

Hierarchy of Values in Qur'anic Hermeneutic of Abdullah Saeed (A Study of Contextual Interpretation in Q.S. Al-Hujurat)

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DOI: 10.29240/alquds.v5i1.1951

Submitted: 2020-09-18 | Revised: 2021-03-09 | Accepted: 2021-04-14

Abstract. This article discusses an interpretation of the Qur'an by Abdullah Said using the contextual interpretation model. However, this paper will focus on how Abdullah Saeed developed the concept hierarchy of values inspired by Fazlur Rahman's thought, how application and implication of this concept in Qur'anic interpretation. Abdullah Saeed developed and formulated the concept hierarchy of values into five levels, including obligatory values, fundamental values, protective values, implementational values, and instructional values. The five hierarchies of values become a complete unified frame as an effort to the contextual interpretation of the Qur'an, especially the ethico-legal verses that mostly fill the daily life of most Muslims based on the understanding of maqashid al-sharia and the concept of good deeds. This study uses a descriptive analysis method and hermeneutic analysis techniques to apply the concept hierarchy of values in the Qur'anic interpretation. The results of this paper are in the contextual interpretation of QS. Al-Hujurat in the 1st-5th verses are instructional value; the 6th and 9th verses are combination of fundamental, protectional and impementational values; the 7th-8th verses and the 14th-18th verses are obligatory value; the 10th verse implementational value; the 11th-13th verses are instructional value. In QS. Al-Hujurat contain the five hierarchical levels of values that have been specifically conceived by Abdullah Saeed.

Keywords: Application of Concept, Hierarchy of Values, Qur'anic Hermeneutic, Contextual Interpretation, Abdullah Saeed.

Introduction

Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the most sacred religious text of Islam and is used as the basis and main source of guidance for Muslims in all

aspects of life, including spiritual, legal, moral, political, economic, or social.¹ Furthermore, the Qur'an is also considered by Muslims as a text that is not just for reading and for being understood but also as a reference in daily life.² Therefore, learning the Qur'an for every Muslim is one of the most important activities. In the hadith, the Prophet said:

خيركم من تعلم القرآن و علمه

"The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it". (Sahih al-Bukhari).

In that context, an effort was made to understand the Qur'an, and the efforts and results produce a variety of new scientific disciplines and knowledge as the development of existing scientific disciplines or new ones that were previously unknown.

The initial step in trying to understand the Qur'an is through interpretation. However, interpretations from one time to the next can develop according to the trends and observations of Muslim scholars or interpreters (*mufassir*) at that time, especially in the contemporary era. One of the Contemporary Muslim scholars who concerned with the Qur'anic interpretation, especially one who lived in a non-Muslim country is Abdullah Saeed. His works provide a new color related to *tajdid* in the interpretation of the Qur'an following the spirit of the times without harming and endangering the faith. He does not want to be caught in two extreme points, namely subjecting the public interest to God's sacred laws or discard the Qur'an because it is not following the times.³ Abdullah Saeed developed and offered a model of hermeneutics or Qur'anic interpretation, which he referred to as a contextual interpretation model that was sensitive to the context of both revelation and the present.

Many writings discuss Abdullah Saeed and his notions, such as contextual interpretation of Abdullah Saeed⁴, or his method of contextual interpretation⁵, and the offer of the value hierarchy concept initiated by

¹ Abdullah Saeed, *Islamic Thought: An Introduction*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pg 15.

² Abdullah Saeed, "Contextualizing" dalam *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an*, ed. Andrew Rippin, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 41.

³ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 2.

⁴ Muchlisin, Annas Rolli. "Penafsiran Kontekstual: Studi Atas Konsep Hierarki Nilai Abdullah Saeed", *Maghzu*, 1.1 (2016); Lien Iffah Nafatu Fina, "Interpretasi Kontekstual: Studi Pemikiran Hermeneutika al-Qur'an Abdullah Saeed", *Esensia*, Vol XII, No. 1, January 2011.

⁵ Imron Mustofa, "Krtitik Metode Kontekstualisasi Penafsiran al-Qur'an Abdullah Saeed", *Islamica: Jurnal Studi KeIslaman*, Volume 10 Nomor 2, March 2016; MK Ridwan,

Abdullah Saeed.⁶ However, this article tries to fill the gap of Abdullah Saeed's notion, which has not been much studied. Therefore, this article not only focuses on Abdullah Saeed's concept about the hierarchy of values but the applicable realm of the concept and implication hierarchy of value in the Qur'anic interpretation. In this case, the writer uses Surat al-Hujurat to be classified and explained according to the concept of the thought of the hierarchy of values by Abdullah Saeed.

Biography and Intellectual Background of Abdullah Saeed

Abdullah Saeed dedicates himself to focus on the study of the Qur'an and Islamic thought. He was born in the Maldives, an island located in the northern part of the Indian Ocean about 500 meters or 310 miles southwest of India, which later became a Republican state. Abdullah Saeed is a descendant of the Omani Arab tribes who live on the island of the Maldives, and in general, the population in the Maldives is Muslim.⁷

His education began in 1977, Abdullah Saeed moved to Saudi Arabia to study. In Saudi Arabia, he studied Arabic and entered several formal educational institutions, including the Institute of Basic Arabic Language (1977-1979) and the Institute of Intermediate Arabic Language (1979-1982) continued at the Islamic University of Saudi Arabia in Medina (1982-1986). The following year, Saeed pursued his study in Australia. In this country, Saeed completed his studies from undergraduate to doctoral programs. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree (Master of Arts Preliminary) and holds a BA in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Melbourne Australia (1987). He continued his postgraduate education for an MA in Islamic Studies and Applied Linguistics (1988-1992). Subsequently, a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies (1992-1994) was completed at the same university.

After completing his formal education around 1994, Saeed began his academic career by serving at the University of Melbourne Australia as a teaching assistant in the Department of Asian Languages and Anthropology. He became a senior lecturer at the University of Melbourne, Australia in 1996. In 2000, Saeed became an associate professor as well as a member of the professor's association. His academic career skyrocketed until he was appointed

"Metodologi Penafsiran Kontekstual: Analisis Gagasan dan Prinsip Kunci Penafsiran Kontekstual Abdullah Saeed", *Millati Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities*, Vol. 1, No. 1, June 2016.

⁶ A Najib, "Contextual Qur'an Interpretation: The Study on Concept of Hierarchy of Values Abdullah Saeed, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2016.

⁷ Kurdi et. all, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an dan Hadis*, (Yogyakarta, Elsaq Press, 2010), 206.

Sultan of Oman Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies in 2003 at the University of Melbourne, Australia.⁸

Abdullah Saeed mastered many languages such as Maldivian, English, Arabic, Urdu, German, and Indonesian. Abdullah Saeed currently serves as Director of the National Centre for Contemporary Islamic Studies at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Abdullah Saeed's attention was focused on issues of text and context, ijtihad, and interpretation. Saeed is a strong supporter of the reformation in Islamic thought.⁹ Abdullah Saeed, with all his best efforts, trying to establish the foundation of Islamic Studies at the University of Melbourne in particular, and in Australia in general¹⁰ so that Islamic studies can develop rapidly in Australia until now.

Besides teaching, Abdullah Saeed is also active in many international organizations and seminars. He is also included as one of the highly productive intellectual ranks. He produced many works, including books, articles, or seminar papers that have been published. His publications related to the study of the Qur'an, including *The Qur'an: An Introduction* (2008); *Islamic Thought: An Introduction* (2006); *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (2006); *Contemporary Approaches to the Qur'an in Indonesia* (2005); *Reading the Qur'an in the Twenty-first Century: A Contextualist Approach* (2013).

Abdullah Saeed also wrote several books on the issues of religious freedom, politics, social, Islam in Australia, and Islamic thought, namely *Sacred Place and Sacred Life in Islam* (1990); *Islamic Banking and Interest: A Study of the Prohibition of Riba in Islam and Its Contemporary Interpretation* (1996); *Essential Dictionary of Islamic Thought* (2001); *Islam in Australia* (2002); *Muslim Communities in Australia* (2002); *Islam and Political Legitimacy* (2003); *Freedom of Religion, Apostasy, and Islam* (2004); *Muslim Australians: Their Beliefs, Practices, and Institutions* (2004).

In his book entitled *Interpreting the Qur'an*, Abdullah Saeed was largely influenced and perfected the interpretation methodology of Fazlur Rahman¹¹ which contributed to the interpretation of ethico-legal verses by linking the context both during revelation and in the present.¹² Further, Saeed was also inspired by Rahman's notion of the concept of a hierarchy of values. Although Rahman did not explicitly mention the essence of the hierarchy of values in his works, Rahman often discussed the problems of a hierarchy of values as general principles such as justice which must be prioritized, primarily related to the

⁸ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an...*, 1.

⁹ Abdullah Saeed, *Al-Qur'an Abad 21*, terj. Ervan Nur Tawab, (Jakarta: Mizan, 2016), 316.

¹⁰ Kurdi, dkk, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an dan Hadis*, 207.

¹¹ Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an: an Introduction*, 222.

¹² Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an*, 127-128.

verse on polygamy.¹³ However, Rahman did not provide specific devices to develop the hierarchy of values.¹⁴

The absence of this more specific level of values encouraged Saeed to develop Rahman's notion of general principles, formulate them into a whole unified frame as a hierarchy of values. Rahman's influence on Saeed's thoughts was highly evident,¹⁵ but it did not mean that Saeed did not have original ideas. Abdullah Saeed's anxiety for the contextualist interpretation methodology project is due to the rise of textual interpretation models by textualists who interpret the Qur'an literally, so the interpretation has ignored the context both during revelation and the context during interpretation. Therefore, Abdullah Saeed develops and offers a hermeneutic model or interpretation of the Qur'an, which he calls a contextual interpretation model that is sensitive to the context of both the context of the revelation and the present. This interpretation is what is desired from contemporary Qur'anic hermeneutics.

Hierarchy of Values in Contextual Interpretation of Qur'anic Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics, in its capacity as an interpretation or method of interpretation, is known in the Islamic tradition, considering the interpretation of the holy book to be something dominant in the history of interpretation of the Qur'an. Based on the very specific formulation, Abdullah Saeed can be included together with contemporary thinkers such as Fazlur Rahman with *double movement*, Muhammad al-Talibi with *al-tafsir almaqasidi* and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd with *al-tafsir altarikhi al-siyaqi*, who have a quasi objectivist-modernist view with all its understandings.¹⁶ Saeed criticized the author-text interpretation and supported the text-reader interpretation. However, it did not mean that Saeed believed in subjectivity and total relativity. According to Saeed, interpretation has rules that create limitations in determining the meaning. Subjectivity is a logical consequence of interpretation because experience, values, beliefs, and prejudice, will remain inherent within the interpreter. Even

¹³ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 7.

¹⁴ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an Towards a Contemporary Approach*, 128.

¹⁵ Lien Iffah Na'atu Fina, "Interpretasi Kontekstual Abdullah Saeed: Sebuah Penyempurnaan Gagasan Tafsir Fazlur Rahman", *Hermeneutik*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Juni 2015, 68.

¹⁶ Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Hermeneutika dan Pengembangan Ulumul Qur'an*, (Yogyakarta: Nawasea Press, 2009), 74.

what the interpreters (*mufassir*) bring is something that is needed, so without them interpretation is not possible.¹⁷

On the other hand, Abdullah Saeed also emphasized that interpretation is a human understanding of revelation that cannot be equated with the revelation itself. Interpretation is a human effort in expressing the messages of the Qur'an. Therefore, there are no sacred interpretations. Both interpretations were made by the previous imams, the tabi'een, and the friends or companions (*shababat*).¹⁸ We can say that Saeed views the Qur'an as a holy book that still offers intellectual challenges for humanity to be able to uncover its true messages. For Saeed, no particular generation has reached the final truth in understanding the Qur'an, so that the next generation has no right to propose different forms of interpretation. It is like a contest. The opportunity is always open for each generation to participate in the race to find the understanding of the Qur'an that is closest to the truth.

In the matter of approach, the al-Qur'an and the Prophet himself never specified a form of the standard approach. For Saeed, this implies the freedom to develop interpretation methods that are considered appropriate. There is nothing wrong with utilizing the development of science in each generation to understand the al-Qur'an better.¹⁹ This makes Abdullah Saeed think that he has the right to offer an innovative approach in understanding the al-Qur'an as a continuation and refinement of what has been revealed by his predecessors.²⁰ Saeed has been able to answer Wael B. Hallaq's criticism of Fazlur Rahman as his predecessor that Rahman has done cannot be an appropriate legal methodology but only as a way of looking at the revelation.²¹ Saeed's concept hierarchy of values is a significant contribution to Fazlur Rahman's Qur'anic hermeneutics.

Abdullah Saeed proposed an interpretation called "contextualist" interpretation²², as an alternative to freeing the approach limitation of legalistic-literalistic or textual interpretation. It is an interpretive approach that solely refers to the linguistic meanings and historization to understand the al-Qur'an²³

¹⁷ Lien Iffah Na'Patu Fina, "Interpretasi Kontekstual: Studi Pemikiran Hermeneutika al-Qur'an Abdullah Saeed", *Esensia*, Vol XII, No. 1, January 2011, 173.

¹⁸ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an...*, 4.

¹⁹ Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an: an Introduction*, (London dan New York: Routledge, 2008), 220.

²⁰ Abdullah Saeed, *Al-Qur'an Abad 21*, 11 and 25.

²¹ Hallaq, Wael B., "Law and the Qur'an", in Jane D. McAuliffe (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2003, Vol. 3, 171.

²² Abdullah Saeed, "Some Reflections on the Contextualist Approach to Ethico-Legal Texts of the Qur'an", *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies*, 71 (2), 2008, 232-236.

²³ Abdullah Saeed, *Al-Qur'an Abad 21*, 38.

with ignoring the role of understanding of the socio-historical context that involves the revelation of the al-Qur'an.²⁴

Saeed considered that textual interpretation is often unable to find the values and principles of general moral ethics (such as justice and equality), which according to him is precisely the main message that the al-Qur'an intends to implant in the minds and hearts of humans.²⁵ Accordingly, Saeed re-read and criticized the tradition as if it had been an official interpretation from the first part of the 2nd century AH to the modern period. The reading is both in the realm of interpretation and *fiqh* through the "contextualist" interpretation approach, which is the interpretation model aimed at *ethico-legal* verses with more flexibility and paying attention to the context at the time of revelation, while at the same time also paying attention to the context of interpretation. Besides, contextual interpretation is also a continuation of the 18th and 19th century reformist movements to handle the challenges that emerged by Western modernity so that it requires a response equal to the level of the challenge.²⁶ This contextualist interpretation model makes the al-Qur'an meaningful in daily life, especially in modern times.

The contextual approach in the study of the al-Qur'an is an approach that tries to collaborate interpretation based on tradition and reason, which aims to understand the intention in the verses of the al-Qur'an by understanding the context why and under what conditions the verse was revealed.²⁷ Likewise, contextual interpretation in the hermeneutics of the al-Qur'an intended by Saeed is an interpretation that points to the belief that the teachings of the al-Qur'an are not necessarily rigid so that they can be applied flexibly by referring to fundamental values and context of its application.²⁸ This approach offers a more expansive space in the interpretation of the al-Qur'an, especially concerning the *ethico-legal* verses, in which the literal meaning is no longer seen as the main reference. As an implication, changes in legal views due to changes in the socio-historical context, in the contextualist perspective, are not taboo but natural.

This contextualist interpretation offered by Abdullah Saeed pays special attention to verses he calls *ethico-legal* verses, such as verses regarding the rules of marriage, divorce, legacy, commands and prohibitions, worship, *budud* and jihad, prohibition on stealing, relations with non-Muslims, orders related to ethics,

²⁴ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an...*, 50-53.

²⁵ Abdullah Saeed, *Al Qur'an abad 21*, 40.

²⁶ Abdullah Saeed, *Islamic Thought: An Introduction*, 134

²⁷ M.F. Zenrif, *Sintesis Paradigma Studi Al-Qur'an*, (Malang: UIN-Mlang Press, 2008), 53.

²⁸ Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an: an Introduction*, 214.

relations between religion and government.²⁹ The above fact leads Saeed to argue that traditional interpretations about some *ethico-legal* verses and the products of *fiqh* produced in the past can no longer serve the needs of modern society.

In the context above, Saeed views that the adage of *al-Qur'an shalih likulli zaman wa makan* requires attention. If left unchecked, the risk that will arise is the perception that the *ethico-legal* verses must be rejected, and Muslims will completely lose contact with the al-Qur'an. In fact, in Saeed's view, the problem is not with the *ethico-legal* verses of al-Qur'an, but on the literal interpretation model that does not pay attention to the context problem. Therefore, Saeed answers the fundamental question of what is the need to develop contextual interpretations of the al-Qur'an, especially in the *ethico-legal* verses. Reinterpretation of these verses is important because in fact, these verses are the least ready to be confronted with reality. However, at the same time, these verses most complete the daily lives of most Muslims.

Saeed's approach to the *ethico-legal* verses is largely determined by his ideas about the values carried by the al-Qur'an. These values are based on an understanding of *maqashid al-syariah* and the concept of good deeds. These values, based on Saeed's observations, are not on the same level. Thereby, Saeed divides the values carried by the al-Qur'an into four categories that are arranged in levels. This is one of Saeed's original ideas.³⁰

At the first level, *Obligatory Values*, which are the verses of the al-Qur'an which contain values of obligations that must be carried out by every individual Muslim everywhere and at any time because these values are universal. These values indeed do not depend on a particular culture, both the culture of Mecca and Medina, where the verse was revealed. These basic values are strongly emphasized in the al-Qur'an and agreed upon by Muslims as an inseparable part of religion.

There are three subcategories of the obligatory values according to Saeed³¹.

- a) *First*, the values related to faith and belief systems, such as faith in God, prophets, scriptures, doomsday, responsibility, and the afterlife. This first category of values is known as the pillars of faith.
- b) *Second*, the values related to worship practice are emphasized in the al-Qur'an, for example, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and remembrance to Allah.

²⁹ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an...*, 2.

³⁰ Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Argumentasi Abdullah Saeed dalam Mengusung Pendekatan Kontekstualis dalam Penafsiran al-Qur'an", Introduction in *Paradigma, Prinsip dan Metode Penafsiran Kontekstual atas al-Qur'an*, (Yogyakarta: Ladang Kata dan Baitul Hikmah, 2016), Xi.

³¹ Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an...*, 130.

In general, scholars categorize them into worship. These values in the Islamic world are known as the pillars of Islam.

- c) *Third*, the values explicitly and clearly mentioned by the al-Qur'an with halal or haram expressions, such as halal trading and haram usury. They are something that is clearly defined by the al-Qur'an in terms of halal and haram, which will never change. It means that what is classified haram by the al-Qur'an will remain haram, or what is categorized halal by the al-Qur'an will remain halal in any condition. The terms used by the al-Qur'an, such as *uhilla*, *uhillat* (has been permitted), *aballa* (He has permitted), or *ablalna* (We have permitted), indicate that if something is determined as halal, then the halal will be valid forever, as an example:

"Permitted for you is the catch of sea, and its food". (Surah Al-Maidah[5]: 96).

On the contrary, what has been categorized as haram by the al-Qur'an will remain haram and is not permitted at any time. Some terms used by the al-Qur'an, such as *barrama* (He has forbidden) and its various derivatives to indicate the prohibition, such as the prohibition of eating carcasses, blood, pork, usury practices, marrying biological mothers, daughters, sisters, sisters from fathers, sisters from mothers, daughters from brothers or daughters from sisters. In the examples above, the al-Qur'an uses terms that give the impression that something is expressly forbidden. In dealing with such verses, Muslims have no choice but to follow them literally. However, only very few verses explicitly mention the terms halal and haram. This discussion should not mix up something halal and haram in the literature of *fiqh*, interpretation, *qiyas*, and *ijma*.

The second level, *Fundamental Values* are verses that contain fundamental values in the form of basic human values, such as justice, humanity, protecting people's property rights, and so on. So they must be applied universally. Al-Gazali revealed the importance of protecting these fundamental values, including the protection of life, property, honor, ancestry, and religion. Among the scholars of *fiqh*, these values are called *maqasid al-syari'ah* (the main goal of sharia). Fundamental values are emphasized repeatedly in the al-Qur'an with textual arguments which strongly show that these values are the basis of the teachings of the al-Qur'an. It must be admitted that there are no specific texts showing that these values are fundamental and universally applicable, but classical Muslim scholars who study them by inductive methods conclude that the five values above are the main objectives of Islamic law.³² Although the universal value is limited to only five by classical scholars, it is still possible to develop this number in line with current demands. For example, the concept of 'protection on religion' is now extended to 'religious freedom' in Ibn Asyur's

³² Jasser Auda, *Maqasid al-Syariah A Beginner's Guide*, (London: Cromwell Press, 2008), 4

opinion, Rasyid Ridha who includes reforms and women's rights in her *maqasid* theory, and Yusuf al-Qardawi who adds self-respect and human rights.

Next, the third level, *Protectional Values* are verses that contain legal provisions and mechanisms shown by the al-Qur'an to maintain and support fundamental values, such as the prohibition on persecution, the prohibition on stealing, prohibition on reducing the scales, prohibition on usury, and so on. As an analogy, protection on property rights is a fundamental value. To make these values to be well protected, there is a prohibition on theft. This prohibition is included in the protectional value so that this value is universal as well.³³

The fourth level is the *Implementation values*. These values are concrete actions and steps that must be taken to maintain fundamental and protectional values. These values are in verses that contain the application of punishment. For example, prohibition on stealing must be upheld in society through certain actions to punish those who violate it. In the al-Qur'an, it is said that "*as for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands. It is the reward of their own deeds, an exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is Mighty, Wise*". (Surah al-Maidah[5]: 38)

When the al-Qur'an determined the punishment for cutting off hands in the 7th century AD in Saudi Arabia, the al-Qur'an had considered and adjusted this type of punishment according to the applied cultural context at that time. At that time, capital punishment and other forms of physical punishment had been applied in Saudi Arabia, so severance punishment was the most effective form of punishment for the condition at that time. According to Saeed, what needs to be underlined is that this form of punishment is not the main purpose of the al-Qur'an. However, it is only the mechanism or method used to reach the main purpose of the al-Qur'an, which is *hifzu al-mal* (protection on the property). Likewise, other forms of punishment that are stated literally in the al-Qur'an, such as the *qisbasha* penalty for the perpetrators of the killings, caning of one hundred times for adulterers and eighty times for those who accuse adultery, and other forms of punishment that are closely related to applied socio-cultural conditions in the Saudi Arabia society at the time of revelation so that this form of punishment is local and temporal.

The fifth level is *Instructional Values*, which is the action taken by the al-Qur'an when dealing with a specific problem at the time of revelation. These values are in verses that contain the commands and prohibitions of the al-Qur'an in order to overcome certain problems at the time of the Prophet Muhammad in a very specific and diverse context. Moreover, these values are also often shown in simple statements that show action on an appropriate case or a parable, a story, and a reference to a particular event. These verses are

³³ Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an: an Introduction*, 166.

certainly related to the conditions of the revelation of the al-Qur'an, so they are not necessarily can be applied automatically universally. For Saeed, these values are the most widely found, the most diverse, the most difficult to understand and analyze because the number of presentations in the al-Qur'an is huge, and the form is also very diverse.³⁴

The verses that contain instructional value use various word choices, such as *amr* (command), *nahy* (prohibition), related to *'amal ṣalib*, *masal* (parable), stories, or special events. To understand these diverse values, it is necessary to consider the issue of the frequency of mentioning these values, the degree of emphasis, and their relevance to the cultural context of the time and the universal culture.³⁵ For example, in a verse that discusses polygamy.

"If you fear that you might not treat the orphans justly, then marry the women that seem good to you: two, or three, or four. If you fear that you will not be able to treat them justly, then marry (only) one, or marry from among those whom your right hands possess. This will make it more likely that you will avoid injustice". (Surah an-Nisa[4]: 3)

In this area, the commentators had difficulty connecting the message of the al-Qur'an with modern life today. The difficulty is due to the ambiguity in values. Saeed then formulated a way to explore and find out whether the values in verses as mentioned above are universal or limited to the time of the Prophet. The criteria used by Saeed³⁶, in this case, are as follow.

First, frequency, in the sense is how often the message is mentioned in the al-Qur'an, which can be measured through tracing the main themes related to these values. The more often certain themes are repeated in the al-Qur'an, the more critical these values are. *Second*, the emphasis of the message during the mission of the Prophet's missionary endeavor took place. The principle is that the greater the emphasis on a particular value, the more significant that value is in the al-Qur'an. *Third*, its relevance to the culture, times, places, conditions of the Prophet and the early Muslim community. Knowing the cultural context at the time of revelation plays a vital role in determining the relevance of the al-Qur'an to the modern age. In this case, the interpreter is required to search the revelation period and the context that influences it, how the customs of Saudi Arabia society, socio-historical, and cultural construct.

Furthermore, the interpreter compares it with the current condition of society. The example presented by Saeed is about capital punishment which was

³⁴ Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an: an Introduction*, 167-169.

³⁵ Abdullah Saeed, *Al-Qur'an Abad 21*, 111-116

³⁶ Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an: an Introduction*, 169-170.

very common in pre-Islamic times. Al-Qur'an verses about capital punishment must have considered pre-Islamic culture to establish dialectics between the al-Qur'an and the community receiving the revelation. In this case, the interpreter must contemplate the relevance of the value and see whether the value is the goal or only as 'media' to achieve more fundamental values, such as protecting property rights.

To better understand the concept of the Hierarchy of Values proposed by Abdullah Saeed, the following is an effort to implement the concept in Surah al-Hujurat.

Abdullah Saeed's Hierarchy of Values in Surah al-Hujurat

Surah al-Hujurat in the al-Qur'an is the 49th surah which consists of 18 verses and is included in the Medinan surah. Surah al-Hujurat has a total verse that is less than hundreds but is a great and noble surah. There are various essential creed and sharia, even containing the essence of existence and humanity. This essence is a broad horizon and a far reach for reason and heart. Additionally, it also gives rise to thoughts and concepts that are important to the soul and reason. It includes various *manhaj* (ways) of creation, structuring, rules of education, and guidance.³⁷

Obligatory Value in Surah Al-Hujurat

Obligatory Values, which is the verses of the al-Qur'an which contain values of obligations that must be carried out by every individual Muslim everywhere and at any time because these values are universal. The 7th and 8th verses in Surah Al-Hujurat represents obligatory values.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ
وَزَيَّنَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْمُشْرُوكَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ

“And know that among you is Allah's Apostle; should he obey you in many a matter, you would surely fall into distress, but Allah has endeared the faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you unbelief and transgression and disobedience; these it is that are the followers of a right way”.

فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

³⁷ Sayyid Qutbh, *Tafsir Fi Zhilalil Qur'an*, trans. Asías Yasin, (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2004), Cet. I, Jilid X, 407.

“By grace from Allah and as a favor; and Allah is Knowing, Wise”.

In this verse contains the values of obligations that must be carried out by every individual Muslim everywhere, and whenever that includes these values are universal. This verse shows the obligation of Muslims to believe in the Prophet Muhammad by respecting, glorifying, being polite, and obeying all his commands. This is because the Messenger of Allah knows more about the benefit of his people and more compassionate towards his people than his own people.³⁸

In the category of obligatory values, the discussion about faith in the Prophet is included in the first value point known as the pillars of faith. Indeed, the perfect faith reflected in this verse consists of verbal confession, justification with the heart, and righteous deeds with the members of the body, then hatred for disbelief is contrary to love for the faith. This means that making faith beautiful in the heart is parallel with justifying (tasdiq) in the heart, and hatred of iniquity is parallel with making good deeds.³⁹ For such people, they get guidance, gifts and gifts from Allah as His greatest pleasure to follow the straight path that Allah has given.

Then, verse 14th to 18th of Surah Al-Hujurat:

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ ءَأَمَّا قُلٌّ لَّمَ تُوْمِنُوْا وَلَكِن قُوْلُوْا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيْمَانُ فِي قُلُوْبِكُمْ وَإِن تُطِيعُوْا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهُ لَا يَلِيْكُم مِّنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ

“The dwellers of the desert say: We believe. Say: You do not believe but say, We submit; and faith has not yet entered into your hearts; and if you obey Allah and His Apostle, He will not diminish aught of your deeds; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful”.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَزِنُوْا أَوْ جَاهَدُوْا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الصّٰدِقُوْنَ

“The believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Apostle then they doubt not and struggle hard with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allah; they are the truthful ones”.

قُلْ أَتَعْلَمُوْنَ اللّٰهَ بِدِيْنِكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ

³⁸ Ad-Dimasyqi Al-Imam Abdul Fida Isma'il Ibnu Kasir, *Tafsirul Qur'anil Adzimi*, 303.

³⁹ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya Jilid 9, (Edisi yang Disempurnakan)*, 404.

“Say: Do you apprise Allah of your religion, and Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth; and Allah is Cognizant of all things”.

يَمُنُونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُلْ لَأَتَمُنُوا عَلَىٰ إِسْلَامِكُمْ بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

“They think that they lay you under an obligation by becoming Muslims. Say: Lay me not under obligation by your Islam: rather Allah lays you under an obligation by guiding you to the faith if you are truthful”.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

“Surely Allah knows the unseen things of the heavens and the earth; and Allah sees what you do”.

In the five verses above (from verse 14th to verse 18th), Allah emphasizes the teachings of the Al-Quran that must be followed by every Muslim universally, at all times, places, and circumstances. The practice of this verse becomes one of the most important markers of a Muslim because it contains the characteristics of true faith that must be possessed by them. The characteristics of true faith in question include the recognition and dignity of faith that is not only spoken verbally, but perfect faith must arise from the bottom of the heart.⁴⁰ The true believers are those who believe in Allah and His Messenger, are sincere in charity, renounce hypocrisy, then there is not the slightest doubt about their faith, and they strive for the wealth and soul they have in the way of Allah SWT to achieve the pleasure of Allah SWT only.⁴¹ How much the level of one's faith must be known by Allah even though something supernatural both in heaven and on earth. Even Allah sees what is hidden in the heart and what is spoken by the tongue because Allah is All-Knowing and Seeing what all His servants are doing.

Instructional Values in Surah Al-Hujurat

Surah al-Hujurat starts with a call and exclamation on the believers not to precede Allah and His Apostle in all aspects because only Allah is All-Knowing.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْدُمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَٰعِرٌ عَلِيمٌ

⁴⁰ Ad-Dimasyqi Al-Imam Abdul Fida Isma'il Ibnu Kasir, *Tafsirul Qur'anil Adzimi*, 423

⁴¹ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya Jilid 9, (Edisi yang Disempurnakan)*,

“O you who believe! be not forward in the presence of Allah and His Apostle, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is Hearing, Knowing”

In this verse, Allah teaches politeness to Muslims in the presence of the Messenger of Allah, both in terms of deeds and conversations.⁴² In essence, the verse contains a prohibition to precede Allah and His Apostle as well as the command to fear Allah because only Allah is All-Hearing and All-Knowing everything. Seen in the context of today's modern age, this first verse means the prohibition on deciding a case before discussing and examining first the law of Allah and the provisions of the Apostle on the matter so that the decision taken does not contradict with Islamic sharia.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالِكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

“O you who believe! do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, and do not speak loud to him as you speak loud to one another, lest your deeds became null while you do not perceive”.

Furthermore, still in the editorial of the verse, which is almost the same as the existence of *la nahy*, it shows that based on the concept of Abdullah Seed's hierarchy of value, the verse belongs to the fifth level, which is the Instructional Values verse (instructional values). This verse was revealed as an action taken by the al-Qur'an when dealing with a problem that occurred during the revelation. The problem referred to at that time was narrated by Imam Bukhari.

“It is narrated to us on the authority of Hasan Ibn Muhammad, it is narrated to us on the authority of Hajjaj, from Ibn Juraij, it is narrated to me on the authority of Ibn Abu Malika, that Abdullah Ibn Zubair r.a. told him that a delegate of Banu Tamim came to The Messenger of Allah. Thereupon, Abu Bakr r.a. said, “Appoint Al-Qa'qa Ibn Ma'bad as their chief”. And Umar r.a. said, “Appoint Al-Aqra' Ibn Habis as their chief”. Thus, Abu Bakr r.a. said, “there is no other purpose except to oppose you”, finally both fell in argumentation until their voices grew louder in the presence of The Messenger of Allah”⁴³

For this problem, the al-Qur'an deliberately revealed this verse to overcome the above problem so that the honor of the Prophet Muhammad

⁴² Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya Jilid 9, (Edisi yang Disempurnakan)*, (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf al-Qur'an Badan Litbang dan Diklat, 2008), 396.

⁴³ Ad-Dimasyqi Al-Imam Abdul Fida Isma'il Ibnu Kasir, *Tafsirul Qur'anil Adzimi*, trans. Bahrin Abu Bakar et al, (Bandung : Sinar Baru Algensindo, 2008), Cet. II, 287-288.

SAW was protected and well maintained. From this incident to the revelation of this verse, it can be understood how Allah taught the Believers about politeness in conversation in the presence of the Prophet Muhammad by lowering his voice and not speaking loudly or harshly because it could offend the Prophet. If it is referred to for the modern age, this verse indicates that ethics or manners when speaking to others, especially to older people who are properly respected, in which we should speak softly, slowly, calmly, not in a loud voice, respecting and glorifying each other so as not to result in the loss and vanished of all the goodness and merits that have been obtained in the past.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَعْضُونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِتَتَّقُوا لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ
وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

“Surely those who lower their voices before Allah's Apostle are they whose hearts Allah has proved for guarding (against evil); they shall have forgiveness and a great reward”.

This verse is still a connection between verses from verse 2 to verse 5 related to *asbab al-nuzul* or the reason for the revelation of this verse, which is motivated by the event mentioned earlier (in Surah Al-Hujurat [49]: 2). In this verse, Allah emphasizes to the Believers that those who lower their voices before the Messenger of Allah after training themselves with a variety of rigorous and severe training, they have been tested by Allah for piety. They have succeeded in purifying themselves with various efforts and awareness to get great forgiveness and reward.⁴⁴ Imam Ahmad said in his book of *Zuhud* that actually, those who want to do immorality, but they do not do it, it is better than those who do not like immorality and do not do it.⁴⁵

Verse 3 of this surah in the present context contains instructions to protect and respect other people and religious symbols, especially the Messenger of Allah to be among the pious. According to this verse, the indicator of the pious is the one who has been tested by Allah but who has passed the test with great effort.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُنَادُونَكَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ الْحُجُرَاتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

“(As for) those who call out to you from behind the private chambers, surely most of them do not understand”

Another indication is that this verse contains a story of an event that occurred during the time of the Prophet. Ibn Ishaq in the book of *Sirah*,

⁴⁴ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya Jilid 9, (Edisi yang Disempurnakan)*, 397-398.

⁴⁵ Ad-Dimasyqi Al-Imam Abdul Fida Isma'il Ibnu Kasir, *Tafsirul Qur'anil Adzimi*, 296.

explained that the 9th year of Hijri was the year the flow of delegates from all the Arabian peninsula to Medina to meet the Messenger of Allah. Among the delegates, according to Qatadah, were delegates from Banu Tamim of 70 people. They said, *“We are from the Banu Tamim, we came here bringing our poets in the field of poetry and speech to compete with your poets.”* The Prophet replied, *“We are not sent to recite poetry and we are not sent to show arrogance, but if you want to try, you may speak your poetry.”* Thus, one of the youths among them proudly shows their people with various virtues. The Prophet Muhammad presented Hassan bin Sabit to answer their poetry and it turned out that Hassan could subdue the poet from the Banu Tamim. Apparently, the delegation from Banu Tamim approached the Prophet and declared himself to convert to Islam.

In this verse, the wisdom of the Messenger of Allah is clearly seen to face the delegation of the Banu Tamim. They came, called the Prophet out of his wife's room beside the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah. Allah states that most of them are stupid, ignorant of politeness and etiquette in making an honorary visit to a head of state, specifically a Prophet. As a verse that contains the instructional value, it can certainly be applied to the current context, in which the manners put forward in this verse are now known as protocol and security. Through this verse, it can be used as a code of ethics to give appropriate and full respect to the dignitary or someone visited.

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“And if they wait patiently until you come out to them, it would certainly be better for them, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful”.

Surah al-Hujarat of 5th verse is still connected asbab al-nuzul or the reason for the decline of the verse, which is based on the events that have been mentioned previously. In this verse, it states that if the delegation did not shout out to the Prophet Muhammad and they patiently waited until he himself came out of his room, that would be better for them. This is because the attitude shows reverence and respect for the Prophet Muhammad.

Allah is forgiving those who call upon the Prophet from the back of his room if they repent and replace their carelessness with decency. Allah is Most Merciful to them, not punishing them later on the Day of Judgment because they have regretted their actions by declaring themselves to convert to Islam (Depag, 2008: 401).⁴⁶ In a modern context, this verse shows the manners that must be performed by Muslims while going to meet someone in his house.

⁴⁶ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya Jilid 9, (Edisi yang Disempurnakan)*, 399-401.

Furthermore, it is not allowed to call him out of his house immediately with a rude tone, loud, and without manners. The Muslims who visited should be patient until the owner of the house came out of his house.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّن نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الْأِسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُوبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

“O you who believe! let not (one) people laugh at (another) people perchance they may be better than they, nor let women (laugh) at (other) women, perchance they may be better than they; and do not find fault with your own people nor call one another by nicknames; evil is a bad name after faith, and whoever does not turn, these it is that are the unjust”.

The 11th of this Surah, came down in response to events that took place at the time of revelation, one of which was when the Prophet arrived in the city of Medina, many Ansar had more than one name. If they are called by friends, sometimes they are called by names they don't like, so this verse went down and existed.

In this verse, there is also an indication of *la naby* that means the prohibition to mock others, especially what often happens to women who mock other women. It may be that the ones who are mocked are better than those who make. Also, this verse also forbids reproach of others and calls with bad calls such as calls to someone who has faith with the words, the wicked, The infidel/kafir, and others. However, summons containing honor are not prohibited as the name of Abu Bakr with as-Shiddiq and Umar with al-Faruq.⁴⁷ If drawn in the current context, the verse has the meaning to forbid Muslims from mocking each other, self-deprecating, and calling others with bad calls. In essence, the moral ideal of the verse, which contains the basic principles of mutual respect and respect among fellow Muslims, is very relevant, especially to maintain the unity and integrity of Muslims today.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“O you who believe! avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, surely Allah is Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful”.

⁴⁷ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya Jilid 9, (Edisi yang Disempurnakan)*, 410-411.

The instructive value emphasized from this verse is the prohibition to prejudice, find fault or badness of others, and gossip or swear at others. In this verse, Allah also gives a parable for those who like to gossip, like those who eat the flesh of their deceased relatives. At the end of the verse, Allah commands Muslims to fear Allah wherever and whenever. Allah is the recipient of repentance for His servants who ask forgiveness for all their mistakes and mistakes. This instructive value is significant to be applied in today's context. Thus, brotherhood among Muslims remains firmly established.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِئََّا تَعْرِفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

"O you men! surely We have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is Knowing, Aware".

In verse 13th of Surah al-Hujarat is called instructive value because this verse refers to certain problems that occurred during the time of the Prophet SAW. Narrated by Abu Dawud about the descent of this verse about the events that happened to Abu Hindin, a friend of the Prophet who used to serve the Prophet to remove dirty blood from his head with an incinerator, which looks like a horn. Rasulullah SAW ordered the Bani Bayadah tribe to marry Abu Hindin with a woman from their circle. They asked, "Should we marry our girls to slaves?" Then Allah revealed this verse. Thus, it is not easy to look down on another person just because of their position.

This verse contains the message that Allah created human from a man and a woman. Then, Allah made people in their own national, ethnic, different races and skin colors not to mock one another, but to make fellow human beings, both men and women know each other and help one another. Allah does not like those who show arrogance with their offspring, ranks, or wealth because the noble ones among men according to Allah are only those who most fear Him.⁴⁸ Thus, there is still a link (*munasabah*) of this verse with the previous verse, if the previous verse discusses the ethics of fellow Muslims, but in this verse Allah explains the ethics between different nations. The difference is to know each other, help and complement each other.

⁴⁸ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya Jilid 9, (Edisi yang Disempurnakan)*, 419-420.

Combination of Fundamental Values, Protectional Values, and Implementational Values in Surah Al-Hujurat

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحَبُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ
نَادِمِينَ

“O you who believe! if an evil-doer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it, lest you harm a people in ignorance, then be sorry for what you have done”.

The 6th verse of Surah Al-Hujarat can be categorized in verses which have a combination of three levels that are the fundamental, protectional, and implementational values. This verse shows the emphasis of the Al-Qur'an on the basic human values inherent in human beings, such as the value of life and religious protection. The fundamental value of protection (protective value) of life and religion is protected by the prohibition of not being careless and orders to examine all news that comes both regarding the interests of religion and human life itself. In the meantime, the implementation value aims to provide specific steps in applying protective values. In this verse, the implementative value is applied by steps to examine carefully, not rashly, and not in a hurry in receiving news before the truth of the news is clear.

This verse gives guideline for the believers to be careful in receiving news especially if the news is sourced from the wicked. The need to be careful in receiving news so that Muslims avoid regret that harms oneself, others or religion due to news that has not been studied before.⁴⁹

وَإِن طَافَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِن بَعَثَ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَىٰ الْآخَرَىٰ فَمَا تَلَوَا
الَّتِي تَبْعِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِن فَاءَتْ فَاصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُقْسِطِينَ

“And if two parties of the believers quarrel, make peace between them; but if one of them acts wrongfully towards the other, fight that which acts wrongfully until it returns to Allah's command; then if it returns, make peace between them with justice and act equitably; surely Allah loves those who act equitably”.

The fundamental value in this verse is because it discusses the value of justice and peace, which is a universal basic value for Muslims while at the same time forming the main objectives of the Shariah. Besides fundamental values, this paragraph also contains protective values which intend to protect

⁴⁹ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya Jilid 9, (Edisi yang Disempurnakan)*, 403.

fundamental values. This verse emphasizes the prohibition to do wrong by breaking the agreement that has been established. The implementative value in this verse contains specific steps to protect justice and peace by making an effort for people who are at odds or at war to make peace according to the provisions of Allah's law based on justice and the benefit of the two disputing parties.

However, if the attempt to make peace still rises defied and continued to do wrong, then it must be fought so that they return to accept Allah’s law. Then, if the dissident group has submitted and returned to the command of Allah, then the two hostile groups must be treated fairly and wisely. There is no more hostility and disputes. Allah commands to keep doing justice in all matters. Therefore, for those who act justly, Allah promises a lot of rewards.

Implementational Values in Surah al-Hujurat

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

“The believers are but brethren, therefore make peace between your brethren and be careful of (your duty to) Allah that mercy may be had on you”.

Surah al-Hujarat, verse 10, goes back to specific steps to protect the value of justice and peace, namely by emphasizing that fellow Muslims are brothers so that between brothers and sisters, never wrong and hurt each other. In addition, this verse also contains the certainty that Allah must give His mercy to those who fear and fear Him.⁵⁰

Based on the above discussion, the classification Abdullah Saeed’s hierarchy of values in Surah Al-Hujurat as follows:

Verse of Surah Al-Hujurat	Hierarchy of Values
The 1 st -5 th verses	Instructional Value
The 6 th verse	Combination of Fundamental, Protectional and Impementational Values
The 7 th -8 th verses	Obligatory Value
The 9 th verse	Combination of Fundamental, Protectional and Implementational Values
The 10 th verse	Implementational Value
The 11 th -13 th verses	Instructional Value
The 14 th -18 th verses	Obligatory Value

⁵⁰ Ad-Dimasyqi Al-Imam Abdul Fida Isma’il Ibnu Kasir, *Tafsirul Qur’aniil Adzimi*, 318.

The Implication of Qur'anic Interpretation by Abdullah Saeed's Hierarchy of Values

The concept hierarchy of values offered by Abdullah Saeed is an interactive model of the Qur'anic interpretation, which is very important to address ethico-legal verses in the Qur'an. Readers participate actively in providing meaning to the text, not just passively accepting the meaning of the text. In other words, the reader should carry out a continuous process of interpretation of the text according to its socio-historical context.

The concept hierarchy of values will help interpret the Qur'an by creating a level of stability within an interpretive tradition and providing the possibility to reinterpret the instructions of the Qur'an in various changing conditions and contexts. The most important values and practices of the Qur'an (fundamental matters) maintain their significance and continuity in the process of contextual interpretation. At the same time, the approach taken by Saeed allows an interpreter to consider changes, emphases, shifts in meaning and in some cases allows the elimination of certain values and practices that depend on the context and the overall frame of reference.

Depending on the context, certain values which did not appear to be of particular importance in early Islam may acquire a high level of significance. An example is the significance of human rights today. Some of these rights, as understood today, are not supported in the Islamic tradition. However, the discourse of human rights is now accommodated in the traditions of the Muslim community, as have many other religions. Some values and institutions may also be completely abandoned due to changing contexts. An example is a slavery. Although this has existed for centuries in various Muslim societies, in the current context, Muslims are no longer willing to defend or support these traditions.

The concept hierarchy of values by Abdullah Saeed has very significant implications for interpretation with a contextual approach. With this formulation, the interpreter will be required to trace a verse in order to find and know the degree of urgency, complexity, and ambiguity of each value from a verse, so that there will be different treatment for each of these ethico-legal verses. With this hierarchy of values, several verses can be found by considering whether the verse seen has a fixed or changing value and whether the verse should be followed literally or not. This hierarchy of values will help the interpreter to find and determine the values of the verse being traced, but it maintains the fundamental values of the Qur'an as in three categories, including obligatory value, fundamental value and protectional value. Thus, this is very

useful for understanding as well as applying the values contained in the Qur'an, especially in a contemporary context.

Conclusion

The formulation of the concept of a value hierarchy proposed by Abdullah Saeed can ease interpretation of the Qur'an, especially on the verses of ethics-law (ethico-legal). This is because the paragraph of the ethics-law is the verse that is least ready to be confronted with reality. Though the verse that most fills the daily life of most Muslims. Thus, the concept of Abdullah Saeed's value hierarchy can provide a new horizon in the Al-Quran contextual interpretation model that is sensitive to the context of both the context at the time of revelation and the current context. The concept of the value hierarchy applied in the verses of Al-Quran can be an answer and solution to the needs of modern-contemporary Muslims for the reinterpretation of the ethico-legal verses.

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