabic grammar, owing to which he wrote several books in the field. He became an embodiment of religious knowledge especially in the science of Hadith and Qur'an exegeses (Foduye, 2013).

Shaykh'Abd Allah rose from well learned and scholarly family. This gave him a privilege to have his early education at home. Also then Torankawa clan of Fulani where 'Abd

Allah belonged, had a very long tradition of scholarship which indicates that he was brought up in a learned environment (Foduye, 2013).

His father, being the first teacher to him taught him the Qur'an which he memorized at the age of thirteen years old he had completed the memorization of the Qur'an by heart from his father. 'Abd Allah was then ready to advance his studies under the guidance of his elder brother *Shaykh* 'Uthman

It was through these relations and other teachers that *Shaykh* 'Abd Allah acquired his education and was qualified to discuss intelligently and teach the traditional books as well as writing several books on different field of studies. *Shaykh* 'Abd Allah stated his writing numbering more than a hundred on different aspects of Islamic knowledge, although, he was in the political affairs of the caliphate, his works on the issues of leadership and how to run a government under Islamic state are excellent.

Shaykh 'Abd Allah bin Foduye wrote over one hundred and seventy books, covering a wide range of topics and issues of concern to the Muslim *Ummah* (Foduye, 2013). Although, he wrote in the early 19th Century, his commentaries on the Qur'an are as of today even though they were written over 200 years ago. Among his writings are the Qur'anic exegeses titled "*Diya'al-Ta'wil Fi ma'an al-Tanzilwakifayat al-Du'afa'al-Sudan*" *Shaykh* 'Abd Allah also wrote a book titled "*Alfa ra'id al-Jalilahwasa'it al-Fawa'id al-Jamilah Fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an*"(Foduye, 2013).*Shaykh* 'Abd Allah Foduye also wrote on complex grammatical analysis known as *al-Sarf*. He wrote *Diya'al- Hukkam*, *Diya'al-Siyasat* and *Diya'al-Khulafa'* and commentaries on *Madkhal*, (Foduye, 2013), including other important writings attributed to him, like *Miftah al-Tafsir*, *Sulalat al-Miftah*, and many others.

III. BACKGROUND OF BADIUZZAMAN SA'ID NURSI

Badiuzzaman Sa'id Nursi was born in 1877 C.E in the small village of Nurs in the province of Bitlis in eastern Anatolia of the old Ottoman Empire (modern day Turkey) (Vahide, 2003).*Badiuzzaman* Sa'id Nursi started his education at the early age from the renowned scholars of his time (Vahide, 2003). He started his studies at the age of nine by learning the Glorious Qur'an and some basic Islamic knowledge in his family environment, (Vahide, 2003). After that he went to the local *Madarasa* (School) for pursuit of knowledge (Vahide, 2005). From his youth, Nursi's extra-ordinary talent manifested and asked things that were around him (Vahide, 2005). Nursi was blessed with a photographic memory. On one occasion, Nursi read an entire page of a book from his memory after only a glance. Upon witnessing this, his teacher was amazed to find such a memory as well as capacity for analysis in same person. It was from episodes like this that Nursi gained his name, *Badiuzzaman*, which means the "wonder of the age" (Vahide, 2005). Nursi spent his whole time and life illustrating that Glorious Qur'an is indeed a fountain of knowledge and progress as well as resolutions to all human predicaments. The idea he uphold throughout his

writings, that is popularly known as The *Risale-i Nur* (Epistles of light), which is a collection of some of his writings on the interpretation and other sciences related to the Qur'an (Vahide, 2003).

Sa'id Nursi, in many ways a distinctive figure, was an original thinker and scholar whose important contributions to contemporary Islamic thought are now being recognized in the Muslim World, but are still relatively unknown in the West. These were primarily in the field of Qur'anic interpretation and contained in the body of work known as the *Risale-i-Nur* (henceforth referred to as the *Risale*) which represents his mature thought (Vahide, 2003).

IV. DEFINITION OF THE TERM HARMONISATION

Harmonisation: literally means cohabitation, reconciliation, concurrence, rapprochement, and unification, while technically means a state of peaceful existence and agreement or a pleasing combination of related things (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2000).

V. HARMONISATION OF THE GLORIOUS QUR'ANIC VERSES BY SHAYKH ABD ALLAH BIN FODUYE

In this topic *Shaykh* 'Abd Allah firstly gave the meaning of *munasabat al-Qur'an* where he said: *munasabat al-Qur'an* means synchronization, congruence, or coordination between verses and chapters of the Glorious Qur'an. In another word he said; it is a conjunction between two things, like tightening general matter and specific or happening of something and the cause or problem and causer of that problem and opposite. Furthermore, *Shaykh* described the significance of this knowledge where he states that:

This field of *Tanasub* (harmony) is of great importance in understanding the Glorious Qur'an. *Tanasub* is ascertained through a rational discovery, not only through textual references such as the common themes in chapters (Foduye, 2011).

Then, sometimes there is relationship between a verse and the one after it, even though they are in different *Surah* (chapter) and sometimes they can look alike in terms of meaning and their teachings or lessons, for example where Allah (S.W.T) says:

It is He who created the heavens and earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He knows what penetrates into the earth and what emerges from it and what descends from the heaven and what ascends therein; and He is with you wherever you are. And Allah, of what you do, is Seeing (Qur'an, 57:4).

Also in another verse Allah (S.W.T) says:

Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan so He will multiply it for him and he will have a noble reward? (Qur'an, 57:11).

The above verses were connected with each other because there is what linked them, in their meanings, for example here in the first verse it shows that Allah knows everything in the heaven and earth and the second verse shows that it is Allah who withholds and grants in abundance meaning that He is giving everything to humankind the way He likes in abundance or to withholds, in short He knows what is right and wrong for humankind.

Furthermore, *Shaykh* brings some verses of the Qur'an which are very close but one is contrary to another or sometimes one verse may be instantaneously after a verse but they have different directions as in example below in *Surah al-Baqrah* where Allah says:

Indeed, those who disbelieve it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them they will not believe (Qur'an, 2:6)..

Therefore, when it was observed carefully with the above verse it discusses about disbelievers and the verses before it discussed about believers, so, these verses were connected immediately but they differed in what they are discussing.

Another good example is where Allah said in the beginning of *Surah al-Mu'minin* (chapter of believers) and end of it, this example will show the relationship between beginning of the chapter and its end, but they differ in their meaning but almost giving the same message indirectly. Allah (S.W.T) says:

Certainly will the believers have succeeded (Qur'an, 22:1).

Then at the end of this chapter Allah (S.W.T) says:

And whoever invokes besides Allah another deity for, which he has no proof-then his account is only with his Lord. Indeed, the disbelievers will not succeed (Qur'an, 22:117).

Furthermore, there is also *Tanasub* (Harmony) between the beginning of chapter and its end like, what happen in chapter of *Sad* this chapter begins with reminder where Allah says:

Sad.By the Qur'an containing reminder (Qur'an, 38:1).

And then at the last it ended again with a reminder, where Allah (S.W.T) says:

It is but a reminder to the worlds (Qur'an, 38:87).

Shaykh 'Abd Allah further said as we have *tanasub* (harmony) chapters of the Qur'an, and in the beginning of chapters and its end, similarly we can get harmony between the end of chapters and beginning of another chapters. For example in the Qur'an where Allah says:

This is the Book about which there is no doubt, guidance for those conscious of Allah (Qur'an, 2:2).

The above verse indicates guidance to the straight path which also Allah immediately indicated in the first chapter of the Qur'an where He says:

Guide us to the straight path-the path of those upon whom you have bestowed favour, not of those who have evoked (Your) anger or of those who are astray (Qur'an, 1:6-7).

Moreover, there is another very important example of harmony among chapters of the Qur'an which are contrary in their meaning, like what occurred in these two chapters that is *Surah of al-Ma'un* (assistance) and *Surah of al-Kauthar* (abundance) whereas chapter of assistance discusses the issue of hypocrites and their features and mentioned one of the features like withholding their wealth to the orphans or poor people, neglecting of prayer, show off with their good deeds, and so also withholding of assistance to others, while chapter of abundance is talking about establishment of prayer, worship of Allah with sincerity to Him only, and giving a charity to the poor with the meat of *Id al-Adh ha* (sacrifice) (Foduye, 2011).

VI. HARMONISATION OF THE GLORIOUS QUR'ANIC VERSES BY BADIUZZAMAN SA'ID NURSI

The classical exegetical literature admits that the field of *tanasub* (relationship) is the most prestigious science in Qur'anic exegesis although Qur'anic commentaries have not paid it sufficient attention. Nonetheless, early modern Muslim thinkers insistently emphasise this notion (Coruch. 2015).

Nursi focused on the Qur'an's *Nazm* (word-order or composition) in his commentary. Because the *Nazm* (word-order) emphasises the great harmony between verses, it is connected with the field of *tanasub*(word-order). In his commentary, he attempted to apply the word-order as a complete system treating all the *Suwar* (Chapters) *Ayat* (verses), and words one after the other, in all its details (Nursi, 2004).

Moreover, Nursi states that:

Just as a clock's hands complete and are fitted to one another in exact orderliness, so does every word and sentence-the entire Qur'an-complete each other (Nursi, 2005).

Furthermore, he also underlines that:

It is as if each Qur'anic verse has an eye that sees most of the verses and a face that looks towards them. Given this, it extends to them the immaterial threads of relationship to weave a design of Miraculousness (Nursi, 2005).

When we look at Nursi's commentary, it can be easily seen that he always indicates the notion of *tanasub* (word-order) in every verse he interprets, referring to the relationship of the verse with the preceding verse, and the harmony and the connection among the clauses and the words in one verse. For example, regarding Qur'an chapter one verse one to four "in the name of Allah, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy. Master of the Day of Judgment," he states that because "the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy" points to the divine bounties, praise is essential for them (Nursi, 2005).

Therefore, he explains the relationship between the first two verses. "The Lord of mercy, the Giver of mercy, indicates the two essentials in *Tarbiya* (education). *Al-Rahman* (The Lord of mercy) refers to the *Jalb al-Manafi* (attraction of benefits) because of its meaning of *Al-Razzaq* (provider). *Al-Rahim* (The Giver of mercy) on account of its meaning of *Al-Ghaffar* (the most Forgiving), implies the *Daf al-Madarrat* (repulsion of harm). These are two fundamental principles of education. For this reason, these two words are tied to each other, and they have a connection with the word of *Rabb* "(Lord)" in the previous verse. In his view, the relationship of "Master" of the Day of "Judgment" with the preceding verse is as follows:

This verse is the result of the previous verse which expresses mercy because mercy is the greatest proof of resurrection and eternal happiness (Nursi, 2004).

In his commentary, Nursi interprets the second chapter of the Qur'an until verse 33, and he frequently indicates the notion of *tanâsub*(word-order). For example, Nursi states that chapter *Baqara* divides human beings into three groups: the believers, the obdurate disbelievers, and the hypocrites until its verse 21. The first five verses are related to the believers, while the subsequent two verses are connected with the obdurate disbelievers, and the following thirteen verses are concerned with the hypocrites. Having clarified the categories of human beings, the Qur'an addresses all of them with Q. 2:21, —People, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, so that you may be mindful [of Him]. Nursi states that —It makes this the result of what preceded it in the same way that a building follows the plan, and commands and prohibitions related to actions follow knowledge, and the *al-Qada'* (divine decree) follows *al-Qadar* (divine determining). After the Qur'an mentioned the threegrups and explains their characteristics, Q. 2:21 orders action and worship in the context of the previous verses (Nursi, 2004). As has been recognised, here Nursi draws attention to the connection among several passages in the chapter, which seem as if they are disconnected narratives.

In order to understand Nursi's approach to intratextual hermeneutics, another great example is his interpretation of Q. 2:25, — [Prophet], give those who believe and do good the news that they will have Gardens graced with flowing streams... Nursi discusses the word-order of this verse in terms of three aspects: The relationship of the verse as a

whole with the previous verses, relationships of the phrases in the verse, and relationships of the parts of the phrases. In his view, there are numerous relations between the meaning of this verse and the previous verses, and different lines from this verse extend to those verses. For example, the Qur'an praises the believers at the beginning of the chapter because of their belief and good deeds(Nursi, 2004).

Then the Qur'an, by this verse (Q. 2:25), demonstrates the result of faith and fruit of good deeds. In the same way, the Qur'an mentioned the obdurate disbelievers and the hypocrites at the beginning and depicted their way, and it points out with this verse the light of eternal happiness and expresses them this great reward to increase their sense of loss. Moreover, the Qur'an ordered the people to worship Allah with the previous verse (Q. 2:21) even though worship signifies hardship, difficulty, and abandon immediate pleasures. Then with this verse, the Qur'an promises them future pleasures in heaven and satisfies them. Furthermore, the previous verses verified divine unity, while this verse declares the fruits of divine unity. What is more, the Qur'an established Prophethood through the inimitability of Q. 2:23. Then by this verse, it indicates the duties of Prophethood such as warning and giving good news. In addition, while the previous verse warned and threatened, this verse excites desire and delivers glad tidings. Therefore, there is the relation between opposites. Finally, the previous verses indicated Hell, one part of the hereafter. Then with this verse, the Qur'an points to the other part of the hereafter, clearly referring to Paradise(Nursi, 2004).

It could be reasonably concluded that like certain modern intellectuals, Nursi puts emphasis on the notion of *tanâsub* (word-order) in his commentary, and he frequently refers to this notion. Nursi believes that there is a great harmony and relationship among the Qur'anic verses, different passages, even among the sentences, words, and letters in one verse. Through his approach, he attempts to points out that the several passages and verses of the Qur'an are not disconnected narratives. It is evident from his emphasis on the Qur'an's *nazm* (word-order or composition) that a major aim of Nursi in his commentary is to develop the field of *tanâsub*(composition)(Nursi, 2004).

This analysis enables us to properly discover Nursi's and the modernists' hermeneutics in relation to Qur'anic sciences and exegesis. Moreover, it may also refer to Nursi's major concerns in his reading of the Qur'an and his exegetical methodology. As can be seen, Nursi used these fields in Qur'anic sciences to clarify various theological subjects. Benefiting from the opportunities of Qur'anic sciences, he developed his theology.

VII. CONCLUSION

The research commences by tracing the meaning of the Glorious Qur'an, which was revealed to the last Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon

him) purposely to guide the entire life of mankind. It is observed that, the Glorious Qur'an is contains of divine rules and regulations not only to guide man but also assures him of harmony in his relation with Allah and people when these rules are strictly adhered to.

Also there are some definitions of the Glorious Qur'an, like Shams al-Din *al-Qurtubi* states that, "The Qur'an is a name of uncreated speech of Allah an attribute to the One Who has no parallel and counterpart (that is Allah); a light derived from His Self, revealed to the Prophet (Peace be upon him) as his miracle, committed to memories, uttered by tongues, written in the copies, distributed as *Suwar* (chapters) and verses, free from any addendum and shortcoming in its alphabets and words. The researcher further explained the term of and brief background of the two scholars and brought their understanding of the Harmonisation among the verses and chapters of the Glorious Qur'an finally end with conclusion.

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