

The Maqāṣid-Based Analysis of Surah Luqman Verses 12–15: A Study of Ibn ‘Āshūr’s Interpretation in *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn ‘Āshūr’s interpretation of Surah Luqman verses 12–15 and to uncover the maqāṣid values embedded within these verses in the context of Islamic character formation. The study is motivated by the need for an exegetical approach that not only emphasizes textual aspects but also reveals the objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah) underlying the educational messages of the Qur’an. This research employs a qualitative approach using library research and an interpretative analytical design. Primary data were obtained from Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr, while secondary data were drawn from literature on Qur’anic exegesis, maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah, and relevant academic studies. Data were collected through documentation techniques and analyzed using content analysis with a maqāṣid-oriented approach. The findings indicate that Ibn ‘Āshūr’s interpretation of Surah Luqman verses 12–15 constructs a systematic framework of character formation through the values of tawḥīd (monotheism), gratitude, birr al-wālidayn (filial piety), moral responsibility, discipline in worship, social concern, and humility. The maqāṣid analysis demonstrates that these values are directed toward the preservation of religion, intellect, life, lineage, and social welfare. These findings affirm that Luqman’s advice is not merely normative in nature but also possesses a teleological dimension that remains relevant to contemporary educational challenges. This study contributes to the development of maqāṣid-based Qur’anic Studies and opens avenues for further empirical research on the implementation of Qur’anic values within modern educational contexts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Qur’an is regarded by Muslims as the Word of Allah and the primary source of Islamic teachings. Although it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad fourteen centuries ago, its teachings are believed to remain relevant across all times and places (*ṣāliḥ li kulli zamān wa makān*). Muslims are

therefore expected to continuously refer to this sacred text as the principal source for addressing ever-evolving issues and challenges. To fulfill this demand, Qur'anic exegetes must employ creative approaches in understanding and interpreting the Qur'an. One such approach is *Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān*, a concept that refers to the core themes and ultimate objectives of the Qur'an, demonstrating the intellectual creativity of Muslim scholars in exploring the meanings of Allah's revelation (Saputra, 2019).

The term *tafsīr maqāṣidī* (maqāṣid-oriented exegesis) is relatively recent, especially when compared to the concept of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, which has long been discussed within the discipline of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. In contemporary Islamic discourse, however, the theory of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* has developed into an independent field of study, distinct from *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and is frequently employed as an analytical framework for examining contemporary issues. Therefore, the study of *tafsīr maqāṣidī* has become increasingly significant and deserves deeper scholarly attention. Religious extremism, for instance, is often rooted in rigid and literalist interpretations of religious texts, including the Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*) (Mufid, 2019).

Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān is a term used by Muslim scholars to identify the divine purposes behind Allah's revelation of the Qur'an to humanity. Although it has not traditionally developed into a distinct academic discipline among either classical or contemporary scholars, references to *Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* are scattered throughout numerous scholarly works. Among classical scholars, for example, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali discussed this concept in his work *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*. According to al-Ghazali, the ultimate objective of Allah in revealing the Qur'an is to call His servants toward the worship and recognition of the One God. Likewise, 'Izz al-Dīn 'Abd al-Salām stated that "*Mu'ṣam Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān huwa al-amr bi iktisāb al-maṣāliḥ wa asbābiḥā wa al-zajr 'an iktisāb al-mafāsīd wa asbābiḥā*" (the essence of the objectives of the Qur'an lies in commanding the attainment of human welfare and the means leading to it, while prohibiting corruption and the causes that lead to it). Similarly, al-Rāzī identified the principal objectives of the Qur'an as *tawḥīd* (the oneness of God), *aḥkām al-sharī'ah* (Islamic legal rulings), and *aḥwāl al-ma'ād* (Fahriana, 2024).

As an endeavor to develop human beings, Islamic education must be grounded upon a foundational source to which all educational activities and formulations are connected. One of these foundations is the Qur'an. The Qur'an is the sacred scripture revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), containing guidance for human life. It was revealed as a guide for those seeking happiness in both this world and the Hereafter. The contents of the Qur'an encompass matters of faith, worship, knowledge, narratives, ethical principles, and behavioral guidelines regulating human life as both individuals and members of society. Consequently, it can be argued that the Qur'an contains universal educational principles covering all aspects of human development (Faoji & Budianto, 2024).

One of the sections of the Qur'an rich in moral teachings and practical guidance is Surah Luqman, particularly verses 12–15. These verses narrate the well-known advice of Luqman al-Ḥakīm to his son, encompassing noble values such as *tawḥīd*, filial piety (*birr al-wālidayn*), social responsibility, and ethical conduct within society. Previous studies have generally focused on the educational dimensions of these verses, resulting in the formulation of concepts such as "ideal Islamic family education," which have become important references for educators.

However, a deeper examination reveals that Luqman's advice in this chapter is not merely a set of pedagogical instructions. Beneath the eloquent language of these verses lie more fundamental Qur'anic objectives (*maqāṣid al-Qur'ān*). The prohibition of associating partners with Allah (*shirk*), for instance, extends beyond doctrinal concerns and serves the broader objective of preserving religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), which forms the foundation of human life. The command to honor one's parents, even when they differ in faith, reflects the objectives of preserving life and lineage (*ḥifẓ al-naḥs wa al-nasl*) within a framework of social harmony. Furthermore, the exhortation to enjoin good and forbid evil (*al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*) and to remain patient in the face of adversity embodies the pursuit of social welfare (*maṣlaḥah*), while the prohibition of arrogance and the command to walk

modestly (*waqṣid fī mashaḥika*) represent efforts to safeguard reason and material well-being from destructive behavior. Thus, an approach that views these verses solely through the lens of education remains limited to instructional values and fails to uncover the philosophical and universal dimensions that constitute the spirit of the Qur'anic message (Guci & Sukmana, 2023).

These limitations necessitate an exegetical approach capable of uncovering the deeper objectives embedded within the sacred text, namely the maqāṣid-oriented approach. *Tafsīr maqāṣidī* is a model of Qur'anic interpretation that seeks to achieve the divine purposes and rationality underlying Islamic law by emphasizing wisdom, public welfare, and universal values embedded in the verses (Auda, 2015). This approach does not stop at the literal meaning of the text but endeavors to reveal the spirit of the Qur'anic message so that it can be effectively actualized in contemporary contexts. Its importance has become increasingly evident in the modern era, where Muslims face complex social challenges that require Qur'anic guidance to be not only normative but also functional and solution-oriented (Hamid, 2020).

Within the tradition of modern Qur'anic exegesis, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr (d. 1393 AH) stands out as one of the pioneering figures in the development of maqāṣid-oriented interpretation. His monumental work, *Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, is widely recognized not only as a comprehensive encyclopedic commentary but also as a practical application of maqāṣid theory in Qur'anic interpretation. Ibn 'Āshūr consciously constructed his exegetical framework upon maqāṣid principles, making his work a primary reference for contemporary maqāṣid studies. In the introduction to his commentary, he explicitly emphasized the importance of understanding *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* as a key to sound interpretation. Studies indicate that in interpreting Qur'anic verses, Ibn 'Āshūr consistently connected them to universal objectives such as public welfare, justice, and wisdom. Although studies on Surah Luqman employing a maqāṣid approach have been conducted, particularly regarding its educational methods, research specifically examining Surah Luqman verses 12–19 in *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* through a maqāṣid-oriented framework remains limited and requires further exploration (Ahmad, 2020). Existing studies tend to focus on the educational values derived from the verses without systematically investigating how Ibn 'Āshūr interpreted these passages within the framework of maqāṣid. Given his expertise in maqāṣid studies, Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation of Luqman's advice undoubtedly contains rich philosophical insights (Ali et al., 2023).

The significance of this research lies in its attempt to fill this scholarly gap. By conducting a maqāṣid analysis of Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation of Surah Luqman verses 12–15, this study seeks to uncover the philosophical foundations and Qur'anic objectives embedded within each of Luqman's counsels. Such an inquiry is important because it shifts the focus from merely replicating Luqman's educational methods toward a deeper understanding of why these teachings are important and how their essence can be realized to promote human welfare across generations. Consequently, the values contained within this chapter are not merely historical legacies but adaptive and solution-oriented principles capable of addressing contemporary challenges faced by the Muslim community. Based on the foregoing background, the researcher is interested in conducting further study in the form of a thesis entitled: "A Maqāṣid Analysis of Surah Luqman Verses 12–15: A Study of Ibn 'Āshūr's Interpretation in *Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* (Hamid, 2020).

2. METHODS

Research methodology refers to the systematic procedures employed in collecting, analyzing, and presenting data so that the study can be scientifically justified. The method utilized in this research is library research, which relies on library materials such as books, classical Islamic texts (*kutub*), academic journals, and other written documents as the primary sources of data. This study adopts a qualitative research design, namely a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written words derived from the object of study. The approach employed in this research is the maqāṣid-oriented exegetical (*tafsīr maqāṣidī*) approach, an interpretive model that focuses on

uncovering the objectives and purposes of the Qur'an (*maqāṣid al-Qur'ān*) embedded within its verses. (Annasthasya et al., 2025), (Ayu et al., 2024).

This approach does not merely focus on the literal meaning of the text; rather, it seeks to reveal the wisdom (*ḥikmah*), public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*), and universal values underlying the Qur'anic message. In the context of this study, the *maqāṣid* approach is applied to analyze Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation of Surah Luqman verses 12–15 in order to uncover the *maqāṣid* dimensions contained therein, both at the level of *maqāṣid al-āmmah* (general objectives) and *maqāṣid al-khāṣṣah* (specific objectives) (Nurrisa & Hermina, 2025).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Surah Luqman verses 12–15 are not merely a series of parental admonitions directed from a father to his son; rather, they constitute an integrated manifesto of monotheistic and moral education within the Qur'an. Beginning with Allah's bestowal of wisdom (*ḥikmah*) upon Luqman, these verses construct a framework for the development of the *insān kāmil* (the complete human being), balancing both the divine dimension (*ḥabl min Allāh*) and the social dimension (*ḥabl min al-nās*). The uniqueness of Luqman's narrative lies in its method of delivery, which is rooted in compassion while remaining firmly grounded in the principles of faith (*'aqīdah*) (S Hidayat, 2024).

An analysis of these verses requires a reading that transcends their literal meaning (*al-ma'nā al-ḥarfī*). Through the lens of *Tafsīr Maqāṣidī*, this study seeks to uncover the *'illah* (underlying rationale) and *ḥikmah* (higher wisdom or objective) behind the commands of gratitude, the prohibition of shirk (associating partners with Allah), and the ethical principles of communication. This approach is essential for demonstrating the relevance of Luqman al-Ḥakīm's teachings within the context of modern education, ensuring that these messages do not remain confined to a historical narrative but are transformed into practical solutions for contemporary moral challenges.

In this chapter, the discussion focuses on the deconstruction of the *maqāṣid* values embedded within Luqman's counsel. The study examines how *Ḥifẓ al-Dīn* (the preservation of religion) is manifested through the prohibition of shirk, as well as how *Ḥifẓ al-Nafs* (the preservation of life) and *Ḥifẓ al-'Aql* (the preservation of intellect) are reflected in the process of character formation. Systematically, this chapter presents the findings of the *maqāṣid*-oriented interpretation, which are categorized into three principal dimensions: theological-spiritual foundations, ritual manifestations, and the actualization of social ethics (Ghaffar et al., 2025).

A. The Character of Tawḥīd

1. Description and Exegetical Analysis of the Verse (Surah Luqman 31:12)

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾

"Indeed, We certainly granted Luqman wisdom, saying: 'Be grateful to Allah. Whoever is grateful, he is only grateful for his own benefit. And whoever is ungrateful, then indeed Allah is Self-Sufficient and Praiseworthy.'" (Qur'an 31:12).

The particle *wāw* at the beginning of this verse functions as a conjunction (*'atf*) linking the story of Luqman with the story of al-Naḍr ibn al-Ḥārith mentioned previously in the verse: "And among the people is he who purchases distracting discourse (*lahw al-ḥadīth*) to mislead others from the path of Allah..." (Luqman: 6). This connection is based on the observation that the narrative of al-Naḍr portrays an extraordinary example of misguidance, as he engaged in *lahw al-ḥadīth* with the intention of diverting people from Allah's path and ridiculing His revelations. In contrast, the story of Luqman presents an exceptional example of guidance and wisdom. The two narratives represent opposing conditions: one embodies deviation, while the other exemplifies guidance (Siti & Daiyatul, 2024).

Consequently, the narrative of al-Naḍr should not be viewed merely as a *muqaddimah* (introduction) leading to the principal objective of the discourse. If an introductory discussion becomes extensive, it ceases to function solely as a prelude and instead becomes an integral part of the main theme itself. Therefore, the story of Luqman is connected through *ʿatf* in the manner of linking one narrative to another rather than serving as a conclusion (*natījah*) following a preliminary introduction. In rhetorical practice, a single stylistic device may simultaneously fulfill multiple purposes, and an eloquent speaker (*baligh*) has the discretion to emphasize whichever aspect is most appropriate. Furthermore, the use of two emphatic particles at the beginning of the narrative—*Lām al-Qasam* and *Qad*—indicates that the event being described is both highly significant and unquestionably true.

Regarding Luqman himself, he is widely recognized as a wise and righteous man. The majority of narrations, although individually weak in transmission, collectively support the view that he was a black man. Some reports associate him with Nubia, while others suggest that he originated from Abyssinia (Ethiopia). The Luqman mentioned in the Qurʾan should not be confused with Luqman ibn ʿĀd, a legendary figure in Arab tradition associated with the well-known proverb “*lḥdā ḥaḍiyyātī Luqman*” (“one of Luqman’s favorite birds”) or with references found in the poetry of Abū al-Muhawwash al-Asadī concerning “the head of Luqman ibn ʿĀd.” This legendary figure was known as “Luqman, the owner of the vulture” and had a son named Luqaym (Bolotio et al., 2020).

Another opinion states that the father of the Qurʾanic Luqman was named Baʿūrāʾ. This claim led some writers to identify him with Balaam son of Beor, mentioned in Jewish literature (Numbers 22–23). However, this identification appears unlikely, as Balaam was considered a prophet among the Midianites during the time of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him). The confusion may have arisen from the similarity of the fathers’ names or from the assumption that “Balaam” and “Luqman” share related semantic associations, since *Balaam* derives from a root meaning “to swallow,” while *Luqman* derives from *luqmah* (“a morsel of food”), leading some Arab scholars to treat the names as linguistic equivalents (Ibn ʿAshūr, 1984), (Permatasari & Rhain, 2024).

Classical Muslim scholars differed regarding Luqman’s status: whether he was a prophet or merely a righteous sage. The majority (*jumhūr*) maintained that Luqman was a wise and pious man rather than a prophet. This position is supported by Imam Malik’s reference to him in *al-Muwattaʾ* as “Luqman al-Ḥakīm” (Luqman the Wise), reflecting the widespread usage of this title among the scholars of Madinah. Evidence supporting this view includes a narration reported by Ibn ʿAṭiyyah from Ibn ʿUmar in which the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: “Luqman was not a prophet. Rather, he was a servant who reflected deeply, possessed sound conviction, and loved Allah. Therefore, Allah loved him and granted him wisdom (Maulida et al., 2023).

Moreover, the Qurʾanic account of Luqman contains no indication of revelation (*waḥy*) descending upon him or any interaction with angels. The expression “*while he was advising him*” (*wa huwa ya ʾiẓuhu*) in verse 13 describes an act of instruction and moral counsel rather than prophetic proclamation (*tablīgh*). Nevertheless, a minority of scholars, including ʿIkrimah and al-Shaʿbī, held that Luqman was a prophet. Their argument is based on the Qurʾanic use of the term *al-ḥikmah*, which in some contexts signifies prophethood, such as in Surah Ṣād (38:20) concerning Prophet David. Likewise, Surah al-Baqarah (2:269) describes wisdom as “abundant goodness,” which may encompass prophethood. Conceptually, wisdom (*ḥikmah*) is understood as knowledge of realities as they truly are, and its highest form is prophethood, since prophetic knowledge originates directly from Allah, the All-Knowing (Rohman et al., 2023).

2. Luqman as a Well-Known Figure Among the Arab Elite

In Ibn Ishāq’s *Sīrah*, it is narrated that Suwayd ibn al-Ṣāmit of Madinah once came to Makkah, where the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) invited him to embrace Islam. Suwayd responded, saying, “Perhaps what you possess (the Qurʾan) is similar to what I possess.” The Prophet then asked, “What do you possess?” He replied, “The compilation of Luqman’s wisdom.” The

Prophet requested that it be recited, and after listening to it, he said, "Indeed, these are good words, but what I possess is superior: the Qur'an revealed by Allah (Rifqi, 2019).

Afterward, Suwayd returned to Madinah and passed away before the Battle of Bu'āth. His people believed that he died as a Muslim and bestowed upon him the title *al-Kāmil* ("the Perfect One"). Nevertheless, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, in *al-Istī'āb*, expressed reservations concerning the certainty of Suwayd's conversion to Islam. Furthermore, at the beginning of this surah, it is mentioned that the Quraysh questioned the Prophet regarding Luqman and his son, indicating that Luqman was already a familiar figure within Arab tradition. Ibn 'Āshūr also notes that, while composing his commentary, he had collected thirty-eight transmitted maxims (*ḥikam ma'thūrah*) attributed to Luqman beyond those mentioned in the Qur'anic verses and intended to present them after completing the interpretation of the relevant passages (Zulaika, 2024).

Luqman is a proper name ('*alam*) derived from the Arabic root *laqama* ("to feed" or "to put a morsel into the mouth"). It is likely an Arabized name whose pronunciation was adapted to conform to Arabic phonological patterns, similar to the transformation of the name "Shaul" into "Ṭālūt." Grammatically, the name Luqman belongs to the category of *mamnū' min al-ṣarf* (diptote), meaning that it does not take tanwīn. This grammatical feature is due to the presence of the additional letters *alif* and *nūn*, rather than its foreign origin ('*ujmah*).

The Function of *An* (أَنْ) in *Ani Ushkur Lillāh*. The particle *an* in the phrase *ani ushkur lillāh* ("that you should be grateful to Allah") functions as *an tafsīriyyah* (an explanatory particle), rather than serving as an object-complement of the verb *ātaynā* ("We granted"). This is because the object of the verb has already been explicitly stated, namely *al-ḥikmah* (wisdom). Consequently, the role of *an* is to clarify the essence and content of that wisdom itself. Since wisdom in this context contains a message originating from divine revelation or inspiration, it implicitly conveys the meaning of "speech" (*qawl*), even though such wording is not explicitly stated. Therefore, the use of *an tafsīriyyah* is appropriate because it serves to explain the content of the wisdom granted to Luqman (Mustofa, 2015).

The Meaning of the Command to Be Grateful. The first teaching bestowed upon Luqman within the framework of wisdom is the command to express gratitude to Allah for the numerous blessings bestowed upon him. These blessings include not only the gift of wisdom itself but also his preparedness and capacity to receive it. This command constitutes the primary foundation of wisdom, as it requires reflection upon one's own existential reality before attempting to understand the nature of things or guide others. The most fundamental reflection concerning human existence is the recognition of one's creation in a state of perfection and the acknowledgment of the Creator who granted that perfection. Such awareness naturally leads to gratitude. Thus, gratitude is not merely an ethical virtue but the first manifestation of true wisdom.

Gratitude as a Benefit to Oneself. The command to be grateful is accompanied by an affirmation that the benefits of gratitude return entirely to the individual who practices it, as expressed in the statement: "Whoever is grateful, he is only grateful for his own benefit." Gratitude contributes to the perfection and refinement of the individual, while conferring no benefit upon the One to whom gratitude is directed, namely Allah. The conditional construction "*man yashkur*" ("whoever is grateful") establishes a strong relationship between the condition and its consequence. Furthermore, the use of the restrictive style (*ḥaṣr*) in the phrase "*fa innamā yashkuru linafsihī*" ("he is only grateful for his own benefit"), together with the particle *lām al-ta'līl* in *linafsihī*, emphasizes that the entirety of the benefits derived from gratitude is confined to the individual who expresses it (Al Qindi et al., 2025).

3. Maqāṣid Analysis

Ibn 'Āshūr raises an important question: Why did Allah grant wisdom (*al-ḥikmah*) to Luqman before anything else? The expression *ātaynā* ("We granted") indicates a direct bestowal from Allah. According to Ibn 'Āshūr, this grant should be understood as *ilhām rabbānī* (divine inspiration) or spiritual illumination rather than mere intellectual brilliance. Wisdom, in this sense, is not simply information or accumulated knowledge; it is existential maturity. For this reason, Allah granted

wisdom to Luqman before he addressed his son. A person is not worthy of becoming a *murabbī* (educator) until he has first disciplined and refined himself. Ibn ‘Āshūr places wisdom before counsel so that advice does not become empty rhetoric. This interpretation is consistent with the Qur’anic method, which seeks not merely to transmit legal rulings but to cultivate *ṣalāḥ al-fard* (individual righteousness) as the foundation for *ṣalāḥ al-mujtama‘* (social righteousness) (Khoirul Muthrofin, 2023).

An equally significant question concerns why the first expression of wisdom is “*Ani usykur lillāh*” (“Be grateful to Allah”). This is particularly noteworthy because Allah does not define wisdom through abstract philosophical concepts but through practical action. From the Qur’anic perspective, the first dimension of wisdom is not possessing extensive knowledge, but rather knowing to whom blessings should be attributed (Azis et al., 2025).

In this context, gratitude is not merely a verbal expression. Rather, it encompasses: 1) awareness of the source of blessings, 2) recognition of the One who bestows those blessings, 3) the proper utilization of blessings in accordance with the purpose for which they were created. Accordingly, wisdom produces gratitude, and gratitude serves as evidence of the presence of wisdom.

The Relationship Between Wisdom and Gratitude in the Maqāṣid of the Qur’an. According to Ibn ‘Āshūr, the relationship between wisdom and gratitude is fundamental within the maqāṣid framework of the Qur’an. Wisdom directs human beings toward understanding purposes and objectives by enabling them to perceive reality correctly, comprehend consequences, and place everything in its proper context. This corresponds directly to the maqāṣid objective of understanding the *ghāyah* (ultimate purpose) behind human actions. Gratitude, on the other hand, safeguards the proper orientation of blessings by ensuring that: 1) Knowledge does not lead to arrogance, 2) Authority does not lead to oppression, 3) Wealth does not lead to corruption, 4) Family relationships do not become objects of idolatrous attachment (Rahma Dewi et al., 2023).

Thus, gratitude functions as the ethical mechanism of wisdom. While wisdom enables human beings to understand the proper purpose of blessings, gratitude ensures that those blessings are used in accordance with that purpose. In this way, gratitude serves as the practical manifestation of wisdom and as an essential means of realizing the higher objectives (*maqāṣid*) of the Qur’an.

B. Gratitude (*Shukr*) as a Character Trait

1. Description and Analysis of the Exegesis of Surah Luqman (31:13)

وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَبْنِي لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

“And [remember] when Luqman said to his son, while advising him, ‘O my dear son, do not associate anything with Allah. Indeed, associating partners with Allah is truly a great injustice.’” (*Qur’an 31:13*)

This verse is connected to the statement, “And We certainly granted Luqman wisdom” (Qur’an 31:12) through the use of the conjunction *wāw* (و) as a coordinating particle (‘*aṭf*). In this construction, the *wāw* functions as a connector to an implied verb (*fi’l muqaddar*) that is not explicitly stated. Consequently, the content of this verse serves as an explanation of one aspect of the wisdom that had been granted to Luqman. The intended meaning may be understood as: “And We granted him wisdom when he spoke to his son.” Thus, Luqman’s words to his son were spoken after he had been endowed with wisdom, making his counsel itself a manifestation of that wisdom. Every circumstance in which wisdom becomes evident through his speech indicates that he was, at that moment, under the influence of the wisdom bestowed upon him (Ibn ‘Āshūr, 1984), (Nopi Harmaliani, 2019).

In principle, a prohibition is directed toward something that is either already being practiced or toward which there is a tendency or inclination. It would be irrelevant to prohibit an action entirely unrelated to the condition of the person being addressed. Although exegetes have differed regarding

the identity of Luqman's son, this disagreement bears little significance for the present discussion (Ibn 'Āshūr, 1984).

The concise counsel delivered by Luqman encompasses the fundamental principles of the Sharī'ah (*uṣūl al-sharī'ah*). These principles include matters of belief (*'aqīdah*), practical conduct (*'amal*), ethical behavior in social interactions (*adab al-mu'āmalah*), and personal moral discipline (*adab al-nafs*). The advice begins with a form of address (*nidā'*) directed toward the listener, even though the use of the second-person pronoun alone would have been grammatically sufficient to indicate the presence of the addressee. In this context, the vocative expression functions figuratively (*majāzī*) to stimulate mental attentiveness (*huḍūr al-dhihn*), thereby enabling the message to be understood and internalized more effectively. This reflects the speaker's deep concern (*ihitimām*) for achieving the communicative purpose of the advice. A similar rhetorical pattern appears in other Qur'anic passages, such as:

- a) "O my father, indeed I saw eleven stars..." (Qur'an 12:4)
- b) "O my son, do not relate your dream to your brothers..." (Qur'an 12:5)
- c) "O Jesus, son of Mary, can your Lord send down to us a table spread from heaven?" (Qur'an 5:112)
- d) "O my father, why do you worship that which neither hears nor sees..." (Qur'an 19:42)

The word *bunayya* ("my dear son") is a diminutive form (*taṣghīr*) of the word *ibn* (son), attached to the first-person possessive pronoun (*yā' al-mutakallim*). Consequently, the final letter takes a kasrah vowel. Its original form is estimated to have been *yā bunayyuya*, derived from *yā bunaywuya*. The word *ibn* belongs to the category of defective nouns (*ism mu'tall*) whose final root letter is *wāw*, which had originally been omitted. In the process of forming the diminutive, the omitted letter is restored. Subsequently, when the silent *yā'* of the diminutive meets the vocalized *wāw*, the *wāw* changes into a *yā'* due to phonological compatibility, and the two letters merge through assimilation (*idghām*).

When used in a vocative expression and attached to the first-person possessive pronoun, the pronoun itself is omitted, as permitted in Arabic vocative structures and to avoid repetitive sounds. Nevertheless, its presence remains indicated by the kasrah vowel, which functions as a marker of the omitted possessive pronoun in all grammatical states (*raf'*, *naṣb*, and *jarr*). Ibn 'Āshūr notes that this linguistic phenomenon had been discussed previously in relation to Surah Yusuf.

The use of the diminutive form in this context symbolically places the listener, even if already mature, in the position of a beloved child. It serves as a form of figurative expression (*kināyah*) that conveys affection (*shafaqah*) and tenderness (*tahabbub*). Within the context of moral instruction, this expression highlights the sincerity (*imhād al-nuṣḥ*) and deep concern of the advisor for the welfare of the person being advised. Moreover, it functions as a psychological encouragement, making the advice easier to accept and follow.

In delivering his counsel, Luqman begins by commanding his son to abandon shirk (associating partners with Allah). This sequence demonstrates that spiritual purification (*tazkiyah*) and the attainment of human perfection (*kamāl*) require an initial stage of self-emptying (*takhallī*) from corruption and deviation. Reforming belief (*iṣlāḥ al-i'tiqād*) constitutes the essential foundation for reforming action (*iṣlāḥ al-'amal*). Fundamentally, corruption in creed originates from two principal sources: *Dahriyyah* (materialism or atheism) and polytheism (*shirk*). Therefore, the statement, "Do not associate partners with Allah," implicitly affirms the existence of God (*ithbāt al-ilāh*) while simultaneously negating the possibility of any partner sharing in His divinity (*ibtāl al-shirk*) (Ibn 'Āshūr, 1984), (Jamaluddin et al., n.d.).

2. Maqāṣid Analysis

The use of the expression "*yā bunayya*" ("O my dear son") in Qur'an 31:13, situated within a stern prohibition against shirk, reflects remarkable pedagogical and philosophical depth. Based on the exegetical analysis, the rationale behind employing a language of affection to instill the foundations of faith can be understood through a maqāṣid-oriented perspective.

Morphologically, *yā bunayya* is a diminutive (*taṣghīr*) form of *ibn* (son) attached to the first-person possessive pronoun. Psychologically, this diminutive serves as a figurative expression (*kināyah*) that

communicates profound affection (*shafaqah*) and a gentle, loving approach (*taḥabbub*). From a rhetorical standpoint, the expression functions to awaken the child's mental readiness (*ḥuḍūr al-dhihn*), enabling him to receive a weighty message with an open heart. It also emphasizes the sincerity (*imḥād al-nuṣḥ*) of the advisor. The prohibition against shirk is therefore not presented as an expression of rigid authority but rather as an act of deep concern for the child's ultimate well-being and salvation (Fatha Pringgar & Sujatmiko, 2020).

From a maqāṣid perspective, Luqman's method reflects a fundamental principle in spiritual purification (*tazkiyah*) and the attainment of human excellence. Reforming belief (*iṣlāḥ al-i'tiqād*) is prioritized as the foundation upon which righteous actions (*iṣlāḥ al-'amal*) are built. The prohibition of shirk is presented first as an act of *takhallī*—emptying oneself of corruption and falsehood—before subsequently filling oneself with virtue and goodness (*taḥallī*). Luqman employs the method of *wa'z* (admonition), a form of instruction that combines warning and moral caution (*takhwīf*) with compassion, thereby touching the heart rather than merely imposing authority.

Shirk is described as *ẓulmun 'aẓīm* ("a great injustice") because it constitutes a violation of the rights of the Creator, an injustice against oneself through submission to lesser entities, and a distortion of the proper order of reality. The use of a compassionate approach in teaching creed serves to balance the gravity of the message, thereby reducing psychological resistance and facilitating acceptance of absolute truth.

By establishing a relationship of guidance (*irshād*), Luqman transforms his counsel from a rigid command into a deeply impactful direction that penetrates the soul (*baligh*). This practice represents a concrete manifestation of wisdom (*ḥikmah*), demonstrating that true wisdom lies not only in personal understanding but also in the ability to guide others through the most appropriate and effective means. From a maqāṣid perspective, Luqman's educational method illustrates that the preservation of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) is achieved not merely through doctrinal instruction but through compassionate communication that nurtures conviction, receptivity, and lasting moral transformation.

C. The Character of Filial Piety (*Birr al-Wālidayn*)

1. Description and Exegetical Analysis of Surah Luqman (31:14–15)

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفَصَّلَهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾

We have enjoined upon humankind to be good to their parents. His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness, and weaning him takes place in two years. (We said,) "Be grateful to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final return."

وَأِنْ جَاهَدَكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ١٥

"But if they strive to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. Yet accompany them in this world with kindness, and follow the path of those who turn back to Me. Then to Me is your return, and I will inform you of what you used to do."

If it is assumed that Luqman was not a prophet receiving revelation, but rather a wise figure acting as a judge and advisor, then this verse may be understood as an inserted statement (*i'tirād*) within the flow of his counsel. This is due to the verse's form, which appears both in direct divine discourse (*tablīgh*) and in narrative style (*ḥikāyah*) attributed to the speech of Allah. The presence of the pronoun "We" (*ḍamīr al-'aẓamah*) indicates a contextual connection (*munāsabah*) with the preceding passage, namely Luqman's warning to his son to avoid shirk and his assertion that such an act is a grave injustice.

Within this framework, the verse functions as an emphasis (ta'kīd) of Luqman's counsel regarding the prohibition of shirk. This emphasis is achieved by universalizing (ta'mīm) the ruling so that it applies to all individuals and all circumstances. In this way, it eliminates the assumption that the prohibition is limited only to Luqman's son or to specific situations. Furthermore, Allah clarifies that this command has been enjoined upon all humanity without exception (hawādah), even in the most severe circumstance, namely when parents compel their child to commit shirk.

On another level, a stronger semantic connection may be proposed: when Allah narrates Luqman's counsel to his son regarding gratitude to Him through the purification of tawhīd from shirk, He simultaneously emphasizes that He has already bestowed a favor (minnah) upon His servants by enjoining goodness toward parents (birr al-wālidayn). Within this general meaning, there is also an implied honor for Luqman as a reward for his sincerity in preserving Allah's rights by beginning his advice with tawhīd. Thus, Allah gives precedence to acts of benevolence (iḥsān) toward those who properly fulfill His rights. This meaning is further reinforced by the pairing of gratitude to Allah with gratitude to parents within the same directive.

Conversely, if Luqman is assumed to be a prophet, then this verse is understood as part of his divinely revealed instruction to his son. Its structure would therefore follow the rhetorical style of revelation, similar to the statement: "Be grateful to Allah" (Qur'an 31:12). This interpretation aligns more closely with the syntactic and contextual flow (siyāq) of the passage and is strengthened by stylistic differences between this verse and its parallels in Surah al-'Ankabūt and Surah al-Aḥqāf. In this case, the present verse takes the form of narrative (ḥikāyah) concerning earlier communities, whereas the other two verses appear as direct address (khiṭāb) to the Muslim community. There is also a report stating that when Luqman conveyed this advice to his son, the son responded: "Indeed, Allah is pleased with me regarding you, so He did not command me concerning you; but He is not pleased with you regarding me, so He commanded me concerning you."

The main focus of this verse lies in the statement: "But if they strive to make you associate with Me..." until the end of the verse. The preceding portion serves as an introduction (tamhīd) and affirmation (taqrīr) of the obligation to treat parents with goodness. This structure is intended to emphasize that the prohibition of obeying parents in matters leading to shirk is mentioned in the context where obedience is generally most strongly required. From this, through the principle of fahwā al-khiṭāb, it is understood that the prohibition is even more emphatic in other circumstances (Muhammed Thani, 2026). Additionally, there is an element of idmāj (implicit integration) that harmonizes with the wisdom attributed to Luqman, whether the verse is considered part of his speech or direct divine discourse.

Based on these considerations, the opinion of some exegetes linking this verse to the conversion of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and his mother's opposition is not tenable. This interpretation does not align with the Qur'anic context, as the similar verse in Surah al-'Ankabūt is more directly associated with that incident. The verse in al-'Ankabūt is more suitable as a cause of revelation (asbāb al-nuzūl) because it lacks the softened rhetorical tone (tarqīq) found in the present verse. Moreover, there is no strong basis for claiming that two different verses were revealed for the same purpose at different times. A more detailed explanation of this command will be provided in the following section (Ibn 'Āshūr, 1984).

2. Maqāṣid Analysis

The insertion of the command to show kindness to parents within Luqman's advice (i'tirāḍ) functions as an emphasis (ta'kīd) of the prohibition against shirk. This reinforcement broadens the scope of the prohibition so that it applies universally in all circumstances, including the most severe case where parents exert pressure on their child to commit shirk.

Furthermore, this insertion can be understood as a divine affirmation that Allah prioritizes goodness toward those who properly fulfill His rights. In this case, it reflects a reward for Luqman, who began his counsel with tawhīd. The contextual relationship (munāsabah) between gratitude to

Allah and gratitude to parents is clearly demonstrated through their pairing within a single directive, implying a strong analogy (*qiyās*): Allah grants the ultimate blessing of existence and guidance, while parents provide tangible sacrifices such as the mother's pregnancy in successive stages of weakness, breastfeeding, and the father's role in protection, education, and financial support (Rahmawati, 2025).

From the perspective of *maqāṣid al-taṣhrī'*, verse 15 establishes a firm boundary regarding obedience to parents when a conflict of faith arises. If parents continuously and forcefully (*mujāhadah*) pressure their child to associate partners with Allah, then obedience to them becomes strictly prohibited. The principle of parental obedience is immediately nullified when it conflicts with divine commands involving sin. Nevertheless, the Qur'an maintains a remarkable balance between the preservation of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) and the preservation of human relations (*mu'āsharah bi al-ma'rūf*) by instructing the believer to accompany their parents in this world with kindness (*ṣāhibhumā fī al-dunyā ma'rūfan*).

This moral obligation is absolute in nature; differences in belief or even the parents' polytheism do not remove the child's duty to maintain good conduct, harmonious interaction, and family ties. This balance is illustrated in the narration of Asmā' bint Abī Bakr, where the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) instructed her to maintain ties with her mother despite her being a polytheist at the time (Alibe, 2022).

Regarding the concept of *ma'rūf* in interfaith family relations, the referenced text does not explicitly provide Ibn 'Āshūr's definition but instead presents it through the perspective of Mālikī jurists. In general, *al-ma'rūf* refers to all forms of goodness recognized by common custom, widely practiced, and free from indications of wrongdoing. In the context of a Muslim child with non-Muslim parents, the scope of *al-ma'rūf* becomes broader, encompassing actions considered beneficial from the parents' perspective, even if such actions may be deemed impermissible within Islamic law. Based on this principle, the Mālikī school allows a Muslim child who financially supports impoverished non-Muslim parents to purchase wine (*khamr*) for them if they habitually consume it. This is permitted because, from their religious standpoint, such consumption is not classified as wrongdoing. However, the Muslim child is absolutely prohibited from facilitating any act that is mutually recognized as immoral or sinful in both Islamic law and the parents' own religious framework.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the analysis of Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation in *Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* of Qur'an Surah Luqman verses 12–15, as well as the *maqāṣid*-based analysis of the values contained therein, the conclusions of this study can be formulated as follows: Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation of Surah Luqman shows that Luqman's series of advice is not merely individual moral instruction, but a Qur'anic educational construction oriented toward the formation of the ideal human being. Ibn 'Āshūr interprets these verses in an integrative manner, taking into account linguistic aspects, context, *munāsabah* (textual coherence), and the universal objectives of the Qur'an. From this analysis, seven main character traits are identified as being developed in a gradual manner, namely: monotheism (*tawḥīd*), gratitude (*shukr*), filial piety (*birr al-wālidayn*), social responsibility, disciplined worship, avoidance of arrogance, and humility. These findings answer the first research question and demonstrate that the objective of describing Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation has been achieved. The *maqāṣid*-based analysis of Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation shows that Qur'an Surah Luqman 12–15 contains the objectives of Islamic legislation at both the general (*maqāṣid al-āmmah*) and specific (*maqāṣid al-khāṣṣah*) levels. The value of *tawḥīd* is oriented toward the preservation of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), filial piety toward the preservation of lineage and life (*ḥifẓ al-nasl* and *ḥifẓ al-naḥs*), the command to reflect upon Allah's supervision leads to the preservation of intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), while social ethics and the prohibition of arrogance support the creation of collective social welfare (*maṣlahah*). Thus, Luqman's advice in Ibn 'Āshūr's perspective is not merely normative, but has a teleological orientation that affirms that all Qur'anic messages aim at

safeguarding human welfare. This finding answers the second research question and supports the theoretical assumption that the maqāṣid approach can uncover the philosophical dimensions behind the text. The maqāṣid-based values in Surah Luqman have strong relevance to contemporary life. The value of tawhīd is relevant in addressing spiritual crises, filial piety in dealing with family disintegration, *amr ma'rūf nahy munkar* in strengthening social responsibility, while the prohibition of arrogance and the command for simplicity are relevant in responding to individualism and digital existential culture. These findings answer the third research question and demonstrate that Ibn 'Āshūr's interpretation is contextual and remains applicable in responding to the challenges of the present era. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Qur'anic Studies, particularly in strengthening the maqāṣidī tafsir paradigm. It shows that Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr's thought is not only relevant within the discourse of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, but also has methodological contributions to contemporary Qur'anic exegesis. This study also expands the interpretation of Surah Luqman, which has often been dominated by a character-education perspective, toward a more philosophical and teleological reading.

Practically, the findings of this research can serve as a conceptual foundation for the development of Islamic education, family development, and social ethics based on Qur'anic values. The study shows that character education in the Qur'an must begin with the strengthening of faith (*'aqidah*), internalization of moral awareness, habituation of worship, and the formation of a humble and responsible social personality. This study has several limitations that should be considered. First, it is limited to Surah Luqman verses 12–15. Second, the primary source is restricted to Ibn 'Āshūr's exegesis without intensive comparison with other exegetes. Third, it is a library-based study and therefore does not empirically test the implementation of maqāṣid values in real social contexts. These factors may affect the generalizability of the findings. Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to broaden the object, approach, and context of study. Subsequent studies may examine other educational verses using a maqāṣidī approach, conduct comparative studies between Ibn 'Āshūr and other contemporary exegetes, or develop field research to test the implementation of maqāṣid values from Surah Luqman in family education, Islamic educational institutions, and modern social life.

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