

Investigating Relation between Verses of *Sūrat al-A‘rāf*

Amir Joudavi*1 □ Mohammad Hossein Baroomand 2 □ Mohammad Ali Heydari 3
Samiyeh Shahbazi 4

1. Amir Joudavi, Associate Professor, Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences, Faculty of Theology, Yazd University, Iran. (Corresponding Author) amirjoudavi@yazd.ac.ir
2. Mohammad Hosein Baroomand, Associate Professor, Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences, Faculty of Theology, Yazd University, Iran. m.h.baroomand@yazd.ac.ir
3. Mohammad Ali Heydari Associate Professor, Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences, Faculty of Theology, Yazd University, Iran. heydari@yazd.ac.ir
4. Samiyeh Shahbazi, Assistant Professor, Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences, Faculty of Theology, Yazd University, Iran. samiyeh.shahbazi@yazd.ac.ir

Abstract

The study of the relationship between the verses of a Surah for interpretation has drawn the attention of the commentators for centuries. In recent times, these relationships have been investigated more thoroughly as their usefulness is better recognized. Examining the relationship between the verses of a surah will gain a more accurate understanding of the meanings of each verse and the overall meaning of the surah. Extracting the primary topics posited in *Sūrat al-A‘rāf* and classifying them, the present study shows the relationship between every one of the verses will be investigated so that the coherence and relationship can be practically showcased. The verses are firstly divided into different sets; then, the relationship between the verses of every set and, next, the relationship between the sets of verses in the Surah will be demonstrated. This way, it will be shown that all the subjects in the Surah are interrelated and constitute a unit whole which is *Sūrat al-A‘rāf*.

Keywords: relation between verses, *Sūrat al-A‘rāf*, coherence of Surahs, Quranic interpretation, *naẓm* of the Qur’anic text.

١. Statement of the Problem

The investigation of the relationship between the verses of a Surah is effective to a large extent in the interpretation thereof and knowing this relationship helps readers understand the Surah and reduces the numerosity of the notions presented by the commentators based on their different perspectives. Moreover, it assists the later commentators to better clarify their perspectives. The initial exegeses often engage in the interpretation of each verse separately and concentrate their attention on the singularities of the verse; but the importance of knowing the relationship between the verses has been made clearer to the commentators with the passing of time during the recent centuries, and they have considered this issue to some extent in their interpretations. Amongst the individuals who have made efforts to showcase the relationship between the holy Qur'ān's verses, Sayyid Quṭb (Quṭb, 2004), Sa'īd Ḥawwā (Ḥawwā, 2003), 'Abd al-Hādī Fiqhīzādīh (Fiqhīzādīh, 1995), 'Abbās Humāmī (Humāmī, 1996), and Abd al-'Alī Bāzargān (Bāzargān, 1996) can be mentioned.

This issue also holds true about the orientalist, though most of them, including Theodor Nöldeke,^١ Richard Bell,^٢ Frithjof Schuon^٣ and Andre Du Ryer,^٤ have emphasized the incoherence of the holy Qur'ān's verses in their books and works (Bell, 1953, 72; Schuon, 1998, 40-41; Du Ryer. 1734, 1).

However, many efforts have been made during recent years by researchers to show the relationship between the verses of a Surah and even the coherence of them (Abdel Haleem, 2017, 148-157; Johns Anthony, 2016, 70-90; Cuypers, 2011, 1-24; Sadeghi, 2011, 210 – 299; Salwa, 2006; Smith, 2017, 121-136; Robinson, 2001, 1-19)

Although the significance of the relationship between the verses of a Surah has increased, a coherent investigation has not been performed so far regarding all verses and subjects of the *Sūrat al-A'rāf*.^٥ This research will show how all the verses in *Sūrat al-A'rāf* are interrelated, and it will also be proved that there is still a robust and coherent relationship between the verse sets when the subject is completely changed and the thread of the verses seems broken.

Method: In this research, first, the relationship lines in each of the verses of the surah have been extracted, and then the relationship between the verses has been explained based on these

^١ Except for the shortest sūrahs that are positioned toward the end of the Qur'ānic corpus, almost all others consist of a succession of paragraph-like sections between which there are frequent and often seemingly abrupt topic shifts." (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Quran#toc487666main>)

^٢ "Short Pieces-interpreted in this way, Mueller's contention brings out a real characteristic of Qur'an style. It is disjointed. Only very seldom do we find it evidence of sustained unified." (Bell, 1953, 72)

^٣ "Seen from outside, however, this book appears (apart from approximately the last quarter, the form of which is highly poetic, though it is not poetry) to be a collection of sayings and stories that is more or less incoherent and sometimes incomprehensible at first approach." (Schuon, 1998, 40-41)

^٤ "He divided it into many signs, or verses, that contain his ordinances and fables, without observation, either of the consequence, or connexion of the discourse, which is the cause that thou shalt find in this book, a multitude of incongruous pieces, and diverse repetition of the same things." (Du Ryer. 1734, 1)

^٥ A similar work has been done regarding the relationship between the verses of *Suraht al-An'am*: Baroomand, M.H. et al., (2022). Investigating Relation of Verses in *Sūrat al-An'ām* Through Extracting Relational Lines. *Journal of Researches of Quran and Hadith Sciences*: Doi:10.22051/TQH.2021.35415.3167.

lines. Every relationship line is a specific topic in the surah that connects the verses in which this topic is discussed. In order to extract these relationship lines, all the issues raised in each verse have been extracted and written in a table.

By extracting, organizing and categorizing the subjects of each verse of *Sūrat al-A 'rāf*, nine main lines of communication can be found, including: line of Allah and properties of Allah (109 verses), guidance (172 verses), prophets (115 verses), divine traditions, examination and divine covenant (41 verses), death and resurrection (32 verses), gifts (God's blessings) (36 verses), creatures with freewill and creatures with determinism (75 verses), faith and its outcome (95 verses), and the line of blasphemy and its outcome (118 verses).

In the second stage, all of the extracted subjects are classified and organized in the order of the secondary subjects (secondary lines) under the primary subjects (primary lines) and, in the same way, more secondary subjects under the secondary ones and so forth. In the end, nine primary lines and about 500 secondary lines are extracted from *Sūrat al-A 'rāf*. These relationship lines have been analyzed in the article.

۲. The Relationship between the Verses in *Sūrat al-A 'rāf*

After clarifying all the subjects and lines posited in the Surah and preparing the subjects of each of the verses, the relationship between the sura's verses can be investigated by showing the line titles in each verse using the tables. One should note that the relationship between the verses' sets with single subjects (such as verses related to the tribes of each of the prophets) is evident amongst the verses of a Surah; hence, the explanations do not include the evident topics herein and the main concentration of the work is on the clarification of the relationship between verses, Relationships between verses which have not been expressed and are left untold in the prior interpretations.

۲,۱. Verses One to Ten: Warning as the Goal of the Holy Qur'ān and Losses on the Day of Resurrection as a Result of Oppression of Divine Signs

The surah begins with *hurūfi Moqatta'ih* and in the second verse and with the reference to the revealing of the holy Qur'ān, the soothing of the great messenger of Islam (pbuh) has been dealt with and it has been stated that if the holy Qur'ān was a book other than this and/or in case that it had been revealed by anyone other than God, the last prophet should have been afflicted with stricture and loneliness; so his highness must not be worried and he has to engage in warning and reminding the believers; thus, the verse indicates that the goal of the holy Qur'ān's revelation has been warning mankind. The relationship between the second verse and the third is in this way that the latter practically warns the believers and asks the believers to accept the guardianship of God and disapproves the guardianship of non-divine figures. It means that a command has been presented for reminding human beings about monotheism as the most important pillar. In the end, He reprimands, how little you notice. Therefore, in the third verse, obedience to God is mentioned as the opposite of polytheism and non-acceptance of God's guardianship. Then, the fourth and the fifth verses continue the previous subject and deal with the worldly outcome of

polytheism and obedience of figures other than God, i.e., perishing. At the end of the fifth verse, their confession on Judgment Day has been pointed out, and it is in this way that the fifth verse establishes communication with verses 6-9, which express the investigation of the accounts on Judgment Day. In verses 6-8, the otherworldly outcomes of polytheism have been mentioned, and the ninth verse points to the idea that the loss on Judgment Day is due to the wrong treatment (*zulm*) of the divine signs.

After discussion about the wrong treatment (*zulm*) of the divine signs in the ninth verse, the tenth verse points to one of the examples of the divine signs, i.e., the very gifts provided by God for the sustenance of the individuals on earth. The tenth verse is related to the third verse in terms of expressing the low number of the remaining individuals.

Verses 11-25 are the detailed descriptions of the brief idea introduced in the tenth verse about the divine blessings, meaning that the angels have prostrated before the human being and this humans' nobility is the greatest gift, the thankfulness for which is compulsory for all human beings.

٢,٢. Verses 11-25: Expressing Examples of Divine Signs and Wrong Treatment of the Signs, Including the Story of Adam (pbuh)

The story of the prostration of the angels to Adam and the disobedience of the devil as an example of those who have wronged the divine signs,^١ causes the connection between the twelfth verse and the ninth verse, which considered the loss on Judgment Day a result of the wrong treatment of the divine signs.

Verses 13-16 speak about Satan's loss and his being driven out as a figure wrongly treating the divine signs and also about his asking for a respite and his having certain unthankful followers for himself in the future.

The relationship between verse 17 and verse 10 is in this form that Satan's followers are examples of the individuals about whom it has been said that "small are the thanks that ye give!" (Qur'ān 7:10), meaning that obedience to Satan is an example of ingratitude because these individuals prefer to obey Satan even with all the gifts and nobility bestowed by God upon them and even with God's demand of prostration from the angels and Satan to the human beings; and this is a vivid example of ingratitude.

Verse 18 deals with the outcomes and consequences of this ingratitude and knows the following of Satan as the factor that led to the entry to hell. The story of Adam's temptation and his exit from heaven that has been pointed out in verses 20-25 is also another example of obedience to Satan.

So, the relationship between this set of verses and the previous set is in this way that the ninth verse realizes the wrong treatment of the divine signs as the cause of losses; the tenth verse realizes a gift like the creation of the humans, as the noblest of the creatures, and the command for prostration as one of the examples of the divine signs and blessings. The following of Satan is amongst the examples of wrongdoing and ingratitude (verses 10-17) and Adam's being deceived and his following of Satan is also another example of wrongdoing and ingratitude (verses 19-25).

^١A more complete explanation of verse 11 and its relation to the verses before and after is given in another article.

٢,٣. Verses 26-46: Relationship Between the Story of Adam (pbuh) and the Ingratitude and Wrongdoings of His Offspring and their Warning by Pointing to the Outcomes of the Actions

From verse 26 to verse 35, human beings have been addressed four times by the use of such an expression as “*Yā Banī Ādam!*” (Qur’ān 7:26-27-31-35). Moreover, addressing human beings by mentioning the name of their father points to the very story of the creation and is a reminder of a special gift granted by God to the human beings as well as their being introduced as the noblest of the creatures. In every address, God expresses some of the verdicts. Obedience to these verdicts is necessary, and failure to fulfill them is actually obedience to Satan and the cause of deviation and wrongdoing. Then, at the end of these four addresses, it is pointed out that the result of fulfilling these verdicts is paradise (verses 42-45), and the outcome of wrongdoing and following Satan is hell (verses 36-41).

Verse 26 continues to address the outcome of Adam’s first sin which took place following the temptation by Satan, and it was eating from the forbidden tree (verses 20-21); as a result of this sin, Adam is required to put on clothing (verse 22); after this sin (or wrongdoing) and repentance to the divine court of God (verse 23), God points in verse 26 to the gift of clothing to conceal the effects of sin and orders the practicing of piety in the continuation (verse 26).

In verse 27, Adam’s offspring are told about Satan’s insurgence and also about the outcomes it has had for their father, and, again, the practicing of piety is commanded. After warning the offspring of Adam about Satan’s mutinies, he is realized as the leader of the disbelievers. Verse 28 is related to the previous verses in this way that the same discussion is presented in this verse based on two excuses inter alia, the other excuses carved by the disbelievers who tell us their fathers have been doing so: “We found our fathers doing so” (Qur’ān 7: 28) and/or say that it has been ordered by God: “Allah commanded us thus” (Qur’ān 7: 28); at the end of this verse, these actions are termed depravities.

This verse’s relationship with verse 29 is in this way that, in contrast to the depravities pointed out in verse 28, verse 29 speaks about exercising justice and acting fairly; then, in comparison to two examples of depravities that are mentioned in the previous verse, verse 29 on present examples of the divine verdicts, including in verse 30, speaks about the criterion-based nature of guidance and deviation. In verse 31, non-practicing of prodigality is commanded; verse 32 speaks about the permissibility of the ornamentations and clean things as one verdict for guidance as compared to deviation and depravity.

Again, verse 33, like verse 28, points to depravities and presents an example of depravities in the divine verdicts, including transgression, injustice, polytheism, and attribution of false things to God.

Verse 34, like verse 25, is about the worldly life and death and the respite that is given to the nations in this world, it is related to verse 128 in that it is stated that the earth is inherited by the nation that observes these verdicts.

After addressing them three times, verse 35 again addresses the offspring of Isrāīl. The previous verses present the verdicts and, having placed depravities against fairness and justice, they are reminders of examples of wrong and right verdicts. This last address points to the dispatching of the messengers as an ultimatum for the offspring of Isrāīl to r Adam’s offspring

are told each these verdicts, so that they cannot say we did not know what is right and what is wrong.

In regard to the dispatch of the messengers and ultimatums, the nations are divided into two sets: the first set has taken the path of refutation, and verses 36-41 express the outcomes of their actions and explicate their states in hell. The second set includes the pious fellows who have observed the verdicts to the extent of their abilities and the outcomes of their actions, and the explications of their states in heaven have been presented in verses 42-45.

Except for the refuters of the truth and Satan's followers who will be thrown into hell, and in addition to the second set that exercises piety and deserves heaven, there is a third set to which verses 46-52 have pointed under the name "the men of A'rāf". This set has neither a good deed to deserve heaven nor has it exercised enmity to deserve hell. Their destiny has been mentioned in the fourth group of the verses.

٢,٤. Verses 46-52: Expression of the States of the Fellows of Heaven and Fellows of Hell Upon Bearing Witness to the Outcomes of Their Actions

After expressing the states of the fellows of heaven and fellows of hell and the conversation that takes place between them (verse 44), verse 46 points to a third set of individuals that are neither the fellows of hell nor the fellows of heaven. This verse seminally points to the veil that is between heaven and hell as well as a place named *A'rāf*, which, as mentioned in the interpretations and lexicons, is a high ground between hell and heaven. Then, reference is made to men standing on *A'rāf* and saluting the fellows of heaven, but they have not yet entered heaven even with the craving they have for it. Verse 47 depicts another side of *A'rāf*'s wall and states that the fellows of *A'rāf* can see it from where they are standing and they ask God not to make them gather around in one place with the wrongdoing tribes. As it has been stated, these individuals have committed actions that made them deserving of neither heaven nor hell. Thus, they await intercession by the elders. Verse 48 speaks of fellows of *A'rāf* (*Aṣḥāb al-a'Arāf*) who are all elders, and by the intercession of them, the men of *A'rāf* (*Rijāl al-a'Arāf*) can be freed of fire. Fellows of *A'rāf* who are standing on this high ground along with the men of *A'rāf* (*Rijāl al-a'Arāf*), address the fellows of hell scornfully about their behaviors (verse 48)^١ and they also address the fellows of heaven admiring them (Qur'ān 7:49); then, a conversation between the fellows of heaven and hell is what is presented from here to the end of verse 51. All commentators, regardless of the relationship between the verses of the Surah, have equated men of *A'rāf* (*Rijāl al-a'Arāf*) and fellows of *A'rāf* (*Aṣḥāb al-a'Arāf*), and for this reason they have difficulty in interpreting these few verses, the full explanation of which will be given in another article (A comparative study of the opinions of about 250 commentators in this field), here it is enough to pay attention to the relationship between the verses of the surah.

٢,٥. Verses 52-58: The Relationship Between the Holy Qur'ān's Purpose, i.e., Warning, and Believers' Guidance and Disbelievers' Deviation

^١Complete explanation in: Baroomand, M. H., Joudavi, A., & Shahbazi, S. (2024). A Comparative Study of «Aṣḥāb al-A'rāf»(Qur'ān 7: 46-48) Relying on Relationship of Verses. *Journal of Contemporary Islamic Studies*, 6(1), 27-37.

Verse 52 of *surat al-A'raf* realizes the holy Qur'ān as being a means of guidance and mercifulness for only the believers, meaning that the holy Qur'ān is a sign presented to all mankind but only enjoyed by the believers. *Kāffirs* cannot take any advantage thereof due to their own defaults. In explaining why the *Kāffirs* cannot take advantage of the holy Qur'ān's verses, verse 53 points to this subject that the disbelievers seek to paraphrase the holy Qur'ān and demand the actualization of its promises while disregarding the fact that there would be no opportunity to enjoy the divine signs when the time comes for the fulfillment of the promises.

Verse 54 deals with monotheism and God's magnificence so as to invite mankind to practice humbleness and stay away from corruption in the world. Verse 57 again presents an example of divine signs and showcases the issue of resurrection in these examples.

By expressing the power of God in the world and saying things about the resurrection of the dead on Judgment Day, verses 54-57 shows the verses that the unbelievers sought to interpret. In fact, these signs have been presented and the believers have perceived and enjoyed them, but *Kāffirs* have not perceived them due to their own negligence and due to having been in search of other signs and meanings.

Verse 58 again expresses the same concept of verse 52; in other words, the holy Qur'ān's guidance and signs pour down on all the lands like a merciful rain but the clean lands, i.e., the believers, grow the plant of knowledge and this rain does not have a product and fruit for the impure lands.

٢,٦. **Verses 59-93: Examples of Believers' Guidance and Disbelievers' Deviation in Different Tribes**

After clarifying the fact that the divine guidance is effective for the believers and useless like rain on salty land for the disbelievers, examples of the descent of the divine guidance to the various tribes via the prophets are presented and the destinies of the tribe of Noah (pbuh) (verses 46-59) and the tribe of Hūd (pbuh) (verses 65-72), and the stories of his highness Šālīh (pbuh), the tribe of Thamūd (verses 73-79), his highness Lot (pbuh) (verses 80-84) and his highness Shu'aib (PBUH) (verses 85-93) are expressed in order. Since the relationship between each of this set of verses is clear, only the relationship between this set of verses and the other verses of the Surah is expressed.

٢,٧. **Verses 94-102: Holy Qur'ān's Descent, Warning, Believers' Guidance, Kāffirs' Deviation and Sending of the Messengers, All in Line with the Goal of Creation**

After expressing examples of prophets in verses 59-93, verse 94 deals with the tradition of the messengers' mission as a divine rule. Verse 95 points to the tradition of replacement (*Sunnati 'istibdāl*), meaning that these tribes are not chastised before the sending of messengers based on such a tradition as the dispatching of the messengers but, after being given an ultimatum and divine signs, the tradition of replacement (*Sunnati 'istibdāl*) is operationalized about them with the refutation of the verses and they will be afflicted with a destructive chastisement so that another tribe can take their position. Again, and in continuation, verse 96 explains that blessings would have been sent from the skies and the earth to them if they had become faithful. Verses

97-99 reproach the opponents of God and demands them not to think they can be free from this divine chastisement; hence, their relationship with the prior verses is well-evident.

Like verse 95, verse 100 points to the tradition of replacement (*Sunnati 'istibdāl*) and this point that this tradition (*Sunnati 'istibdāl*) would eventually lead to the selection of the ones inheriting the earth, meaning that the various tribes continuously come and they are guided by the prophets and they will be replaced by new tribes in case of refutation, and this goes on until the real inheritors of earth emerge. In verse 101, as an outcome of the Kaffirs' actions, it is stated that their hearts are sealed because of a failure to keep their promises after the messengers were dispatched (verse 102).

٢,٨. Verses 103-167: Examples of the Dispatched Prophets and Kaffirs' Refutation

After expressing the tradition of the messengers' dispatching (in verse 94) and explaining the states of five various tribes to which messengers have been sent for their guidance but were refuted by them (verses 59-93) and following presentation of a summary of this tradition (verses 94-102), verses 103-167 give an explanation of the story of his highness Moses[^] and Pharaoh and offspring of *Isrā'īl* and the relationship between this set of verses is evident.

٢,٩. Verses 168-188: Guidance and Deviation, the Products of Acting in Match or Against the Nature (*Fīṭrat*)

After explaining the story of Pharaoh and the offspring of *Isrā'īl*, verse 168 points to some examinations of the *Banī Isrā'īl* Tribe and also to their eventual division into two sets of the righteous and non-righteous ones. Then, verse 169 explains about the way the non-righteous group of *Isrā'īl*'s offspring treats the heavenly book. After inheriting the Torah from their fathers, the non-righteous sons forgot the books' covenant, i.e., saying nothing but the truth about God. They picked up the inferior commodity of the world in exchange for putting down this covenant and they are now hoping to be forgiven by God. At the end of the verse, it is stated in reference to their inability to contemplate whether the other world is better and more valuable than the corporeal commodity. Since contemplation refers to thinking and pondering based on nature (*fīṭrat*), it is shown that this group of the sons of *Isrā'īl* has gone away from its real nature (*fīṭrat*) by performing affairs contradictory to nature (*fīṭrat*) and this way of scornful addressing in verse 169 and this gloominess of the heart based on which they cannot perceive the divine signs and, instead, have exchanged them with the earthly commodities, are the products of the very actions that are against nature (*fīṭrat*). Besides, verse 171 pertains to this same set and states that they have been coerced to fulfill the contents of some of the verses.

Verse 170 deals with the second set of *Banī Isrā'īl* who have resorted to the book of God, say prayers and are amongst the righteous persons. This verse is related to verse 196 which says that God is the guardian of the righteous. By expressing the book's covenant, verse 169 is related to verse 172 which expresses nature's (*fīṭrat*'s) treaty.

[^]A more complete explanation of verse 143 and a review of the phrase "*Lan Tarānī*" with the help of the relation of the verse is given in the following article: Baroomand, M.H., Joudavi, A., Shahbazi, S. (2022). Comparative Study of Interpreters' Ideas about "Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk Qāla Lan Tarānī" (Q.7:143) Relying on the Relationship of Verses. *Quran and Religious Enlightenment*, 2 (2), 23-39.

Verses 171 and 172 are related in that the sons of *Isrā'īl* are required to take the heavenly book in verse 171 after they were situated in the shade of the mountain and a promise is acquired from them in verse 172 via another requirement which is the very nature's (*fiṭrat's*) treaty and is considered as a sort of general coercion. It has to be explained that the nature's (*fiṭrat's*) treaty and promise is compulsory for all human beings based on a prophetic narration, to wit "*Kulla Mawlūdun Yūlidu 'Alā al-Fiṭrah*" (all human beings born according to God's nature (*fiṭrat*)). The reason for coercing all the human beings to enter this nature's (*fiṭrat's*) treaty (*Mithāqī Fiṭrat*) is given afterwards: "(This), lest ye should say on the Day of Judgment: 'Of this, we were never mindful'" (Qur'ān 7:172). Moreover, verse 173 continues the expression of this reason by saying that it was their father's way of worshipping false gods (verse 173).

After expressing nature's (*fiṭrat's*) treaty in verse 172 and expressing its reason in verses 173-174, verse 175 points to an opponent of God; according to the narrations, he is *Bal'am Ba'ūr*. This verse is related to the verses before it in this way that the prior ones speak about nature's (*fiṭrat's*) promise and *Bal'am Ba'ūr* is the example of the persons who have acted against nature (*fiṭrat*). That is, when he acted according to his nature (*fiṭrat*), God says, We gave him our signs. But when he acts against his nature (*fiṭrat*), he becomes one of the misguided.

The important point that matters here is that having a nature (*fiṭrat*) is compulsory for all human beings for it is the nature that illuminates the path like a light.

However, acting in one with the nature (*fiṭrat*) is completely voluntary, and that an individual chooses a path and is guided by the light of the nature and/or acts against the nature all depend on his or her choices, for human beings are creatures with free will. In the continuation of this same discussion, in verse 176, God states that we could have taken him (*Bal'am Ba'ūr*) up if we wanted to act forcibly but nobody is forced to act based on the nature (*Fiṭrat*) and s/he can choose to follow Satan or not based on his or her own will.

Verses 176 and 179 are related in this way that both of them explain about two examples of individuals who act against their nature; one is compared with a dog and the other is compared with animals ('*An'ām*).

Additionally, verse 178 points to the criterion-based nature (*fiṭrat*) of the divine guidance and determinism about the guidance of the individuals who act in one with or against the nature (*fiṭrat*) and also to the idea that, in order to enjoy guidance, the individual should voluntarily act in one with nature (*fiṭrat*) and that those who voluntarily act against the nature: "such are the persons who perish" (Qur'ān 7: 178).

Again, verse 179 points to the outcome of acting against the nature (*fiṭrat*); it also states that the individuals who act against the nature (*fiṭrat*) would be deprived in their hearts and ears from understanding and perception, and they will eventually receive its otherworldly outcome, which is hell.

Verse 180 and the prior verses are related in this way that verses 173-179, which were mentioned above, deal with individuals who have acted against their nature (*fiṭrat*). Here, in verse 180, reference is made to the God's most beautiful names. Although the verse is apparently about the divine names, reference to a narration from Imām Sādīq (pbuh) who said, "I swear to God that we (Imāms) are the most beautiful divine names and God does not accept any action

from his servants unless through the recognition of us”³ makes it clear that this verse points to the individuals who have acted in one with the nature (*fiṭrat*), i.e., the very *Ahl al-Bayt* (peace be upon them), as compared to those who have acted against the nature (*fiṭrat*), which was mentioned in verses 173-179.

Verses 181-182 are related to the previous verses in this way that, after dividing the Jewish nation into two groups of the righteous and the non-righteous ones in verse 168, expressing their states in the later verses and explaining about the individuals who have acted against the nature’s treaty (*Mithāqī Fiṭrat*) (verses 172-179) and the individuals who act in one with the nature (*fiṭrat*) (verse 180), reference is made this time in verse 181 to the Islamic nation that is composed of two parts.

In verse 159, reference is made to the righteous individuals of the nation of Moses (pbuh) (verse 159) and to the righteous persons of the nation of Muhammad (pbuh) (verse 181). Then, verse 182 has been presented the ones refuting Islam (verse 182); and it is stated that God exercises gradualism about them and gives them time to add to their sins, and this is the strategy of God about them (verse 183).

Verses 184-185 have been interlaced with the prior verses in this way that God has dealt in them with the asking of proofs from the refuters of Islam: (verse 184) and asks them, do you not know that the prophet had not been bewitched and he is a vivid warner. In verse 185, God directs their attention to the kingdom of the skies and earth and their creation which is a symbol of the creation of everything considering the holy Qur’ān’s norms. At the end of verse 185, they are frightened of the consequences of refuting God and His prophet, and it is stated that your death is close.

Verse 186 presents proofs for verses 184-185 and states that the reason for the Kaffirs’ not believing in God’s verses and His prophet is that God has deviated from them and this deviation is the product of God’s determinism and the main reason for it is the behaviors exhibited by the polytheists based on free will.

Verse 187 is related to verse 185 in this way that the Kaffirs are frightened of the outcomes of their actions and closeness of their death, and a question strikes their minds as to “when would the time of this close death be?” (verse 187); in the response, God orders, “tell them that only the God knows it” so that it can be shown that the prerequisite for prophetic mission is not just having a knowledge of the unseen and the time of the resurrection’s occurrence; and that the prophet is just an annunciator of the good news and warner of the punishments: (verse 188). Verse 188 is continued with the presentation of proof to this claim that the prophet does not know about the unseen; it is ordered to “tell them that if I had knowledge of the unseen, I could

³Ḥuwayzī, ‘Abd ‘Alī ibn Jum‘ah. (1994), *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thaqaliyn*. Qum: Ismā‘īliyan, Vol.2, p.103.

have collected a lot of profits for myself and nothing could harm me". At the end, certain signs of the resurrection are just stated in response to the Kaffirs.

٢,١٠. Verses 189-206: Relationship Between the SURA's Beginning and Ending Parts, Expressing of the Divine Gifts and Human Beings' Ingratitude and Following of Satan

Verses 189-198 have been presented in direct relationship with the beginning verses of the surah. The second verse deals with the holy Qur'ān's descent and the divine signs for the warning and guidance of the creatures. The third verse proposes things about polytheism and nonacceptance of God's guardianship, which is per se a sort of ingratitude and an example of the wrong treatment of the divine signs. Verses 11-25 posit things about the disobedience and ingratitude of Satan and his deception of Adam and Adam's following of him; then, verses 26-35 warn the offspring of Adam four times about following Satan and exercising ingratitude towards God.

This same order also holds true for verses 189-198, in which the creation from a single soul is first proposed (verse 189); then, the human beings' demand for having righteous children is mentioned, and the humans vow to stay thankful in exchange for it (verse 189). However, after receiving this gift, the issue becomes pertinent to human beings' polytheism and ingratitude (verse 190). In explaining this issue, verses 191-198 point to the inabilities of everything that is worshipped at the side of the One God (verse 191-198). Verse 196 points to the descending of the book and the revelation of the divine signs for the guidance of human beings and their rescue from polytheism as well as to God's guardianship and the inability of the partners the human beings wrongfully take equal to God out of ingratitude.

Verse 199 realizes this approach of the human beings (ingratitude) as having been adopted out of ignorance (verse 199); in verse 200, following Satan has been introduced as the reason for such ingratitude; in verses 200-201 (verse 200-201), seeking refuge in God and exercising piety have been proposed as two ways of escaping from Satan.

Verse 203 continues with the discussion about the book's descent and divine signs' revelation and God's guardianship for the righteous individuals which has been mentioned in verse 196; it has been presented in response to the great messenger's opponents who state that these verses are made by you yourself and not God; it is ordered that the prophet "tell them what I say is the revelation from God and a divine sign and I only obey them".

After expressing the divine nature of these verses, verse 204 asks the listeners to keep silent during the reading of the holy Qur'ān as a sort of respect to the speaker of these sacred words. Verse 205 demands God's remembrance and not remaining ignorant of Him; in the continuation and in verse 206, God's remembrance and praising God and prostration to Him are realized as actions by the individuals who, unlike Satan, do not practice haughtiness before God and who do not exercise wrongdoing and ingratitude before the divine signs. This way, the last verses of the surah again point to the subject that has been posited in the beginning thereof, i.e., wrongdoing and ingratitude of human beings in respect to the divine signs and guidance.

Conclusion:

The investigation of the relationship between the verses in *Sūrat al-A'rāf* indicates, unlike what is believed by some orientalists, there is a coherent relationship between the verses of *Sūrat al-A'rāf* and this relationship has explained in this project. The coherent relationships of the sura's verses achieved by the identification of the lines of the subjects posited in the Surah.

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