

Applying the Theory of Symmetric Order in the Holy Qur'an; A Novel Approach to Structural Coherence in Surah Yusuf

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کاربست نظریه نظم متقارن در قرآن کریم؛ نگاهی نو به انسجام ساختاری سوره یوسف

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Abstract

A type of Qur'anology in recent decades among Orientalists and Muslims is innovative research in recognizing new areas of order in the Holy Qur'an. Based on symmetric order, some studies have been significantly studied. The present article uses a descriptive-analytical method to examine coherence in Surah Yusuf. First, the concept of symmetrical order is introduced, then a rhetorical analysis of Surah Yusuf is provided. Surah Yusuf is divided into sixteen sections connected inversely and provides a general and comprehensive model of the relationship between the sections. Based on the results, we may mention a better explanation of the beauty of the composition of the text of Surah Yusuf, the development of the literary miracles of the Holy Qur'an, and the development of new text research topics to prove the non-distortion of the Qur'an.

Keywords: Symmetrical Order, Surah Yusuf, Holy Quran, Chiasmus, Semitic eloquenc.

چکیده

یکی از گونه‌های قرآن‌شناسی ده‌های اخیر در میان مستشرقان و مسلمانان، پژوهش‌های نوین در شناخت ساخت‌های جدید نظم قرآن کریم است. در این میان پژوهش‌های مبتنی بر نظم متقارن توانسته است جایگاه خوبی را در این میان به خود اختصاص دهد. مقاله حاضر با در پیش گرفتن روش توصیفی-تحلیلی، به بررسی انسجام سوره یوسف می‌پردازد. این مقاله، نخست به معرفی مفهوم نظم متقارن پرداخته و پس از آن به تحلیل بلاغی سوره یوسف می‌پردازد. سوره یوسف به شانزده بخش تقسیم می‌شود و به صورت معکوس میان بخش‌های سوره ارتباط برقرار شده و یک مدل کلی و فراگیر را از ارتباط بخش‌های سوره ارائه می‌کند. از نتایج این پژوهش اثبات ساختار منظم سوره یوسف می‌باشد.

کلیدواژه‌ها: نظم متقارن، سوره یوسف، قرآن کریم، صنعت قلب، بلاغت سامی.

1. Introduction

As the last holy book, the Holy Qur'an is a highly literary text, and from the perspective of Qur'an scholars, the highest miracle of the Qur'an is the miracle in the order of this divine book and the miracle of expression. The study of order and continuity of Qur'anic verses has been a subject of debate among Muslims for a very long time, and many books have been published on the order of the Qur'an. However, most Western scholars believe that Qur'anic verses are scattered, discrete, and lack structural and thematic coherence. They consider the Qur'an as fragmented texts which are irrelevant to the various subjects described within a surah.

Some Muslims have considered human distortion as the cause of the text's fragmentation and ambiguity and have stated that "probably the curators of the Qur'an have confused the connection between the Qur'anic topics" (Khosh Manesh, 2009: 33-36).

In response to these problems, some have accepted that the Qur'an has fragmented speech and justified it in this way that this type of expression is indicative of the miracles of the Qur'an, or they have considered it to prevent fatigue and boredom from the divine word, or they have stated that literary unity Surahs make up for the inconsistency of Qur'anic verses. (Khamegar, 1381: 66). This article aims to answer the fundamental question of whether the Holy Qur'an structure is coherent.

2. Research Background and Necessity

There has been a significant increase in Western knowledge about the thematic coherence and structural unity of Qur'anic suras in the last decades. Michel Cuypers, for example, illustrates the value of using biblical methods of symmetry, correlation, and ring composition in Quranic verses (Cuypers, 2009). On the other hand, such studies have been criticized by some scholars, such as Nicolai Sinai, for ignoring the objective text in discovering ring composition (Sinai, 2017).

Surah Yusuf amuses many scholars investigating the suras' thematic unity and structure. Mustansir Mir has written two

articles about the twelfth Surah while referring to its ring-like structure (Mir, 1986, 2000). Angelica Neuwirth offers a detailed analysis of Surah Yusuf (Neuwirth, 1980). Neal Robinson provides a helpful outline of Surah Yusuf but does not consider the details (Robinson, 2003: 223). Michel Cuypers has devoted an article to the ring structure of Surah Yusuf, which shows a symmetrical structure similar to Robinson's free structure (Cuypers, 1995). Jawad Anwar Qureshi has also stated and analyzed the structure of the symmetrical order of Surah Yusuf (Anwar Qureshi, 2017). Raymond Farin also referred to the structure of Surah Yusuf (Farrin, 2014: 78).

Here, we first refer to the semantics of symmetrical order theory. After providing some explanations about Surah Yusuf, we examine the coherence of the structure using a descriptive-analytical approach.

3. Theoretical Research Foundations

The theory of symmetrical order, also called Semitic rhetoric and Chiasmus, roots in Qur'anic studies and dates back two hundred and fifty years ago. Robert Lowth, an English scholar (d. 1787 AD), published a book entitled "Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews" in 1753 AD and showed that the Psalms and other biblical texts are a combination of parallel verses with synonymy, contradiction and complementary connections. A few years earlier, the German scholar Johann Albrecht Bengel (D. 1752 AD) also spoke of the characteristic of chiasmus, or inverse parallelism, in a book entitled "Gnomon of the New Testament." Bengel showed that the order in these texts sometimes forms a concentric or ring-like composition.

Following this trend, two other English scholars, John Jeb (d. 1833 AD) and Thomas Boyce (d. 1880 AD), took a practical step in the evolution of this idea; however, the first Semitic rhetoric theory was named biblical rhetoric, but after other Semitic texts in addition to the Bible were proven to be compatible in recent decades, it was theorized as Semitic rhetoric by Ronald Mint, a professor of biblical interpretation at the

University of Rome, and, its principles and rules were systematized (Iqbal, 2013: 58).

According to Semitic rhetoric, texts are based on complex symmetries at different text levels. This theory, known as rhetorical analysis, explains the order of texts. Based on the fundamental principle of balance, the rhetorical analysis explains the text's composition and determines its structure. To determine symmetries, one must understand the relationships between the constituent elements of the text. These relationships are limited to two types: a) conformity or consistency, b) conflict or inconsistency. Without a systematic and precise distinction between their factors, these adaptations, conflicts, and indicators, have each been considered in lexical, morphological, syntactic and discourse aspects. By recognizing the relationships between the text's constituent elements and proving the word's coherence, the rhetorical analysis seeks to determine various forms of symmetry. These symmetries form the structure of the text. There are three types of balance which are explained as follows;

1. **Parallelism or parallel construction:** Parallelism or parallel construction refers to the units of a text appearing in the same order it first emerged; that is, the structure of the content in the text is repeated regularly. For example, the speaker or writer first arranges and discusses three subjects up to the middle of the speech; then, the first subject is repeated and summarized. The second subject is then repeated and summarized, and the same goes for the third subject. Finally, there is a conclusion (ABC / A'B'C').
2. **Concentric or ring composition:** The purpose of a concentric or ring pattern in a text (concentric or ring composition) is that the subjects of a text are arranged in a concentric circle, and the sub-theme is inserted between the first and second sections of the text. (ABC / x / C'B'A'), or A / x / A'.
3. **Mirror composition or Chiasmus:** Chiasmus or mirror composition refers to a design with no central element. The structure of the

content in a text should be based on ; (ABC / C'B'A') (Cuypers, 2011, Khoshmanesh, Abulfazl, (2009), "Examining the Compilation and Integration of Qur'anic Verses from the Perspective of Orientalists and Ayatollah Taleghani," Journal of Science and Education, No. 8, 26-39. 35 ; Mint, 2004, p.20).

4. Qur'anic examples in the study of symmetrical order

Michel Cuypers used the method of rhetorical analysis for the first time in the Qur'an. He uses his most extensive work in this field, entitled "The Banquet: A Reading of the Fifth Sura of the Qur'an to prove order and coherence in Surah Ma'idah (Makvand & Shakir, 1394, pp. 14-12). Here we provide an example of all three parallel, concentric, and chiasmus structures:

4-1. Parallel structure: verse 21 of Surah Nur

A. يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّبِعُوا (O' believers! Do not obey)

B. خَطَايَا (the steps)

C. الشَّيْطَانِ (of the Devil)

A'. وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ (and whoever follows)

B'. خَطَايَا (the steps)

C'. الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ (of the Devil, he commands to sin)

In this example, "obedience, sin, and evil" are repeated in a parallel structure, in the same order as it is first mentioned.

4-2. Concentric composition: verses 1-3 of Surah Al-Qadr

A. إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ (We sent the Qur'an on the Night of decree) (Declarative sentence)

B. وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ (what do you know of the Night of decree?) (Imperative sentence)

A'. لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ (The Night of decree is better than a thousand months) (Declarative sentence)

In this example, the verses relate to two declarative and imperative sentences.

4-3. Chiasmus composition: verse 1 of Surah Al-Munafiqun

A. إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ (When the hypocrites come to you)

B. قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ (They say we testify)

C. إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ (Surely you are the Messenger of God)

C'. وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ (And God knows that you are His Messenger)

B'. وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ (And God bears witness)

A'. إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ (Indeed, the hypocrites are liars)

In this example, the words “hypocrites, lack of testifying, the Messenger of God” have reappeared reverse. In this way, the term «الْمُنَافِقُونَ» at the beginning of the verse has symmetry with the word «الْمُنَافِقِينَ» at the end of the verse. Also, the word «نَشْهَدُ» corresponds to the word «يَشْهَدُ», and the word «رَسُولُ اللَّهِ» corresponds to the word «رَسُولُهُ».

Another example of the reverse order of the verse is «يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ» (O Messenger, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will be like the messengers who have gone before you). The word «الرَّسُولُ» with the word «رَسُولُهُ»; The word «بَلِّغْ» is synonymous with the word «بَلَّغْتَ» and the phrase «مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ» is similar to the phrase «إِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ» which is another example of a mirror structure (reversed) in the Holy Qur'an.

5. Introducing Surah Yusuf in the Holy Qur'an

Surah Yusuf is the twelfth surah of the Holy Qur'an (Abu Hayyan Andalusi, 1412 AH, vol. 6, p. 234). This Surah consists of 7079 letters, 1776 words, and 111 verses (Thalabi, 1422 AH, vol. 5, p. 196) and is placed after Surah Hud (Qutb, 1425 AH, vol. 5, p. 2872). This Surah was sent in Mecca (Fazlullah, 1419 AH, vol. 12, p. 157); some believe verses 1, 2, 3, and 7 were sent in Medina (Fakhr Razi, 1412 AH, vol 11, P. 416). Due to the unity of context, Allameh Tabatabai believes this surah was entirely sent down in Mecca (Tabatabai, 1412 AH, vol. 11, p. 100).

It is narrated from Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) that whoever recites this surah will have an easy passing (Ibn Kathir, 1412 AH, vol. 4, p. 313). Also, Imam Sadiq (AS) mentions that: “Whoever recites this surah each day and night, God will associate him with Yusuf on the Day of Judgment, and he will be one of God's special servants" (Hoveizi, 1415 AH, vol. 2, p. 408). Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi says: “The narrations that express the virtue of the Qur'an in recitation do not mean superficial reading or without any thought and action; rather, it requires thought, which is the beginning of an action. According to the content of this surah, if one makes this Surah their role model and rejects lust, wealth, position, and power, to the extent that the dark and gloomy dungeons precede the King's filthy palace, their soul will be as beautiful as Yusuf. His tremendous inner beauty will be revealed on the Day of Resurrection, and they will be one of the righteous servants of God” (Makarem, 1937, vol. 9, p. 297).

6. Symmetrical order of Surah Yusuf

Surah Yusuf has a mirror composition (Chiasmus) (ABC / C'B'A') which is as follows: Section A (verses 1-2) is about the Holy Qur'an and emphasizes that this book is sent from God in Arabic. In section B (verse 3), God tells Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that he will tell him stories he has never known. In section C (verses 4-6), the first section of Prophet Yusuf's story is told, where he recounts his dream to his father, Yaqub. He dreamt of the sun, moon, and eleven stars - representing his parents and brothers - bowing before him.

Section D (verses 7-18) refers to Yaqub's sons (AS) that intended to kill their brother Yusuf. They agree to throw him in a well, fake his death and deceive their father. In this section, the caravans find Yusuf, get him out of the well, and take him to Egypt. Section E (verses 19-22) refers to Yusuf being an enslaved person in Egypt, where Putifar (Aziz Mesr) bought him and told his wife (Zulaikha) to treat him well and that he may benefit them one day or that they might adopt him. Section F

(verses 23-31) retells how Zulaikha and other Egyptian women tried to seduce Yusuf, which he resisted and stayed loyal to Potiphar, who raised him since he was a child.

In section G (verses 32-35), Zulaikha becomes furious with Yusuf for his reluctance and threatens to imprison him. Thus, Yusuf is sent to prison for not obeying Zulaikha's demands. Section H (verses 36-42) refers to the story of the dreams of Yusuf's two cellmates. After speaking of monotheism and his ancestors Abraham, Yaghub, and Isaac, Yusuf interprets the dreams. He reveals that one will be executed, and the other will become the king's butler after his release. Section H (verses 43-49) refers to the king's dream where seven fat cows are devoured by seven sleek cows and seven ripe, healthy sheaves of wheat are devoured by seven shrivelled, dry ones. The released prisoner, now the king's butler, comes to see Yusuf in prison and asks him to interpret the king's dream.

In section G' (verse 50), the King immediately orders Yusuf's release. Still, Yusuf opposes the King's request and says he does not desire freedom until his innocence about Egyptian women and Zolaikha has been proven. In part F' (verses 51-53), Zulaikha and other women declare his innocence, and Yusuf is finally released.

In section E' (verses 54-57), it is mentioned that the same Yusuf, who was once brought to Egypt as an enslaved person, now reigns in Egypt and is the King's treasurer in Egypt. In section D' (verses 58-98), the story returns to family narratives between Yusuf and his brothers. This time, however, Yusuf deceives them and plots to join his brother Benjamin and his father, Yaghub. In section C' (verses 99-101), the end of the story is told as it began, where Yusuf's dream is fulfilled, and his father, mother, and eleven brothers bow before him. Section B' addresses Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and tells him that this is an unseen and untold story revealed to him, and he is now aware of its content. It also warns those who refuse to follow the Prophet. Finally, in section A', the surah ends by stating that the Holy

Qur'an is a divine revelation and confirms all previous prophets and books.

§	Description	Verse
A	Qur'an, the Divine Revelation	1-2
B	Prophet Muhammad (PBUH); Unaware of the history of the prophets	3
C	Yusuf's dream	4-6
D	The brothers' plot; Well; Travelling to Egypt	7-18
E	Yusuf's Slavery in Egypt	19-22
F	Women trying to deceive Yusuf	23-31
G	Zolaikha; Yusuf being sent to prison	32-35
H	Yusuf in Prison; Interpretation of the Prisoners' Dreams	36-42
H'	Yusuf in Prison; Interpretation of the King's Dream	43-49
G'	King; Ordering Yusuf to be released from prison	50
F'	Women apologizing to Yusuf	51-53
E'	Yusuf's reign in Egypt	54-57
D'	Yusuf's plot; King's Cup; Travelling to Egypt	58-98
C'	The realization of Yusuf's dream	99-101
B'	Prophet Muhammad (PBUH); Learning about the stories of the prophets through revelation	102-110
A'	The Qur'an, a divine revelation that confirms previous books	111

Symmetry in sections A and A.'

Section A (verses 1 and 2) refers to the revelation of the Holy Qur'an in Arabic:

«تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ»

(Yusuf: 1-2)

Section A' (Yusuf: 111) refers to the Qur'an's divinity and how it approves other previous divine books:

«مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِن تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ»

(Yusuf: 111)

So, the symmetry in these two sections refers to the revelation of the Holy Qur'an.

Symmetry in sections B and B.'

Section B (verse 3) refers to Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) unawareness of the history of the previous prophets and mentions

that the Qur'an will tell him the most incredible stories:

«نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ»

(Yusuf: 3)

Section B' (verses 102-110) refers to Yusuf's unrevealed story, which the prophet has now been informed of:

«ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ أَجْمَعُوا أَمْرَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَمْكُرُونَ»

(Yusuf: 102)

So, the symmetry in these sections is the Prophet's unawareness and his awareness of Yusuf's story. The matching of the word «الغافلين» in verse 3 of Surah Yusuf with the word «الغيب» in verse 102 of Surah Yusuf shows the reverse symmetrical order between these two parts.

Symmetry in sections C and C.'

Section C (verses 4-6) refers to Yusuf's dream about the sun and the moon and eleven stars which represent his parents and brothers, bowing before him:

«إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ»

(Yusuf: 4)

In section C' (verses 99-101), Yusuf's dream is realized, and his parents and brothers bow before him:

«وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا وَقَالَ يَا أَبَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُؤْيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًّا»

(Yusuf: 100)

So, the symmetry in these two sections is dreams and their realization.

Symmetry in sections D and D.'

In section D (verses 7-18), the brothers plot against Yusuf. They take him to the desert and throw him in a well. After the caravans find him, he is taken to Egypt:

«قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِنْهُمْ لَا تَقْتُلُوا يُوسُفَ وَالْقَوْهَ فِي غِيَابَتِ الْجُبِّ يَلْتَقِطُهُ بَعْضُ السَّيَّارَةِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ»

(Yusuf: 10)

In section D' (58-98), Yusuf plots against his brothers. He hides the king's cup in Benjamin's

bag and keeps him in Egypt. Contrary to section D when Yusuf travels to Egypt, here, his brothers travel to Egypt to retake Benjamin:

«فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَّازِهِمْ جَعَلَ السَّقَايَةَ فِي رَحْلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَتَتْهَا الْعِيرُ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَارِقُونَ»

(Yusuf: 70)

So, the symmetry in these two sections is the brother's plot against Yusuf and Yusuf's plot against his brothers.

Symmetry in sections E and E.'

In section E (verses 19-22), Yusuf is sold as a slave in the Egyptian market and enters Putifar's home:

«وَقَالَ الَّذِي اشْتَرَاهُ مِنْ مِصْرَ لِامْرَأَتِهِ أَكْرِمِي مَثْوَاهُ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا»

(Yusuf: 21)

In section E' (verses 54-57) Yusuf, who was once sold as a slave, is now the King or *Aziz Mesr*:

«قَالَ اجْعَلْنِي عَلَىٰ خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلَيْكُمْ»

(Yusuf: 55)

So, the symmetry in these two sections is slavery and the reign of Yusuf in Egypt.

Symmetry in sections F and F.'

In section F (verses 23-31), Zulaikha and other Egyptian women try to seduce Yusuf, but Yusuf resists their lustful desires and does not betray Putiphar:

«فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ بِمَكْرِهِنَّ أَرْسَلَتْ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَعْتَدَتْ لَهُنَّ مُتَّكَأً وَآتَتْ كُلَّ وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْهُنَّ سِكِّينًا وَقَالَتِ اخْرُجْ عَلَيْهِنَّ فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُ أَكْبَرْنَهُ وَقَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ وَقُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَذَا بَشَرًا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ»

(Yusuf: 31)

In section F' (verses 51-53), Zulaikha and other Egyptian women confessed to their sin and declared Yusuf's innocence:

«قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُنَّ إِذْ رَاوَدْتُنَّ يُوسُفَ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ قُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلَّهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنْ سُوءٍ»

(Yusuf: 51)

So, symmetry in these sections is Zulaikha and other women's efforts in seducing Yusuf, asking for forgiveness, and declaring his innocence.

Symmetry in sections G and G.'

In section G (verses 32-35), after Yusuf rejects

Zulaikha, she orders Yusuf to be imprisoned:
 «وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدْتَهُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ فَاسْتَعْصَمَ وَلَئِن لَّمْ يَفْعَلْ مَا أَمَرَهُ لَيُسْجَنَنَّ وَلَيَكُونًا
 مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ»

(Yusuf: 32)

In section G' (verse 50) the king orders for Yusuf's release after Yusuf interprets his dream. Here, Yusuf says he will not be released until his innocence has been proven:

«وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ أَتُؤْتُونِي بِهِ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ الرَّسُولُ قَالَ ارْجِعْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَاسْأَلْهُ مَا
 بَالِ النَّسْوَةِ الَّتِي آتَيْتَ بِهَا نَفْسَكَ يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ بِمَا تُكَلِّمِينَ النَّاسَ»

(Yusuf: 50)

So, the symmetry in these two sections is Yusuf's imprisonment and release.

Symmetry in sections H and H.'

Section H (verses 36-42) refers to the dreams of Yusuf's cellmates and Yusuf interpreting the dreams; one of whom was executed and the other became the king's butler:

«يَا صَاحِبِي السِّجْنِ أَمَا أَحَدُكُمَا فَيَسْقِي رَبَّهُ خَمْرًا وَأَمَا الْآخَرَ فَیُصَلِّبُ
 فَتَأْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ مِنْ رَأْسِهِ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ الَّذِي فِيهِ تَسْتَفْتِيَانِ»

(Yusuf: 41)

Section H' (verses 43-49) refers to the king's dream and its interpretation by Yusuf, according to which there will be seven rainy years and then seven years of drought in Egypt:

«قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ دَابًّا فَمَا حَصَدْتُمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِي سُنْبُلِهِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِمَّا
 تَأْكُلُونَ ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ سَعَةٌ شَدِيدٌ يَأْكُلْنَ مَا قَدَّمْتُمْ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
 مِمَّا تَحْصِنُونَ»

(Yusuf: 48-49)

So, the symmetry in these two sections is the prisoners' and the king's dreams and their interpretation by Yusuf.

One section of Surah Yusuf (D'), verses 58-98, reflects a concentric composition (ABC / x / C'B'A) which is as follow

- A. 58-79 The brothers' sin in calling Yusuf a thief
- B. 80-81 Yusuf's oldest brother not exiting Egypt
- C. 82 The Caravan Exiting Egypt
- D. 83 Yaquq hoping to reunite with his children
- E. 84 Yaquq going blind
- F. 85-86 Reprimanding Yaquq
- G. 87 In search of Yusuf and his brother

H. 88-89 The brothers ask Yusuf for help

G'. 90 Finding Yusuf and his brother

F'. 91-92 The brothers feel guilty

E'. 93-95 Sending Yusuf's shirt to Yaquq to heal his eyes

D'. 93-95 Yusuf hoping to reunite with his father

C'. 94-95 The caravan exiting Egypt

B'. 96 Yusuf's oldest brother exiting Egypt

A'. 97-98 The brothers regret their sins

Section A refers to the brother's sin of calling Yusuf a thief:

«قَالُوا إِن يَسْرِقْ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخٌ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ»

(Yusuf: 77)

And section A' refers to the brothers regretting their actions against their father and brother:

«قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ»

(Yusuf: 97)

Section B refers to Yusuf's older brother not exiting Egypt after losing Benjamin:

«قَالَ كَبِيرُهُمْ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ أَبَاكُمْ قَدْ أَخَذَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَوْثِقًا مِنَ اللَّهِ»

(Yusuf: 80)

Moreover, section B' refers to his exit from Egypt to take Yusuf's shirt to Yaquq.

Sections C and C' refer to the departure of the caravans from Egypt to Canaan; in C, the second journey, Yusuf's brothers fail to bring Benjamin with them, and in C' the caravans return from Egypt with Yusuf's shirt.

Section D refers to Yaquq's hope in reuniting with his children:

«عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَنِي بِهِمْ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ»

(Yusuf: 83)

Section D' points to Yusuf and Yaquq finally reuniting:

«وَأْتُونِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ»

(Yusuf: 93)

As it has been determined, the phrase «يَأْتِيَنِي» is related to the words «وَأْتُونِي»

Sections E refers to Yaquq losing his sight:

«قَالَ يَا أَسْفَىٰ عَلَىٰ يَوْسُفَ وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ»

(Yusuf: 84)

And section E' points to Yusuf's solution to Yaquq gaining his sight back:

«أَذْهَبُوا بِقَمِيصِي هَذَا فَأَلْقُوهُ عَلَى وَجْهِ أَبِي يَأْتِ بَصِيرًا»

(Yusuf: 93)

Section F refers to Yaqub's entourage who reprimand him for being upset due to Yusuf's departure:

«قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ تَفْتَأُ تَذْكُرُ يُونُسَ حَتَّى تَكُونَ حَرَضًا أَوْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْهَالِكِينَ»

(Yusuf: 85)

And section F' refers to the brothers who reprimand themselves for their sins:

«قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَثْرَكَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنْ كُنَّا لَخَاطِئِينَ»

(Yusuf: 91)

Thus, the common denominator between the two is "reprimand."

Section G refers to the search of Yusuf:

«يَا بَنِي أَذْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِنْ يُونُسَ وَأَخِيهِ»

(Yusuf: 87)

And section G' refers to finding Yusuf and his brother:

«قَالُوا أَلَيْكَ لَأَنْتَ يُونُسَ قَالَ أَنَا يُونُسَ وَهَذَا أَخِي»

(Yusuf ; 90)

Section H in the center of the ring which includes the verse:

«فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ قَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الْعَزِيزُ مَسَّنَا وَأَهْلَنَا الضُّرُّ وَجِئْنَا بِبِضَاعَةٍ مُزْجَاةٍ فَأَوْفِ لَنَا الْكَيْلَ وَتَصَدَّقْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْزِي الْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ»

This refers to the excellence of Aziz Mesr

against his brothers and them asking Yusuf, now the Aziz Mesr, for help.

7. Conclusion

In the verses of the Holy Qur'an, one of the beauties of the words of the Qur'an, as a book that was revealed in the «لِسَانِ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ» is the observance of eloquence and order. Reciting the Qur'an may seem discrete if done superficial and linear. Still, with a more profound and comprehensive reading, we find that its coherence results from a complex structure formed from a symmetrical order. In this study, the order of Surah Yusuf was shown by explaining the structure. We know that the theory of balanced order is presented in three forms: parallel, circular, and mirror. We divided Surah Yusuf into sixteen sections; the first eight are inversely related to the last eight sections. This article proved the existence of a coherent structure in line with the theory of symmetrical order. Despite the commentators' and researchers' views towards Quranic sciences, we were able to prove the structural coherence of Surah Yusuf, the twelfth surah in the Qur'an.

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