

## The Concept of Qur'anic Communication from the Perspective of the Philosophy of Science

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**Abstract.** This study aims to analyze the term *al-ittishāl* or *al-mūashalah*, specifically interpreted in Arabic as communication. The study addresses inquiries regarding the essence and existence of communication in the Qur'an from ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives. The focus of this study is crucial for analysis as the mainstream perception of communication in society has predominantly concentrated on aspects such as *al-qaul*, *al-khitab*, *al-kalam*, and the like. Employing thematic tafsir methodology, this research analyzes data primarily derived from the Qur'an, its exegesis, and hadith, while relevant books and journal articles serve as secondary sources. The research reveals that the essence of Qur'anic communication through the term *al-ittishāl*, stemming from the root word *washala* and its derivatives, recurs 12 times within the Qur'an across various chapters, all of which connote meanings of connection, seeking protection, reaching, and revelation (clarification). Meanwhile, the existence of communication in the Qur'an, from the perspective of the philosophy of science, is categorized into three aspects. Firstly, the ontological dimension of communication in the Qur'an is evident in the term *yashilūna*, signifying 'connected, linked, and reaching.' Secondly, the epistemological aspect of communication is depicted through its various forms within the Qur'an, encompassing verbal and non-verbal expressions, whether direct or indirect, unidirectional, or bidirectional. Thirdly, the axiological aspect of Qur'anic communication is discernible in its intended purpose or benefits, aiming for human understanding of the conveyed instructions and demonstrating the power of Allah.

**Keywords:** *Essence of Communication; Existence of Communication; Qur'anic Interpretation; Philosophy of Science*

### Introduction

The primary source of Islamic teachings is the Qur'an. The existence of the Qur'an is akin to an ocean brimming with wonders and uniqueness that never fades away into the oblivion of time and never diminishes from the ink of knowledge. The Qur'an introduces itself, among other things, as *(هدى للناس)* - a guidance for humankind - and as a book revealed to lead humanity from darkness into radiant light.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the Qur'an also functions as knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

The extension of the Qur'an holds a distinct significance as it stands as the primary symbol of prophethood and the fundamental divine message, alongside the sayings of the Prophet

<sup>1</sup> Ahmad Von Denffer, *Ulum Al Qur'an: An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'an (Koran)* (Kube Publishing Ltd, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Dwi Sukmanila Sayska and Jani Arni, "Evidences of Scientific Miracle of Al-Qur'an in the Modern Era," *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 24, no. 1 (June 2, 2016), 79, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jush.v24i1.1481>.

(Hadith), which serve as an explanation of the Qur'an itself.<sup>3</sup> It serves as guidance, without a doubt. Therefore, Muslims are enjoined to comprehend the meanings and content of the Qur'an to implement its teachings in their daily lives, including understanding how communication should be conducted, as communication mirrors the communicator.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that the Qur'an has had an immense influence throughout human civilization is evident in the variety of works produced by Muslim and non-Muslim figures. This ranges from classical to contemporary works, from those that derive moral lessons (*ibrah*) from the Qur'an to those seeking to obscure its meanings.

Building upon the Qur'an's position as guidance and knowledge,<sup>5</sup> the evolution of interpretation has yielded significant results, particularly in interpretative models. One model perceived to meet the needs of people in the modern era is the thematic interpretation model. Similarly, the study of Qur'anic communication needs to be further developed in line with this evolution.

This theme becomes intriguing as the Qur'an contains various verses that signify communication within diverse contexts. The Qur'an depicts communication as an innate aspect of human nature, as stated in Surah Al-Rahman [55]: 1-4.

*The Most Compassionate taught the Qur'an, created humanity, and taught them speech.*<sup>6</sup>

The word "البيان" (*al-bayan*) in that verse, according to Rakhmat (d. 2021) citing ash-Syaukani (d. 1834), is interpreted as the ability to communicate.<sup>7</sup> This understanding signifies that communication is an innate predisposition granted by Allah to humanity (*Sunnatullah*). Hence, as social beings inherently inclined to interact with others, humans must possess the capability to master and comprehend the concept of proper and accurate communication.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, the Qur'an delineates verses related to the role and ethics of communicating well and appropriately, as found in Surah Al-Imran [3]: 112, elucidated by al-Maraghi (d. 1952), explaining that the verse illustrates that Allah has reminded humanity to maintain consistent relations with Him and with fellow humans to avoid distress and disgrace.<sup>9</sup> Based on this perspective, it can be understood that everyone will face difficulties and constraints in life unless they establish a good relationship with their Creator and maintain positive relationships with other individuals. This underscores the significance of communication in navigating life as social and cultured beings.

Moreover, in another verse, guidelines for interacting with fellow humans are detailed, as Allah SWT states in Surah An-Nisa [4]: 86.

*86. And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet [in return] with one better than it or [at least] return it [in a like manner]. Indeed, Allah is ever, over all things, an Accountant.*

The above verse illustrates that Allah calls upon the believers to show respect to their adversaries when they demonstrate respect. Consequently, this behaviour will bring benefits to you.

<sup>3</sup> Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, *Al-Qur'an Al-Karim: Bunyatuhu Al-Tasyri'iyyah Wa Khasbaishuhu Al-Hadhariyyah* (Mesir: Dar al-Fikr, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> Al-Sakhawi, *Al-Maqasid Al-Hasanah Fi Bayan Kasir Min Al-Ahadis Al-Musytabirah 'ala Al-Asinab* (Beirüt: Dār al-Hijrah, 1986), 319.

<sup>5</sup> Oliver Leaman, *The Qur'an: A Philosophical Guide* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahnya* (Semarang: Karya Toha Putra, 1989).

<sup>7</sup> Rakhmat, *Islam Aktual*, 77.

<sup>8</sup> Ahmad Mushthafa Al-Maraghi, *Tafsir Al-Maraghi* (Mesir: Mushthafa al-Babi al-Halabi, 1972), 188.

<sup>9</sup> Ahmad Mushthafa Al-Maraghi, *Tafsir Al-Maraghi* (Mesir: Mushthafa al-Babi al-Halabi, 1969), 27.

Indeed, Allah is watchful over their actions among you if they intend harm against you.<sup>10</sup> This highlights the importance of mutual respect among individuals, particularly through communication, in fostering interactions.

A fundamental principle of communication in human life involves influencing the development and progress of individuals.<sup>11</sup> Communication techniques such as 'persuasive, tactical, and dialogic' represent the embodiment of humanity itself, serving as sources of success.<sup>12</sup> They even become sources of proximity to one's Lord. The communication model between humans and God can determine the acceptance of someone's hopes and imagination.

The Islamic teachings from the Qur'an suggest a system encompassing aspects governing human life, including the relationship between humans and their Creator (vertically), relationships among individuals, and the relationship between humans and the natural world or other creatures (horizontally).<sup>13</sup> This is reflected in a Hadith of the Prophet narrated by Muslim from Umar, which implies three aspects: Iman (faith), Islam (submission), and Ihsan (excellence or spiritual virtue).<sup>14</sup> Indirectly, the Qur'an refutes that communication is not specifically explained within its verses. This contention contradicts the concept of the Qur'an, which elucidates that Allah encompasses knowledge of all things and thus does not omit any knowledge within the Qur'an, as stated in Surah Thaha [20]: 110.

*110. Allah knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them, but they do not encompass it in knowledge.*

The verse above indicates that everything is already encompassed within the Qur'an.

In the dynamic journey of life, it becomes evident that humans do not exist in isolation.<sup>15</sup> Consequently, Allah created humans as social beings due to the inherent nature of each individual possessing strengths and weaknesses.<sup>16</sup> In such a context, they must acquaint themselves with and respect one another, illustrating the necessity of communication for mutual understanding and appreciation among fellow humans.<sup>17</sup> This aligns with the decree of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Hujurat (49): 13.

*13. O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.*

The human need for communication is elaborated upon separately in the Qur'an, encompassing principles, elements, forms, models,<sup>18</sup> and even communication components and

<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Abd Al-Mun'im Al-Jamal, *Al-Tafsir Al-Farid Li Al-Qur'an Al-Majid* (Mesir: Dār al-Kitab, 1970), 573.

<sup>11</sup> Habibi Muttaqin, Sabil Mokodenseho, and Febby Widjayanto, "Defending Indonesian Sovereignty through Mass Media: Radio Rimba Raya in the Revolutionary War," *IHiS (Indonesian Historical Studies)* 6, no. 1 (June 4, 2022): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.14710/IHIS.V6I1.13821>.

<sup>12</sup> Hafied Cangara, *Pengantar Ilmu Komunikasi* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1998), 1.

<sup>13</sup> Suparman Usman, *Hukum Islam: Asas-Asas Dan Pengantar Studi Hukum Islam Dalam Tata Hukum Indonesia* (Jakarta: Gaya Media Pratama, 2001), 22.

<sup>14</sup> Muchlis Muhammad Hanafi, *Komunikasi Dan Informasi (Tafsir Al-Qur'an Tematik)* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an Badan Litbang Dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2011), 83-84.

<sup>15</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018).

<sup>16</sup> Christopher J. Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

<sup>17</sup> Judy C. Pearson et al., *Human Communication*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> Nasr Abu Zayd, "The Qur'an: God and Man in Communication," November 27, 2000, 1–28, <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/5337>.

providing examples of communication within it. The aspects referred to manifest in various terminologies, such as:

(المجدالة والحوار والمحادثة والكلام واللفظ والخطاب والبيان, القول والاتصال)

All aimed at realizing a proper and effective interaction process among individuals. This is founded upon knowledge, understanding, and wisdom as outlined in the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Based on the issues mentioned above and the prevailing focus of mainstream society on aspects like *al-qaul*, *al-khitab*, *al-kalam*, and others in communication, there is a need for further analysis of the terms *al-ittishāl* or *al-muwashalah*, specifically interpreted in Arabic as communication. This article addresses questions regarding the essence and existence of communication in the Qur'an from ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives. To achieve this, an explanation of communication through authoritative Islamic sources (the Qur'an) is required, examining its essence, object and scope, forms, objectives, or the benefits of communication in the Qur'an from the perspective of the philosophy of science.

In answering the research above questions, this study employs a thematic method in interpreting the Qur'an (thematic exegesis or *tafsir maudhu'i*) with steps involving thematic interpretation research: explaining the derivations of the word communication, classifying communication-related verses, and interpreting these verses from the standpoint of the philosophy of science.

### The Nature of Communication in the Qur'an

Etymologically, communication in Arabic is termed *al-ittishāl* or *al-muwashalah* derived from three letters, namely *waw-shad-lam* (وصل), which signifies 'to reach.' Meanwhile, in the Indonesian General Dictionary, communication is defined as 'communication relations, a line of communication, a communication tool, news, information,' and so forth.<sup>19</sup>

Ibn Manẓūr in *Lisān al-ʿArab* mentions that the term *الاتصال* (*al-ittishāl*) stems from three letters: *wa-shad-lam* or *washala-yashilu*, signifying the idea of attainment, connection, or the transmission of something. Similarly, Abu Bakr ar-Razy asserts that *al-ittishāl* refers to something being connected to something else, establishing a chain between them. This is also echoed in *Muʿjam Maqayis al-Lughah*.<sup>20</sup>

The term *al-ittishāl* in *Muʿjam al-Wasit* indicates that *washal-yashilu-washlan-washilatan* means *dhammahu bihi wa jama'ahu wa laamahu* - to link, unite, or connect it, and convey and also *ballagahu wa intaba ilaihi* - reach it, ending there. It can thus be linked to someone or affiliated with them, as seen in Surah An-Nisa' [4]: 90. Alternatively, it is said that *amshalahu syai'* or *ila asy-syai'* means to conclude or convey something, akin to *tawashshala ilaihi, i'ntaba ilaihi wa ballagahu*, culminating in attaining a connection '*wushlatun*' or '*al-ittishāl*', thereby signifying a relationship between the two entities.<sup>21</sup>

This interpretation is further strengthened by Isfahani (d. 1108), who explains that *al-ittishāl* signifies the connection of one thing to another, akin to the connection between the two ends of a circle that cannot be separated. *Al-ittishāl*, derived from '*masdar*' the root word *washala*, indicates

<sup>19</sup> Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1990), 231.

<sup>20</sup> Abi Husain Ahmad bin Faris bin Zakaria, *Muʿjam Maqayis Al-Lughah* (Kairo: Dār al-Fīkr, 1979), 115.

<sup>21</sup> Majma Al Lughah Al Arabiyah, *Al-Muʿjam Al-Wasit*, 4th ed. (Mesir: Maktabah Syuruq ad-Dauliyah, 2004), 1037-1038.

linking one part to another, resulting in integration.<sup>22</sup> *Al-ittishāl* signifies the unification of elements, similar to the unification of the two ends of a circle. It is said to be like "this and that". For example, in the words of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 27 and An-Nisa' [4]: 90, which means "they are linked". It implies a connection between "such and such, connected to such and such". If there is a relationship between them or a lineage connection, as mentioned in Surah Al-Qasas [28]: 51, it means "linked to one another".<sup>23</sup>

From the understanding mentioned earlier, various elements of communication emerge in the Qur'an, such as *al-qaul*, *al-mujadalah*, *al-hiwār*, *al-mubadatsab*, *al-kalam*, *al-ladẓu*, *al-bayan*, *al-mubaajah*, and so forth. Additionally, numerous social interactions in various forms indicate communication in the Qur'an.

Therefore, *tawashul* is the process of exchanging information between two parties so that the message conveyed can be understood by both parties engaged in communication. The term *al-ittishāl* emphasizes the significance of the message's connection or reaching and continuity with the communicator, thus constituting communication without necessarily requiring feedback (connected). It can be said that when there is a connection, a bond, or a link between entities, communication occurs.

Communication is a process where two parties achieve a state that indicates full or partial interconnectedness in an idea, direction, understanding, or motivation for a particular action.<sup>24</sup> Experts assert that communication is informative to ensure others comprehend and understand, a persuasive aspect of encouraging acceptance of teachings or information conveyed, engagement in activities or actions, and more. Furthermore, communication is not solely about conveying information; it also aims to shape public opinion<sup>25</sup> and attitudes.<sup>26</sup> Communication is effective if each party comprehends the language used and understands what is being communicated.<sup>27</sup> The process involves gathering elements of the communicator, the message, and the communication.<sup>28</sup>

Al-Fiqi (d. 2012) likened communication to someone blinking; humans will continue communicating no matter how dark the night is.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile, Satir (d. 1988) defined communication as giving and receiving meaning between two individuals.<sup>30</sup> Fundamentally, communication aims to build relationships with others.<sup>31</sup>

Observing the etymological and terminological meanings of communication above, it is evident that communication involves a relationship between the communicator and the

<sup>22</sup> Raghīb Isfahānī, *Mu'jam Al-Mufradat Li Alfaẓ Al-Qur'an*, 4th ed. (Jeddah: Dār al-Basyir, 2009), 873.

<sup>23</sup> Abu I-Baqā Ayub ibn Musa al-Husaynī Al-Kafawī, *Al-Kullīya: Mu'jam Musthalat Wa Al-Furuq Al-Luqawīyah*, 2nd ed. (Mesir: Al-Risalah, 1993), 39.

<sup>24</sup> Salahuddin Gohar, *Ilmu Al-Ittishal: Mafahimuhu, Nazriyatuhu, Majalatahu* (Mesir: Maktabah Ain Syam, 1979).

<sup>25</sup> Walter Lippmann and Michael Curtis, *Public Opinion* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>26</sup> Kathleen M. Rose, Ezra M. Markowitz, and Dominique Brossard, "Scientists' Incentives and Attitudes toward Public Communication," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117, no. 3 (January 21, 2020): 1274–76, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1916740117>.

<sup>27</sup> Onong U. Effendy, *Ilmu Komunikasi: Teori Dan Praktik* (Jakarta: Remaja Rosda Karya Offset, 1999), 39.

<sup>28</sup> YS. Gunadi, *Himpunan Istilah Komunikasi*, ed. Djony Herfan (Jakarta: PT. Grasindo, 1998), 69.

<sup>29</sup> Ibrahim Al-Fiqi, *Neuro Linguistic Programming and The Art of Unlimited Communication NLP* (Mesir: Canadian Centre for Human Development, 2011).

<sup>30</sup> Virginia Satir et al., *The Satir Model: Family Therapy and Beyond* (California: Science and Behavior Books, 1991).

<sup>31</sup> Leslie T. Good, "Power, Hegemony, and Communication Theory," in *Cultural Politics in Contemporary America* (London: Routledge, 2022), 51–64, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003326427-6>.

communicator. It necessitates conveying information to express what is desired to others, unity, agreement, and harmony with others, as well as establishing connections.

#### *The Essence of Al-Ittishāl in the Qur'an*

To understand the meaning of the term *al-ittishāl*, it is necessary first to trace this word through its original sentences using the book "*Mufabras li al-Fadzī al-Qur'an*" to identify the verses employing this term in the Qur'an. The word *al-ittishāl*, originating from the root word "*washala*," along with all its derivative forms, recurs 12 times in the Qur'an. To clarify, each of its derivatives will be explained regarding the arrangement of verses and the Makki and Madani aspects.

Considering its *Makki* and *Madani* aspects, it can be observed from the following arrangement:

#### a. Makki verses

1. Al-An'am (6) : 136 (*yasilū*)
2. Al-An'am (6) : 136 (*yasilū*)
3. Huud (11) : 70 (*tasilu*)
4. Hūd (11) : 81 (*yasilū*)
5. Al-Qashash (28) : 35 (*yashilūna*)
6. Al-Qashash (28) : 51 (*washalna*)

#### b. Madani verses

1. Al-Baqarah (2) : 27 (*yūshala*)
2. An-Nisa' (4) : 90 (*yashilūna*)
3. Al-Maidah (5) : 103 (*washilatīn*)
4. Ar-Ra'd (13) : 21 (*yashilūna*)
5. Ar-Ra'd (13) : 21 (*yūshala*)
6. Ar-Ra'd (13) : 25 (*yūshala*)

When examined from the aspect of its arrangement within the chapters, it can be observed from the following sequence:

1. Al-Baqarah (2) : 27 (*yūshala*)
2. An-Nisa' (4) : 90 (*yashilūna*)
3. Al-Maidah (5) : 103 (*washilatīn*)
4. Al-An'am (6) : 136 (*yasilū*)
5. Al-An'am (6) : 136 (*yasilū*)
6. Hūd (11) : 70 (*tasilu*)
7. Hūd (11) : 81 (*yasilū*)
8. Ar-Ra'd (13) : 21 (*yashilūna*)
9. Ar-Ra'd (13) : 21 (*yūshala*)
10. Ar-Ra'd (13) : 25 (*yūshala*)
11. Al-Qashash (28): 35 (*yashilūna*)
12. Al-Qashash (28): 51 (*washalna*)

The verses indicated in the book "*Mufabras li al-Fadzī al-Qur'an*" through the use of the term *al-ittishāl* derived from the root word "*washala*" in the Qur'an have been mentioned. To clarify the meaning of these 12 derivatives, they need to be classified based on their definitions as follows:

### **Classification of Verses Based on the Object of Study in the Philosophy of Science**

As previously stated, the term *al-ittishāl*, through its various derivatives, is mentioned in the Qur'an 12 times in distinct ways, classified into five main meanings. These collectively formulate

the essence of *al-ittishāl*, which signifies the connection of one thing to another, resulting in unity or integration and the conveyance of information.

From the several meanings of *al-ittishāl* above, relevant terms have been selected corresponding to the definition of communication, classified based on the study of the philosophy of science. For a clearer understanding, please refer to the following table:

"

Verses on the Ontology of Communication	Verses on the Epistemology of Communication	Verses on the Axiology of Communication
Surah An-Nisa' [4]: 90.	Surah Ar-Ra'd [13]: 21. Surah Ar-Ra'd [13]: 25. Surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 27. Surah Al-An'am [6]: 136.	Surah Al-Qasas [28]: 51. Surah Hūd [11]: 81. Surah Hūd [11]: 70. Surah Al-Qasas [28]: 51.

The table above is the classification of verses based on the aspects of ontological, *epistemological*, and *axiological* communication. In detail, it will be expounded in the discussion of verses according to each aspect in the subsequent subsection, either by selecting one verse or all verses.

## The Existence of Communication in the Qur'an from the Perspective of Philosophy of Science

### *Ontology of Communication in the Qur'an*

As previously mentioned, the term for communication in the Qur'an can be traced using the word *الاتصال*, derived from its root *وصل*, which appears 12 times in various contexts throughout the Qur'an, each with different meanings.

Based on the classification of Qur'anic verses concerning the ontology of communication, it is essential to scrutinize the clauses of the verses to explain the core content of Surah An-Nisa [4]: 90.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَنْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتِلُوكُمْ فَإِنْ اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمَّ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَالْقَوَا إِلَيْكُمْ أَلْسَلَمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا

90. Except for those who take refuge with a people between yourselves and whom is a treaty or those who come to you, their hearts strained at [the prospect of] fighting you or fighting their own people. And if Allah had willed, He could have given them power over you, and they would have fought you. So, if they remove themselves from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not made for you a cause [for fighting] against them.

In Surah An-Nisa's verse 90, it is crucial to examine the preceding verse for a comprehensive understanding of its context before delving into its content. The previous verse elucidates the permissibility of seeking protection from a specific group. Additionally, it provides information about the conditions for prohibiting the killing of a hypocrite who is under the





The relevance of this theme can be observed from the word *إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ* as previously discussed that this word originates from three letters *و - ص - ل*, which means to reach or to connect. Shihab interprets the word *yasiluna* as 'those who come to terms,'<sup>33</sup> while as-Sa'di (d. 1957) interprets it as 'those who establish a connection' or bridge between them and the consequences of a peace agreement among them.<sup>34</sup>

The phrase *الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ* (*al-ladbeena yasiloon*) or 'those who reach out' or 'those who seek protection' or 'those who have an affiliation or connection,' according to Mujahid, Ibn Zaid, and others, who believe this meaning is the most accurate. Abu Abidah stated that *يَصِلُونَ* signifies 'being related or connected (relationship).' However, al-Mahdawi (d.220 H) rejected this notion among scholars because lineage or family ties cannot be a barrier to fighting against non-believers and killing them. An-Nuhas (d.338 H) stated that this was a grave mistake as it presupposed that Allah warned against killing non-believers with family ties to Muslims, while early polytheists also had familial ties with Muslims. The argument used was considered to have never existed and was then removed.

Al-Maraghi (d. 1952) stated that scholars are more inclined to associate the term 'yantasibuna' with 'safety' or 'security.' Therefore, those who seek affiliation or establish a connection with the secure community will obtain safety rather than lineage in familial relations. Thus, the subject (communication system) discussed in the above verse is to fight the hypocrites who dispute with you if they do not emigrate, except those who seek security (by protection).<sup>35</sup>

Referring to the comments of the scholars above, the word 'yashiluna' in the mentioned verse signifies 'connected, linked, and reaching.' All these terms depict the essence of communication in terms of a connection or linkage (the connection of a message from the communicator to the recipient). The essence can be observed from a community seeking protection from another, indicating that one group goes and reaches out to another to communicate, seeking protection. Before being granted protection, connecting ideas arise from communicative activities. Thus, the intended object of communication is the realization of protection, encompassing all the scopes of communicative activities.

The accurate interpretation of the clause (*إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ*) is except for those who go to communicate (consolidate) with a group that has made an agreement not to engage in war; they should not be fought against. In the millennial era, those who have made MoUs with a particular group or institution should not undermine each other but instead support one another. All this can occur through both verbal and non-verbal communication.<sup>36</sup> Its scope encompasses all human social interactions or activities involving the transfer of information, facts, thoughts, feelings, and values, reflecting humans' temporal, physical, and socio-psychological dimensions. These processes can be either primary or secondary.

<sup>33</sup> Muhammad Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbab: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), 534-565.

<sup>34</sup> As-Sa'di, *Tafsir Al-Karim Ar-Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam Al-Mannan*, 208.

<sup>35</sup> Al-Qurthubi, *Al-Jami' Li Ahkam Al-Qur'an*, 507-512.

<sup>36</sup> Yusuf Hanafi et al., "Development and Validation of a Questionnaire for Teacher Effective Communication in Qur'an Learning," *British Journal of Religious Education* 42, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): 424-34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2019.1705761>.

### The epistemology of communication in the Qur'an

An intriguing exploration of the essence, subjects, and scope of communication are outlined in the preceding verses. This curiosity helps to discern the diverse forms of communication depicted throughout the Qur'an. For instance, in Surah Ar-Ra'd [13]: 21,

وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسَابِ

21. *And those who join that which Allah has ordered to be joined and fear their Lord and are afraid of the evil of [their] account.*

The meaning of the above verse provides information about the characteristics of those who possess intellect. They are individuals who consistently maintain vigilance and are mindful of their Creator. It also conveys the idea of individuals who fear their Lord and are apprehensive of the consequences of evil deeds.

Shihab interprets this as referring to individuals who connect what God commands to be connected, and they fear their Lord and the consequences of a bad reckoning. Allah SWT describes those with commendable traits, that they will attain a good outcome, which includes honourable consequences and victory in both this world and the Hereafter: "Those who fulfil the covenant of Allah and do not break the contract." (Ar-Ra'd [13]: 20). They are not the same as the hypocrites, for when they make a covenant, they violate it; when they argue, they deceive; when they speak, they lie; and when they are trusted, they betray. In the following verse, it is stated, "Those who join that which Allah has ordered to be joined" (Ar-Ra'd [13]: 21), such as maintaining family ties, doing good to relatives and kin, as well as to the needy, those who require assistance, and giving in charity. "And they fear their Lord" (Ar-Ra'd [13]: 21), meaning they act in performing deeds that are incumbent upon them and in abstaining from acts they should avoid. In this context, they feel under the watchful gaze of Allah and fear the reckoning of the Last Day. Therefore, Allah commands them to stay steadfast on the right path and remain consistent in all their activities and circumstances.<sup>37</sup>

The verse provides information about those who maintain family ties (*silaturrahim*), those who fear severing them, as breaking family ties can result in punishment, and those who fear being confronted by Allah on the Day of Judgment. This aligns with a hadith that refers to *al-munaqasyah*, a term applied to actions or deeds. If we examine the words *يصلون* (*yasilu*) and *يواصل* (*yumassil*) in Surah Ar-Ra'd [13]: 21, they mean 'to connect' or 'to establish a connection,' aligning with the definition of *الاتصال* 'communication,' signifying 'something connected or linked.' A person engaging in communication establishes a connection with the individual they are communicating with. Ath-Thabari interprets the term *yasilu* as 'connecting.'<sup>38</sup> Meanwhile, Shihab interprets it as 'connecting and linking.' Most scholars of exegesis describe the meaning of maintaining family ties (*silaturrahim*) as a characteristic or sign of those with understanding (*ulil albab*).

The interpretation differs from the above. The writer attempts to analyze using the language approach used in Surah Ar-Ra'd [13]: 21, *والذين يصلون ما امر الله ان يوصل*. This clause in the verse portrays an expression laden with meaning; at least in this verse, Allah desires that every individual always maintains connections with one another. Hence, Allah encourages His servants always to

<sup>37</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, 590-592.

<sup>38</sup> Ath-Thabari, *Tafsir Ath-Thabari* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, n.d.).

establish mutual acquaintance with others. This concept of mutual acquaintance then becomes the foundational stone in depicting communication in the Quran. Furthermore, according to the writer's analysis, when Allah commands the preservation of family ties (*silaturrahim*), the appropriate method is through verbal communication. The second aspect derived from the verse above is that one must adopt a Divine communication model based on the Quran and Sunnah to draw nearer to God. Indeed, Allah wants to remind us that in human communication, one should be cautious in choosing words. It is prudent to heed the advice always to speak appropriately, considering the context and using the right words in communication. Hence, when humans communicate, they continue to earn rewards. Consequently, this can be linked to various terms with relevance or connection (*munasabah*) with *al-ittishāl*, such as "*qaulan*." The form of "*qaulan*" is mentioned in the Quran six times, including *qaulan ma'rufan*, *qaulan sadidan*, *qaulan layyinan*, *qaulan baligan*, *qaulan maysuran*, and *qaulan kariman*. This communication principle should be the foundation for interactions to foster good familial relationships, as the Prophet said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or remain silent".<sup>39</sup>

According to the author, the verse above also illustrates that communication is not solely through words (*al-ittishāl lafdzī*) but also non-verbal means (*al-ittishāl ghairu lafdzī*). An example of non-verbal communication in the verse can be observed in the term "*yūshala*," which means 'conveying; connecting.' "*Yashilu*" means engaging in the process of maintaining family ties (*silaturrahim*), whereas "*yūshala*" implies remaining connected (a state of touching), and anything in contact typically involves the physical body (*al-jasad*), thus the form of communication is non-verbal (*al-ittishāl al-jasdy*), whether direct or indirect, unidirectional, or bidirectional

Therefore, the types of communication in the Qur'an are divided into verbal and non-verbal, occurring in direct or indirect forms, unidirectional or bidirectional. Techniques include *al-qaul* and its variations, *al-kitabah*, or *al-harakah*, while strategies may vary according to the subject. If the subject involves seeking protection, the strategy might involve *الطلب* (request), and *المحاجة* (debate), and *الدعاء* (prayer), or *المناجات* (supplication), and so forth. If the subject is maintaining family ties (*silaturrahim*), the strategy is *المحادثة والحوار وما اشبه ذلك*. It involves dialogue (*المحادثة*), discussions (*الحوار*) and similar approaches. If the objective is acquaintance (*ta'rif*), then the strategy involves engagement in conversation (*muhadatsah*) "*التعارف فاساليه المحادثة*". If the objects revolve around stories (*القصاص*), the strategy might include sermons/ *khutbah* (*الخطبة*), articles/ *maqalah* (*المقال*), or explanations (*البيان*); *القصاص فاساليه الخطبة او المقال و البيان*. Meanwhile, other objectives will align with their respective existences. This is where each element's characteristics can be identified and correlated.

Every human action, being a human activity, can be regarded as a form of communication. Communication involves the conveyance of information and the comprehension of ideas, which inherently entail cause-and-effect implications. Likewise, in the verse above, the term signifies 'connectedness,' implying involvement in the communication process. This communication process subsequently yields four distinct forms of communication. Firstly, there is self-communication (*الاتصال الذاتي*). This type of communication involves individuals communicating with themselves as a form of mental communication (*اتصال عقلي*). This communication is often

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<sup>39</sup> Shahih Muslim, *Kitab Iman*, Nomor 74, Jilid 1, 68.

utilized in research communication. Secondly, there is interpersonal communication (الاتصال الشخصي). This form of communication constitutes part of direct communication using human sensory faculties. Thirdly, there is collective or group communication (الاتصال الجماعي). This communication occurs among individuals in a specific environment, such as communication within classrooms or a family. It provides opportunities for everyone to express themselves. Fourthly, there is public communication (الاتصال العام). This form of communication occurs between one individual and several others. Typically, this is seen in conferences, seminars, and public lectures at universities.

#### *Axiology of Communication in the Qur'an*

The field of the Qur'an is vast, its words are beautifully crafted, and it is inexhaustible in its depth of study. Therefore, it is certain that the Qur'an delves into various communication models. Moreover, the language of the Qur'an is unparalleled as a literary language, including the concept of communication depicted through diverse terms, each carrying implications towards the essence of communication itself. Hence, there are purposes, benefits, and wisdom behind the communication in the Qur'an, which is gentle and profound.

The verse 51 of Surah Al-Qasas, *وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ* "And We have certainly conveyed to them the word that perhaps they might be reminded," conveys the message of Allah's greatness and power by delivering the Quran to humanity for the purpose of remembrance. Referring to the concise explanation of the Quran by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, it states, "By our honour and authority, we have indeed delivered this word, which is the Quran, to them continuously. Parts of it were revealed successively as needed. The Quran was revealed sequentially through promises, warnings, stories, and lessons, all aimed at encouraging continuous remembrance, contemplation, and belief in what it contains."<sup>40</sup> This is supported by the Comprehensive Explanation "*Tafsir Lengkap*" by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, stating that this verse explains that Allah revealed the Quran gradually, part by part, by His wisdom, making it easy to read, remember, understand, and firm up hearts while strengthening faith. It responded to the demand of the disbelievers who wanted the Quran to be revealed simultaneously. Allah says: "And those who disbelieve say, 'Why was the Qur'an not revealed to him all at once?' Thus [it is] that We may strengthen thereby your heart. And We have spaced it distinctly." (Surah Al-Furqan [25]: 32)

In the verse mentioned, the term related to communication is found in the clause (وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ). Firstly, (وَصَّلْنَا) means "conveyed" or "made it reach," and (الْقَوْلَ) means "the word" or "the saying." However, the focus is on the term (وَصَّلْنَا), which originates from (وصل), meaning to reach or convey. Ibn Kathir interprets the clause (وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ) as "Indeed, We have explained in detail to them that speech." Mujahid stated they had provided them with a detailed explanation of that speech. As-Saddy mentioned (وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ) as "Indeed, We have clarified to them that speech." Qatadah said that (وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ) means Allah informed them about the actions of the people before them so that they may remember Allah (لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ).

Mujahid and others have commented regarding the meaning of His saying: "Indeed, We have sent down to them this Qur'an that they might reflect upon it" (Surah Al-Qasas [28]: 51), asserting that the referent of "them" here are the people of Quraysh. This understanding is derived from the apparent meaning of the verse. However, Hammad ibn Salamah conveyed, via the

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<sup>40</sup> Tim Penyusun, *Tafsir Ringkas Al-Qur'an Al-Karim*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2016).

narration of Amr ibn Dinar from Yahya ibn Ja'dah, from Rifa'ah ibn Qarzah al-Qurazi (also known as Rifa'ah ibn Syamuel according to Ibn Mandah), who, according to lineage, was the maternal uncle of Siti Safiyyah binti Huyayyin. Rifa'ah divorced his wife, Tamimah binti Wahb, and she was subsequently married by Abdur Rahman ibn Zubair ibn Bata. According to Ibnul Asir, Rifa'ah stated that the statement of Allah SWT: "And We had certainly explained the word in detail" (Surah Al-Qasas [28]: 51) was revealed about a group of ten (Jewish individuals), and I am one among them. Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abu Hatim narrated this, specifying that this hadith was Rifa'ah's statement."<sup>41</sup>

Based on the interpretation of the verse above, scholars suggest an interpretation that still requires analysis to grasp the fundamental meaning of the verse. Verse 51 begins with the phrase "*walaqad*," indicating something that has been continued, followed by "*washshalna al-qaul*" (conveyed the word), signifying that the "*al-Qaul*" conveyed by Allah is the Qur'an, and the speech is that of Allah's. This word reaches humanity when it is communicated or conveyed. Therefore, it can be understood that Allah intends to convey to us that humans must engage in communication so that what is intended can be understood by others. In this context, the purpose and benefit of communication are for others to understand the instructions being conveyed. There are numerous forms of information intended to be communicated. If we pay attention to verses that use the term "*al-ittishāl*," it can be understood that every meaning contained within each term represents a form of information intended to be conveyed.

In Surah Al-Qasas, verse 51, it is evident that the information intended to be conveyed regarding the Qur'an is that Allah aims to demonstrate His magnificence to the Quraysh who questioned the ability of God to reveal a book similar to the scriptures given to previous Prophets. Hence, besides the previously mentioned communication benefits, another benefit is to showcase His authority and power.

## Conclusion

The essence of Qur'anic communication through the term *al-ittishāl*, derived from the word *washala* and its various forms repeated 12 times within the Qur'an across several chapters, such as Al-Baqarah [2]: 27 (*yūshala*), An-Nisa' [4]: 90 (*yashilūna*), Al-Maidah [5]: 103 (*washilatīn*), Al-An'am [6]: 136 (*yasilū*), Hūd [11]: 70 (*tasilū*), Hūd [11]: 81 (*yasilū*), Ar-Ra'd [13]: 21 (*yashilūna*), Ar-Ra'd [13]: 21 (*yūshala*), Ar-Ra'd [13]: 25 (*yūshala*), Al-Qasas [28]: 35 (*yashilūna*), and Al-Qasas [28]: 51 (*washshalna*), signifies connection or linking, seeking protection, reaching, and being revealed (explained). Meanwhile, the existence of communication within the Qur'an, from the perspective of the philosophy of science, can be categorized into three distinct aspects. Firstly, the ontology of communication in the Qur'an can be observed through the term "*yashilūna*," which means 'connected, linked, and reaching.' All these meanings depict the essence of communication itself. Communication, in the sense of connection or linkage (conveying a message from communicator to recipient), is illustrated by these interpretations. The essence of communication can be understood from the scenario where one group seeks protection from another, signifying one group travelling and reaching out to another for communication to obtain protection before it is

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<sup>41</sup> Abi al-Fida' Ismail bin Umar Ibnu Katsir al-Qurasyi Al-Dimasyqi, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Adzim* (Riyadh: Dār Tayyibah, 1999), 243.

granted. In this context, the process of connecting ideas stems from communication activities. Therefore, it can be said that the object of communication in this verse is the realization of protection, and its scope encompasses all communication activities. Hence, the accurate interpretation of the clause (إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ) would be except for those who engage in communication, specifically in the context of consolidating an agreement with another group not to engage in warfare against each other. Thus, they should not be fought against. Secondly, the epistemology of communication in that verse can be observed through its various communication forms. Communication in the Qur'an is categorized into verbal and non-verbal forms, whether direct or indirect, one-way or two-way. The techniques involved may include speech, its delivery, and writing or movement. The strategies employed vary depending on the objective. For instance, if the objective is seeking protection, the strategies might involve requests (الطلب), argumentation (المحاجة), supplication (الدعاء), or intimate conversation (المناجات), among others. If the objective is fostering family ties (silaturrahim), strategies might encompass conversation (المحادثة), dialogue (الحوار), and similar means. In the case of acquaintanceship (ta'ruf), the strategy could involve getting acquainted through conversation (التعارف فاساليه المحادثة). When the objective is storytelling (القصص), the strategies may involve sermons (الخطبة), articles (المقال), or explanations (البيان), among others, depending on their existence and relevance. Based on these, four forms of communication are derived: self-communication (الاتصال الذاتي), interpersonal communication (الاتصال الشخصي), group communication (الاتصال الجماعي), and public communication (الاتصال العام). Thirdly, the axiology of Qur'anic communication can be understood from the purposes or benefits inherent in communication itself. The aim and benefit of communication are for others to comprehend the instructions conveyed. Moreover, it serves the purpose of showcasing the authority of Allah.

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