



The Spiritual Pathology of the Heart in the Stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman: A Thematic Analysis from the Perspective of Tafsir al-Mishbah



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Abstract

This study seeks to analyse the manifestations of spiritual pathology of the heart as depicted in the Qur'anic narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, through an integrative approach combining Qur'anic exegesis and psychological perspectives. The significance of this research lies in recognising that the spiritual pathology of the heart are not solely spiritual or theological concerns but are intricately linked to psychological states and the social conduct of modern individuals. Prior investigations into the spiritual pathology of the heart have predominantly adopted normative-theological frameworks or have examined specific figures in a fragmented manner. Consequently, there exists a paucity of comprehensive studies that synthesise Qur'anic interpretation with psychological methodologies. Employing a qualitative methodology grounded in library research and utilising the thematic interpretation (maudhu'i) approach, this study reveals that Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman exhibit symptoms indicative of spiritual maladies such as riya' (showing off), ujub (self-admiration), arrogance, stinginess, ظلم (oppression), and rejection of truth. These spiritual afflictions may precipitate psychological imbalance, thereby influencing moral, spiritual, and social dimensions of life. From a psychological standpoint, the traits and behaviours of these figures bear resemblance to various personality disorders, including narcissistic, antisocial, histrionic, and obsessive-compulsive disorders. This research contributes to an expanded understanding that the spiritual pathology of the heart impact not only spiritual well-being but also moral integrity, mental health, and social equilibrium. Accordingly, these Qur'anic narratives may function as ethical exemplars to deter the emergence of destructive behaviours in contemporary society.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bentuk-bentuk penyakit hati dalam kisah Fir'aun, Qarun, dan Haman di dalam Al-Qur'an melalui integrasi perspektif tafsir dan psikologi. Kajian ini penting dilakukan karena penyakit hati tidak hanya dipahami sebagai persoalan spiritual dan teologis, tetapi juga memiliki keterkaitan dengan kondisi psikologis serta perilaku sosial manusia modern. Selama ini, penelitian mengenai penyakit hati cenderung dibahas secara normatif-teologis atau hanya berfokus pada tokoh tertentu secara parsial, sehingga belum banyak kajian yang mengintegrasikan dimensi tafsir Al-Qur'an dengan pendekatan psikologi secara komprehensif. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif berbasis studi kepustakaan dengan metode tafsir tematik (maudhu'i). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Fir'aun, Qarun, dan Haman memiliki indikasi penyakit hati berupa riya', ujub, sombong, kikir, zalim, serta penolakan terhadap kebenaran. Penyakit hati ini dapat menyebabkan ketidakseimbangan mental seseorang, sehingga mempengaruhi kehidupan moral, spiritual dan sosialnya. Ketiga tokoh tersebut menunjukkan ciri-ciri penyakit hati yang dalam perspektif psikologi memiliki kemiripan dengan beberapa gangguan kepribadian, seperti narsistik, antisosial, histrionik, dan obsesif kompulsif. Dalam perspektif psikologi, karakter dan perilaku ketiga tokoh tersebut memiliki kemiripan dengan beberapa gangguan kepribadian, seperti narsistik, antisosial, histrionik, dan obsesif kompulsif. Penelitian ini berkontribusi memperluas pemahaman bahwa penyakit hati tidak hanya berdampak pada aspek spiritual, tetapi juga memengaruhi keseimbangan moral, mental, dan sosial manusia. Dengan demikian, kisah-kisah tersebut dapat dijadikan refleksi etis untuk mencegah berkembangnya perilaku destruktif dalam kehidupan kontemporer.

Keywords:

Spiritual Pathology of the Heart; Pharaoh; Qarun; Haman; Tafsir Al-Mishbah; Psychology

Kata kunci:

Patologi Spiritual Penyakit Hati; Fir'aun; Qarun; Haman; Tafsir Al-Mishbah; psikologi

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Introduction

The Qur'an accords considerable emphasis to the concept of the heart (qalb) as the locus of human spiritual, moral, and existential consciousness.¹ Within the Islamic framework, the heart is not merely regarded as a biological organ but is understood as the centre that governs behaviour, ethical awareness, and the relationship between humans and God. Consequently, the corruption of the heart is considered the primary source of spiritual deviation, which in turn precipitates social, political, and civilisational decline. The Qur'an recounts the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman as emblematic representations of maladies of the heart that recurrently manifest throughout human history. Pharaoh epitomises absolute arrogance and the rejection of divine truth; Qarun embodies materialism and an excessive attachment to worldly life; while Haman exemplifies the abuse of power and intellect in the service of tyranny.² These three figures illustrate that maladies of the heart may assume diverse forms, yet all ultimately culminate in moral, social, and spiritual ruin.

The pathology of the spiritual heart has emerged as a critically important issue in contemporary life, given that advancements in science, technology, and economics are not invariably accompanied by corresponding moral and spiritual development. Global humanitarian crises—such as corruption, hedonism, authoritarianism, social exploitation, and moral decline—suggest that the fundamental problem of modern society resides not solely within socio-political structures but also within the internal corruption of individuals. Manifestations of arrogance in positions of power, the exaltation of materialism,³ and the manipulation of knowledge for political ends underscore the enduring relevance of the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman in the present context.⁴ Accordingly, Qur'anic narratives should be interpreted not merely as historical records but as moral reflections on maladies of the heart that persist across all eras.⁵ Employing a thematic and contextual approach in Tafsir al-Mishbah, M. Quraish Shihab elucidates that the spiritual pathology of the heart constitute the root cause of contemporary humanitarian crises;⁶ thus, this study is significant for fostering spiritual awareness and social ethics in modern society.

¹ Miftah Nur Ilmi et al., 'Makna Qalb dalam Al-Qur'an Berbasis Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghaib dan Neurosains', *Jurnal Intelektualita: Keislaman, Sosial dan Sains* 12, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.19109/intelektualita.v12i2.19190>.

² Fikri Alfani Hakim, 'The Qur'anic Reflection on Hedonism: Contemplative Study of the Stories of Saba' and Qarun in the Qur'an', *Aqwal: Journal of Qur'an and Hadis Studies* 6, no. 2 (2025): 157–79, <https://doi.org/10.28918/aqwal.v6i2.12436>.

³ Cindy Mutia Annur, 'Jumlah Kasus Tindak Pidana Korupsi yang Ditangani KPK (2004-2023)', Databoks, 2024, <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/politik/statistik/5e6f4f7ee095749/kpk-tangani-1500-kasus-korupsi-dalam-dua-dekade>.

⁴ Nur Robaniyah et al., 'Analysis of Human Characteristics in the Qur'an; Comparative Study of Tafsir Al-Mishbah and Ibn Kathir', *Al-Karim: International Journal of Quranic and Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023): 45–66, <https://doi.org/10.33367/al-karim.v1i1.3542>.

⁵ Effendi Effendi, 'Historisitas Kisah Fir'aun dalam Perspektif Islam', *Al-Adyan: Jurnal Studi Lintas Agama* 13, no. 1 (2018): 71–96, <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsla.v13i1.2944>.

⁶ Ilham Rian Pratama, 'Koalisi Masyarakat Sipil Temukan 121 Kasus Penyalahgunaan Kekuasaan dalam Pemilu 2024', *Tribunnews*, 2024, <https://www.tribunnews.com/mata-lokal-memilih/2024/02/11/koalisi-masyarakat-sipil-temukan-121-kasus-penyalahgunaan-kekuasaan-dalam-pemilu-2024>.

The Qur'an, as a source of guidance for human life, presents various solutions encapsulated within its thematic content, notably through its narratives.⁷ The term 'Pharaoh' is mentioned seventy-four times across twenty-seven surahs. The figure of Qarun appears four times, while Haman is referenced in Q.S. al-Qashash [28]: 6, 8, and 38; Q.S. al-Ankabut [29]: 39; and Q.S. al-Mu'min [40]: 24 and 36.⁸ The realities and truths conveyed through these stories function as a means for reflection, enabling humanity to confront the complexities of life, particularly in the contemporary era. Historically, both oppressors and the oppressed have existed in every age and continue to manifest within all social systems, whether past, present, or future.⁹

The spiritual pathology of the heart are conceptualised as forms of corruption that afflict the heart, rendering individuals unable to discern truth and instead predisposed to falsehood.¹⁰ Additionally, such the spiritual pathology may be directly associated with mental health. From a psychological standpoint, these conditions are characterised as emotional or behavioural disturbances arising from disruptions in spiritual life and internal values. M. Quraish Shihab further asserts that individuals afflicted by spiritual maladies of the heart may experience mental imbalance. In the field of the Psychology of Religion, it is posited that a mentally healthy individual possesses a calm and tranquil soul or heart.¹¹ Conversely, the concept of nafs denotes the inner aspect of human beings, which harbours the potential for both good and evil.¹² The greater one's inclination towards negative tendencies, the more severe the affliction of the heart.¹³ This phenomenon is exemplified in the personalities of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, who suffered from spiritual disturbances that manifested in negative traits and behaviours throughout their lives.¹⁴

Reflection is defined as a metacognitive process that takes place before, during, and after an event, with the purpose of fostering a deeper understanding of oneself and one's experiences, thereby enabling the anticipation of similar events in the future.¹⁵ Graham Gibbs, a prominent scholar in the field of education, delineates reflection as comprising several stages. The first stage is description, which entails providing a detailed and accurate account of what occurred. The second stage is feelings, which involves articulating one's thoughts and emotions. The third stage is evaluation, which requires assessing both the positive and negative aspects of the experience. The fourth stage is analysis, characterised by a critical examination of opinions related to the situation, identifying relationships among the event's components, exploring possible alternatives, and seeking its underlying meaning. The fifth stage is conclusion, which highlights actions that should have been avoided and those that ought to have been undertaken. Finally, the

⁷ Muhammad Chirzin, *Al-Qur'an dan Ulumul Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Dana Bakti Primayasa, 2003). 143.

⁸ Shalah Al-Khalidy, *Kisah-Kisah dalam Al-Qur'an Jilid 1* (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 1999). 56.

⁹ Muhammad Hafid, *Penyakit-Penyakit Hati* (Yogyakarta: Tangga Ilmu, 2023). 15.

¹⁰ Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah, *Thibbul Qulub Klinik Penyakit Hati*, in *Pustaka Al-Kautsar* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2018). 66.

¹¹ Diana Vidya Fakhriyani, *Kesehatan Mental* (Pamekasan: Duta Media, 2019). 142.

¹² M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 1998). 34.

¹³ Rafy Sapuri, *Psikologi Islam* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2009). 87.

¹⁴ Effendi, 'Historisitas Kisah Fir'aun dalam Perspektif Islam'.

¹⁵ John Sanders, 'The Use of Reflection in Medical Education: AMEE Guide No. 44', *Medical Teacher* 31, no. 8 (2009): 685.

action plan stage involves determining the preparations and measures to be implemented should a similar event arise, based on the insights gained.¹⁶

Research on cardiac the spiritual pathology and antagonistic figures in the Qur'an has been undertaken with diverse focal points. Investigations into cardiac the spiritual pathology predominantly emphasise conceptual dimensions, including the classification of spiritual maladies, their spiritual and social ramifications, and preventative measures grounded in Qur'anic terminology, as exemplified by the work of Qonitatul Laily.¹⁷ Conversely, studies concerning Pharaoh typically concentrate on manifestations of evil, tyrannical traits, and the moral lessons embedded within his narrative in the Qur'an, as analysed by Afifah Zakiya Mei Al-Humaira.¹⁸ Research pertaining to Haman generally focuses on power dynamics and loyalty to leadership, coupled with arrogance within Pharaoh's governmental circle, as explored by Wildan Ashari Hasibuan.¹⁹ This overview suggests that prior studies have remained somewhat fragmented, addressing the spiritual pathology of the heart and Qur'anic antagonistic figures in isolation. Consequently, there exists considerable scope for further research that integrates the concept of the spiritual pathology of the heart with the characters of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, viewing them as representations of destructive behavioural typologies from a more holistic and comprehensive Qur'anic exegetical perspective.

Although numerous previous studies have investigated the spiritual pathology of the heart and examined the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman thematically, these discussions have largely remained discrete. Research concerning the spiritual pathology of the heart typically concentrates on their classification, effects, and normative remedies, without establishing connections to the figures within Qur'anic narratives. Furthermore, analyses of the stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman predominantly address moral and ethical dimensions, without systematically integrating these with the concept of the spiritual pathology of the heart as an analytical framework. The distinct contribution of this study lies in its focus on the spiritual pathology of the heart as portrayed in the stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, and the reflection of these spiritual maladies in contemporary life.

This study posits that the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman in the Qur'an exemplify forms of spiritual pathology of the heart, which underpin human moral, social, and political corruption. Afflictions of the heart—such as arrogance, excessive attachment to worldly life, greed for power, and rejection of truth—not only impact the individual but also engender oppressive and destructive social systems. Pharaoh embodies takabbur (arrogance) and an obsession with absolute power that precipitates the denial of divine truth; Qarun represents materialism and an excessive love of worldly possessions that undermine social and spiritual consciousness; while Haman illustrates how intellect and authority may be utilised to perpetuate tyranny when moral and theological orientation is lost. Drawing upon the perspective of Tafsir al-Mishbah, M. Quraish Shihab contends

¹⁶ Graham Gibbs, *Learning by Doing: A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods* (Oxford: Further Education Unit, 1998). 213.

¹⁷ Qonitatul Laily, 'Penyakit Hati dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an' (Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, 2023). 68.

¹⁸ Afifah Zakiya Mei Al-Humaira, 'Kejahatan Firaun dalam Al-Qur'an' (IAIN Ponorogo, 2021). 75.

¹⁹ Wildan Ashari Hasibuan, 'Pesan dan Kesan dalam Kisah Haman: Studi Analisis Tafsir Tematik' (Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2020).

that these accounts are not merely historical narratives but serve as moral diagnoses of contemporary humanitarian crises, including authoritarianism, materialistic capitalism, and the manipulation of power. Consequently, spiritual transformation and the purification of the heart are posited as essential foundations for the advancement of human civilisation.

This study adopts a qualitative methodology grounded in library research, drawing upon a range of pertinent literary sources. The approach employed is tafsir maudhū'i (thematic exegesis), which entails the systematic collection of Qur'anic verses pertaining to the theme of the spiritual pathology of the heart, followed by a comprehensive analysis of these verses in terms of their context, meanings, and interrelationships. This research not only identifies the various forms of the spiritual pathology of the heart but also investigates their patterns of manifestation, psychological dynamics, and their reflections in contemporary human experience. Utilising an integrative interpretive framework that combines Qur'anic exegesis with psychological insights, the study aims to demonstrate that the characters and behaviours of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman exemplify typologies of the spiritual pathology of the heart that persist across diverse social contexts and modern life, thereby serving as pertinent material for understanding contemporary human realities.

Results and Discussion

Inventory and Interpretation of Qur'anic Verses Concerning The spiritual pathology of the Heart in the Narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman from the Perspective of Tafsir Al-Mishbah

The Qur'anic verses recounting the narratives of Pharaoh (Fir'aun), Qarun, and Haman are distributed across various surahs, each encompassing diverse themes and contextual frameworks. However, not all of these verses explicitly signify indications of maladies of the heart. Only specific verses depict characters and behaviours associated with spiritual afflictions, such as arrogance, greed, envy, and an excessive desire for power. Accordingly, this study concentrates on the verses that contain indications of the spiritual pathology of the heart within the stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman in the Qur'an, which may be elaborated upon as follows:

1. Qur'an, Surah Al-Qashash [28]:4

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ مِنْهُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

Truly Pharaoh elated himself in the land and broke up Its people into sections, depressing a small group Among them: their sons he slew, but he kept alive their females: For he was indeed A maker of mischief.

This verse addresses the figure of Pharaoh. According to M. Quraish Shihab in "Tafsir Al-Mishbah", the term (فِرْعَوْنَ) Fir'aun was a title bestowed upon the great rulers of ancient Egypt. Pharaoh is characterised as an arrogant individual and a corrupter, whose malevolent traits were deeply ingrained in his character. The

Pharaoh described as a cruel ruler who ordered the killing of male children is commonly identified as Ramses II (Al-Akbar), who is believed to have ascended the throne around 1311 BCE. During Ramses II's reign, oppression of the Children of Israel took place, as they were regarded as supporters of the preceding Hyksos Dynasty.²⁰

The term (الأرض) al-ardh translates as “the earth” or “land” and is employed here to denote the territory of Pharaoh. The use of al-ardh conveys a sense of the vastness of Pharaoh's dominion and authority, which is portrayed as extending universally. According to Tafsir Al-Mishbah, some scholars contend that Pharaoh's domain encompassed Egypt and parts of the Levant. Conversely, others maintain that Pharaoh's (Ramses II) authority extended from the borders of India to the Danube Sea region in Eastern and Central Europe. The Children of Israel were among the communities residing in Egypt during this period.²¹

Furthermore, the term (شيئاً) shiya'an, the plural of shi'ah, denotes the act of obeying, following, and defending a particular individual or group. Pharaoh divided Egyptian society into factions; nevertheless, all were compelled to submit to and obey his commands. The phrase (إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ), translated as “Indeed, he was among the corrupters,” signifies that Pharaoh's corruption and destruction were so extensive that he was classified among the corrupters. His corruption was manifested through arrogance, which engendered various forms of evil. Moreover, Pharaoh frequently divided the populace for political purposes and oppressed many individuals, going so far as to kill male children.²²

2. Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Qashash [28]:38

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هَامَانَ عَلَى الطِّينِ فَاجْعَلْ لِي صَرْحًا لَعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ إِلَى إِلَهِ مُوسَى وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ

Pharaoh said: “O Chiefs! No god do I know for you but myself: therefore, O Hāmān! light me a (kiln to bake bricks) out of clay, and build me a lofty Palace, that I may mount up to the god of Moses: But as far as I am concerned, I think (Moses) is a liar!”

In the verse above, the repetition of the word (لي) li, meaning “for me,” underscores the urgency of Pharaoh's command, which was to be executed without delay. This urgency is linked to his intention to ascend and seek God. The phrase (فأوقد لي يهامان) translated as “So kindle for me, O Haman,” constitutes a directive to ignite the clay, signalling the immediate commencement of the construction project ordered by Pharaoh. Nevertheless, Pharaoh's declaration regarding the erection of a lofty edifice may have been intended primarily to deceive or manipulate his subjects.

In Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Thabathaba'i proposes that the structure in question may have been intended as an observatory for the study of the stars. Its purpose was to ascertain whether there was evidence supporting Prophet Moses' assertion

²⁰ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10* (Lentera Hati, 2002). 188.

²¹ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

²² Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

regarding the Lord of the universe. Moreover, the Qur'an does not explicitly confirm whether the building was ever constructed. Regarding the pyramids that remain in Egypt today, these are not the edifices referenced in the verse, as they were constructed by the Pharaohs as tombs. Notably, the Pyramid of Khufu, the tallest among them, reaches a height of approximately 138 metres.²³

3. Qur'an, Surah Al-Qashash [28]:76

إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى فَبَغَى عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولَى الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ

Qārūn was doubtless, of the people of Moses; but He acted insolently towards them: Such were the treasures We Had bestowed on him, that their very keys would Have been a burden to A body of strong men. Behold, his people said to him: "Exult not, for God loveth not Those who exult (in riches).

This verse introduces the narrative of Qarun and simultaneously imparts a moral lesson to humanity. Irrespective of the individual, time, or place, it illustrates the fate that befalls the wealthy who exhibit arrogance. Allah's declaration, "Indeed, Qarun was from the people of Moses," signifies that Qarun lived during the era of Prophet Moses and was regarded as his cousin. Despite originating from the esteemed family of a Prophet, Qarun became rebellious and unjust towards them, acting with arrogance and humiliating the Children of Israel.²⁴

Qarun was the recipient of blessings and favours owing to his association with the people of Prophet Moses. Allah granted him immense wealth, to such an extent that several strong men were required merely to carry the keys to his treasuries. After elucidating the cause of his arrogance, the verse proceeds to describe how some of the Children of Israel counselled him. As stated in the scripture: "O Qarun, do not be excessively proud," referring to his wealth, which led him to forget Allah. "Indeed, Allah does not like those who are boastful," indicating that Allah does not regard such individuals as His beloved servants when arrogance becomes entrenched in their character.²⁵

The term (فَبَغَى) *fabaghā* is derived from *baghā*, which means "to desire." This word is frequently employed in contexts relating to tyrannical desires and oppression. Consequently, it may denote aggression, hostility, and the usurpation of rights. The prefix *fa'* at the beginning of the word signifies that this tyranny occurred suddenly and impulsively, without due consideration. Additionally, the word (الْكُنُوزِ) *al-kunūz* is the plural form of *al-kanz*, originating from *kanaza*, which means to accumulate wealth extensively. Regarding the phrase (لَا تَفْرَحْ) *lā tafrah*, it should not be understood as a prohibition against rejoicing per se, but rather as a caution against excessive rejoicing that causes an individual to become engrossed in materialism, thereby neglecting their true purpose and disregarding the Hereafter

²³ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

²⁴ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

²⁵ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

and spiritual values.²⁶ M. Quraish Shihab contends that pride in something legitimate is permissible, provided it is not excessive and is accompanied by humility and gratitude to Allah SWT.²⁷

4. Qur'an, Surah Al-Qashash [28]:78

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيْتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي وَأَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرَ جَمْعًا
وَلَا يُسْئَلُ عَنْ ذُنُوبِهِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ

He said: "This has been given to me because of a certain Knowledge which I have." Did he not know that God Had destroyed, before him, (Whole) generations, —which were Superior to him in strength and greater in amount (of riches) they had collected? But the wicked are not Called (immediately) to account for their sins.

This verse addresses Qarun's refusal to heed counsel, which led to his becoming conceited and arrogant. He stated, "Indeed, I was only given it," implying that he attributed his wealth solely to his exceptional knowledge and intelligence in methods of acquisition. He further asserted, "No one has any merit over what I have obtained." Moreover, the use of the passive form (أُوتِيْتُهُ) *ūtītuḥu* suggests that Qarun deliberately omitted any reference to the individual or power who granted, assisted, or served as the means by which he acquired his wealth. This stance contrasts markedly with the admonitions of those who counselled Qarun, as they explicitly acknowledged Allah SWT as the ultimate source and controller of all causes and intermediaries.²⁸

The term (مِنْ) *min* in the phrase (مِنْ قَبْلِهِ) *min qablihi* denotes a relatively proximate temporal reference. Within this verse, it is understood that the preceding nation destroyed by Allah SWT, closest to the time of Qarun, was Pharaoh. Consequently, the events experienced by Qarun occurred subsequent to Pharaoh's destruction. The expression (وَلَا يُسْئَلُ عَنْ ذُنُوبِهِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ) *wa lā yus'alu 'an dhunūbihim al-mujrimūn* suggests that the sins of those whose wickedness has become deeply ingrained in their character are already manifest, as exemplified by Qarun.

5. Qur'an, Surah Al-Qashash [28]:79

فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا لِيَلْبِتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

So, he went forth among His people in the (pride of his worldly) glitter. Said those whose aim is The Life of this World: "Oh! that we had the like of what Qārūn has got! For he is truly a lord of mighty good fortune!"

The preceding verse conveyed the counsel given to Qarun, whereas the present verse exemplifies the augmentation of his arrogance. The term (زِينَتِهِ) *zīnatihi* is derived from *zinah*, signifying adornment or ornament—anything perceived as good and beautiful by an individual. What may appear unattractive to some could be regarded as beautiful by others and thus serve as an adornment for them. Qarun

²⁶ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

²⁷ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

²⁸ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

emerged displaying his adornments; however, that which he deemed beautiful may, in the sight of Allah, have been considered reprehensible. The concept of adornment may encompass various elements, such as followers, vehicles, clothing, and others. All these were exhibited to manifest his pride and wealth, thereby rendering the term *zinatihi* as indicative of magnificence or grandeur.²⁹

Furthermore, Tafsir Al-Mishbah elucidates that the phrase (فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ) *fa kharaja 'alā qawmihi fi zinatihi*, translated as “So he came out before his people in his splendour,” exemplifies Qarun’s profound arrogance. Firstly, the term (عَلَى) *'alā*, which fundamentally signifies “above,” is interpreted here as “before” or “towards”; however, its usage suggests that Qarun regarded himself as superior to his people. Secondly, the expression (فِي زِينَتِهِ) *fi zinatihi*, meaning “in his splendour,” conveys the impression that even as he emerged, he remained enveloped in magnificence. From every perspective, all elements became deliberate manifestations of grandeur that he constructed around himself, as if he existed within an ostentatious display of his own creation.³⁰

6. Qur'an, Surah Al-Ankabut [29]:39

وَقُرُونًا وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَمَانَ وَوَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَأَسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانُوا سَابِقِينَ

(Remember also) Qārūn, Pharaoh, and Hāmān: there came to them Moses with Clear Signs, but they behaved with insolence on the earth; yet they Could not overreach (Us).

In Tafsir Al-Mishbah, the aforementioned verse is interpreted as signifying the demise of tyrannical power. The reference to Qarun prior to Pharaoh is intended to provide solace to the heart of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Qarun was among the people of the Prophet Moses and was even related to him by kinship. Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) faced opposition from his own community, including some of his relatives. Among the polytheists of Mecca were individuals who rejected his prophethood out of envy. In a comparable manner, Qarun harboured envy towards the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him). Furthermore, parallels can be drawn between Qarun and earlier peoples such as 'Ad and Thamud, who possessed knowledge, evidence of truth, and intellectual capacity. Qarun himself was well-versed in the Torah and comprehended its contents; however, he failed to apply this knowledge in adhering to the path and guidance of religion.³¹

This verse is interpreted as follows: “And We also destroyed Qarun,” referring to the wealthy and arrogant individual from the people of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him). Subsequently, Pharaoh is identified as the tyrannical ruler of Egypt, and Haman as his devoted minister who consistently complied with Pharaoh’s wishes. Indeed, Allah’s messenger, Prophet Moses, presented all three with clear explanations, evidence, and miracles. Nevertheless, they persisted in their arrogance upon the earth and were certainly not among those who could evade Allah’s

²⁹ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

³⁰ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

³¹ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

destruction and punishment. The term (الأرض) al-ardh in this verse is understood to denote their inhabited territory, although it may also signify the earth in a more general sense. Despite not ruling the entire world, their arrogance was so profound that they became preeminent in disobedience across all regions of the earth.³²

The Qur'anic verses cited above pertain to maladies of the heart as exemplified in the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman. Although these verses do not explicitly reference the spiritual pathology of the heart, an analysis informed by Tafsir Al-Mishbah reveals various indications of spiritual afflictions manifested in their character traits. The author identifies at least five distinct forms of heart the spiritual pathology embodied by Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman. Each verse addresses their behaviours and malevolent attributes within differing contexts. Their stories are preserved in the Qur'an as instructive lessons for humanity, and these three figures are acknowledged as paradigmatic examples of individuals afflicted with the spiritual pathology of the heart (qalbun marīd).

Table 1.

Typology of Spiritual Pathology of the Heart in the Stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman in the Qur'an

No	Qur'anic Verse	Figure	Main Interpretation	Indications of Spiritual Pathology of the Heart
1	QS. Al-Qashash [28]: 4	Pharaoh (Fir'aun)	Pharaoh elevated himself above others on earth, fragmented society into factions, oppressed the Children of Israel, and perpetrated destruction through tyranny and the abuse of power.	Arrogance, tyranny, injustice, and abuse of power
2	QS. Al-Qashash [28]: 38	Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and Haman	Pharaoh denied the existence of any deity other than himself and commanded Haman to construct a lofty edifice as a symbol of arrogance and a repudiation of the truth conveyed by Prophet Musa.	Arrogance, denial of truth, excessive pride, and uncritical loyalty to authority
3	QS. Al-Qashash [28]: 76	Qarun	Qarun grew arrogant due to his vast wealth and oppressed his people, despite receiving counsel advising against excessive pride.	Arrogance, greed, attachment to material wealth, and self-admiration ('ujb').
4	QS. Al-Qashash [28]: 78	Qarun	Qarun attributed his wealth exclusively to his own knowledge and abilities, neglecting to recognise Allah as the source of his blessings.	Self-admiration ('ujb), arrogance, and denial of divine favour
5	QS. Al-	Qarun	Qarun exhibited his wealth and	Displaying ostentation

³² Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 10*.

	Qashash [28]: 79		splendour publicly to elicit admiration and recognition from society.	(riyā'), arrogance, and an excessive pride in wealth
6	QS. Al- 'Ankabut [29]: 39	Qarun, Pharaoh, and Haman	Despite the clear evidence and miracles presented by Prophet Musa, they persisted in their arrogance and rejected the truth.	Arrogance, denial of truth, rebellion, and spiritual corruption

The table above elucidates that the maladies of the heart depicted in the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman are intrinsically linked to the abuse of power, wealth, and knowledge. Pharaoh exemplifies a disease of the heart manifested as arrogance and despotic authority, which engender injustice and oppression within society. Qarun embodies a disease of the heart characterised by an excessive attachment to worldly possessions, greed, ostentatious display of wealth, and the rejection of counsel, stemming from his conviction that his success is solely attributable to his own efforts. Conversely, Haman symbolises loyalty to power grounded in arrogance and the denial of truth. Collectively, these verses demonstrate that the spiritual pathology of the heart not only precipitate individual moral decay but also engender wider social harm, including oppression, division, and the repudiation of divine guidance. Consequently, the Qur'an presents the accounts of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman not merely as historical records but as ethical admonitions concerning the perils of the spiritual pathology of the heart, which may lead humanity towards arrogance, falsehood, and eventual ruin.

Reflection on the Spiritual Pathology of the Heart in the Narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman within Human Existence

The ailments of the heart, as exemplified in the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, symbolise negative traits arising from within the individuals themselves, specifically egoism, pride, and denial of truth. Prior to further examining how these maladies of the heart are reflected in the stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman within the broader context of human existence, the author will first elucidate the potential relationship between these spiritual afflictions and an individual's mental state. According to the theory of the psychology of religion developed by Zakiyah Daradjat, the spiritual pathology of the heart denotes a condition wherein a person's soul or inner self is disturbed due to emotional and spiritual imbalance. Emotional instability is evident in individuals who are highly emotional and easily governed by their feelings. Such individuals tend to be obstinate in defending their errors and are often unable to avoid repeating them, even when they recognise their wrongdoing. This underscores the significant role emotions play in confronting various challenges and experiences. A sensitive person is frequently dominated by their emotions; consequently, when experiencing anxiety, they become vulnerable, unstable, and susceptible to suggestion.³³

Conversely, Qarun is characterised by traits such as *riyā'* (showing off), *'ujub* (self-admiration), and stinginess. The term *'ujub* denotes an admiration of one's own

³³ Zakiyah Daradjat, *Ilmu Jiwa Agama* (Jakarta: PT Bulan Bintang, 2005). 56.

superiority or possessions and is closely linked to Qarun's pride in his wealth. From a psychological standpoint, this condition may correspond to narcissistic personality disorder, a trait also evident in the character of Pharaoh. Meanwhile, *riyā'*, exemplified by Qarun's ostentatious public display of grandeur and wealth, typically reflects a desire for recognition and attention from others. Consequently, from a psychological perspective, this behaviour may be associated with histrionic personality disorder, which is characterised by a pleasure in being the centre of attention and often results in a dramatic lifestyle.

Furthermore, Qarun's stinginess, manifested in his reluctance to share and refusal to grant others their due rights, may be indicative of obsessive-compulsive personality disorder, specifically an obsession with control that can also provoke anxiety.³⁴ Typically, individuals who are stingy exhibit a predominant fear of losing possessions they value, such as wealth and property. This closely aligns with Qarun's character, as he excessively glorified his riches and regarded all his wealth as solely the product of his own effort and intelligence, thereby believing that no one else was entitled to possess or share in it. From a psychological perspective, the maladies of the heart depicted in the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman may thus be interpreted as manifestations of certain personality disorders. This is intimately linked to mental health, which can significantly influence an individual's mindset, behaviour, and social relationships.

The maladies of the heart depicted in the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman remain observable today in various manifestations of negative behaviour that continue to hold relevance in contemporary society. As previously elucidated in the exegesis of Qur'anic verses pertaining to the the spiritual pathology of the heart within these stories, these figures exhibited reprehensible traits such as arrogance, ظلم (*ẓulm/injustice*), 'ujub (self-admiration), *riyā'* (showing off), and stinginess. The author endeavours to draw parallels between these phenomena and present-day occurrences, noting that similar behaviours persist. Numerous rulers, particularly in Indonesia, act arbitrarily, authoritatively, and unjustly. Although the specific forms of oppression may differ from those of Pharaoh, their character traits are fundamentally analogous.

Ethical violations involving the abuse of power by government officials in Indonesia encompass three key elements: the abuse of authority, the misuse of legally established procedures, and the infliction of losses upon the state. Notably, Indonesia ranks fourth among the most corrupt countries in Asia, with corruption predominantly concentrated within the police and prosecutorial institutions.³⁵ Individuals engage in the abuse of power to serve particular interests, whether personal, group-related, or corporate. When such actions adversely affect the financial or economic condition of the state, they are classified as acts of corruption.³⁶ Data from Statistics Indonesia (BPS) indicate that the 2024 Indonesian Anti-Corruption Behaviour Index (IPAK) declined to 3.85, representing a

³⁴ Sandy Ardiansyah, *Kesehatan Mental* (Padang: PT Global Eksekutif Teknologi, 2023). 98.

³⁵ Steven Kerby, 'Penyalahgunaan Wewenang di Indonesia', *Kompasiana*, 2024, <https://www.kompasiana.com/stevenkerby5508/6623bb13de948f670d193ab2/penyalahgunaan-wewenang-di-indonesia>.

³⁶ Khairunnas, 'Penyalahgunaan Wewenang Jabatan (Abuse of Power)', 2024, <https://iainptk.ac.id/penyalahgunaan-wewenang-jabatan-abuse-of-power/>.

decrease from the 2023 score.³⁷

The phenomenon of flexing has become increasingly prevalent, largely due to the emergence of so-called "crazy rich" individuals. Christine Li, Head of Research at Knight Frank Asia Pacific, has indicated that the threshold for classification as "crazy rich" is possession of assets exceeding US\$30 million, approximately IDR 432 billion. These individuals, often referred to as "sultans," appear to engage in competitive displays of wealth and luxury.³⁸ The practice of flexing, defined as the public exhibition of wealth, has become a notable trend among this group. Such behaviour serves not only to demonstrate affluence but also to enhance social image and status. Their activities are characterised by the ostentatious display of luxury goods, exclusive modes of transportation, and extravagant holidays on social media platforms.³⁹ Furthermore, this "crazy rich" phenomenon may also be indicative of money laundering practices, whereby the wealth exhibited frequently originates from illicit activities, subsequently concealed through investments in luxury properties, sports cars, and other high-end commodities.

The peril inherent in such trends resides in their distortion of societal values, wherein wealth is elevated to the foremost criterion of success. From this vantage point, there is apprehension that these conditions may incentivise individuals to partake in unethical conduct and moral degradation, fostering the conviction that any means are justifiable in the pursuit of wealth and luxury.⁴⁰ Recently, several prominent Indonesian affluent individuals have become embroiled in legal controversies. Harvey Moeis was implicated as a suspect in a corruption case involving PT Timah Tbk, resulting in state losses amounting to IDR 271 trillion. Similarly, Indra Kenz was involved in fraudulent investment and money laundering schemes via the Binomo application, culminating in total losses of IDR 83 billion.⁴¹ The author presents these cases to substantiate the argument that narratives concerning Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman retain their pertinence in contemporary society. Although the manifestations of these actions differ, they all stem from negative traits rooted in excessive ambition and an obsession with worldly opulence.

The manifestation of heart the spiritual pathology in the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, within the broader context of human existence, can be examined through the application of Graham Gibbs' reflective model. As outlined in the preceding chapter, this framework comprises six stages: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. The purpose of employing this theory is to facilitate an analysis of how the heart the spiritual pathology depicted in the stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman correspond to analogous conditions observed in contemporary

³⁷ Badan Pusat Statistik, 'Indeks Perilaku Anti Korupsi (IPAK) Indonesia 2024 Sebesar 3,85, Menurun Dibandingkan IPAK 2023', 2024, <https://www.bps.go.id/id/pressrelease/2024/07/15/2374/-indeks-perilaku-anti-korupsi--ipak--indonesia-2024--sebesar-3-85--menurun-dibandingkan-ipak-2023-.html>.

³⁸ Mahmud Ashari, 'Crazy Rich, Flexing, Dan Melunturnya Budaya Ketimuran', KemenKeu, 2024, <https://www.djkn.kemenkeu.go.id/kpkn-kisaran/baca-artikel/14817/Crazy-Rich->

³⁹ Andrea Wiwandhana, 'Di Balik Fenomena Crazy Rich, Flexing, dan Budaya Pencucian Uang', Kompasiana, 2024, <https://www.kompasiana.com/andreawiwandhana6196/667557fe34777c31092385a5/di-balik-fenomena-crazy-rich-flexing-dan-budaya-pencucian-uang>.

⁴⁰ Wiwandhana, 'Di Balik Fenomena Crazy Rich, Flexing, dan Budaya Pencucian Uang'.

⁴¹ Bimo Aria dan Dini Afrianti Efendi Fundrika, '5 Crazy Rich Indonesia Tersandung Kasus Hukum: Dari Indra Kenz Sampai Harvey Moeis', Suara.Com, 2024, <https://www.suara.com/lifestyle/2024/03/29/091126/5-crazy-rich-indonesia-tersandung-kasus-hukum-dari-indra-kenz-sampai-harvey-moeis>.

society. The subsequent sections provide a detailed account of the stages involved in analysing heart the spiritual pathology within these narratives, utilising Graham Gibbs' reflective model.

Firstly, the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman as presented in the Qur'an characterise these figures as arrogant, boastful, miserly, unjust, and self-admiring. They exemplify past communities described within the Qur'anic text as afflicted by moral and spiritual maladies. Consequently, their stories serve as profound lessons for subsequent generations. Pharaoh is depicted as a proud ruler who considered himself infallible and thus committed acts of oppression. Qarun, a relative of the Prophet Moses, ultimately aligned himself with Pharaoh. Despite being endowed with great wealth, he became arrogant, flaunting his opulence and neglecting the rights of others. Haman, a minister loyal to Pharaoh, supported all his actions and collaborated in establishing a system of power predicated upon the subjugation of others.

Secondly, the affective dimension. Within Graham Gibbs' reflective framework, the stage of feelings pertains to the emotional responses elicited when individuals engage with the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman. Negative emotions arise in reaction to their reprehensible conduct, including *riyā'* (showing off), *'ujub* (self-admiration), arrogance, stinginess, and injustice. Emotions such as anger, disappointment, and disapproval constitute initial responses to behaviours deemed contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and moral responsibility. The recognition of these feelings demonstrates the reader's emotional engagement in interpreting the significance of these accounts. Consequently, anger may indicate a sensitivity to injustice, while disappointment and disapproval reflect unmet expectations regarding ideal conduct.

Thirdly, evaluation. Drawing upon the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman as presented in the Qur'an, the evaluation stage aims to encourage contemporary readers to derive lessons from these accounts. As Allah states in Surah Yusuf [12]: 111:

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولَى الْأَلْبَابِ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَى وَلَكِن تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

There is, in their stories, Instruction for men endued with understanding. It is not A tale invented, but a confirmation Of what went before it, — A detailed exposition of all things, and a Guide and a Mercy to any such as believe.⁴²

The verse above suggests that humanity ought to critically assess the characters depicted in Qur'anic narratives. Indeed, certain stories encompass negative traits that may imperil the human heart and give rise to spiritual maladies. As human beings, it is imperative that we extract wisdom and lessons from these accounts. The conduct of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman exemplifies the perils associated with power and wealth when coupled with afflictions of the heart, as such conditions ultimately lead to the individuals' own destruction. Similarly, contemporary instances of abuse of power, pervasive corruption, and ostentatious displays of luxury propel perpetrators towards ruin, both in legal and social contexts. Such actions inadvertently cause harm to society, while the perpetrators themselves endure adverse consequences, including the erosion of trust and integrity.

⁴² Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Tajwid dan Terjemahan* (Jakarta: PT Sygma, 2007). 1.

Fourth, analysis. According to Graham Gibbs, the analytical approach requires readers of Qur'anic narratives to critically evaluate the actions of the characters involved. The transgressions committed by Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman clearly contravened the true nature of humanity and thus represented manifestations of maladies of the heart. Readers are encouraged to examine the detrimental consequences of their behaviour to prevent the recurrence of such actions. In practice, those who engage with Allah's revelations and possess the capacity for reflection are safeguarded against these maladies. The maladies of the heart depicted in the stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman stemmed from their failure to acknowledge their own limitations.

They regarded themselves as perfect due to their power and wealth. Pharaoh wielded immense authority, which fostered arrogance and led him to believe in his own invincibility. Qarun, overwhelmed by his riches, similarly became prideful. Haman, Pharaoh's minister, also exhibited arrogance, as his position closely resembled that of Pharaoh. The moral failings embedded within their characters obstructed their ability to recognise the truth. In a comparable manner, individuals in Indonesia who engage in abuses of power, corruption, and fraud often perceive themselves as superior to others, resulting in a loss of empathy towards those who endure oppression and injustice.

Fifth, the conclusion. Following the reflective stages outlined above, the conclusion stage fundamentally involves the formulation of a final judgment. Upon reading and critically evaluating these narratives, it becomes evident that the actions of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman represented a departure from humanity, resulting in maladies of the heart that adversely affected mental well-being. From this understanding, it is imperative to avoid such behaviours and to renounce any actions that give rise to these maladies. The spiritual pathology of the heart, in any form, can lead to severe and potentially fatal consequences. Those ensnared by such mindsets—whether in historical contexts or the present day—ultimately face disaster and destruction. Individuals afflicted by these maladies eventually forfeit all that they once esteemed. Consequently, it is essential to protect the heart from negative traits by consistently fostering goodness in all actions.

One approach to overcoming cardiovascular the spiritual pathology is through the remembrance of Allah, as indicated in Qur'an Surah Ar-Ra'd [13]: 28.

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

“Those who believe, and whose hearts Find satisfaction in the remembrance Of God: for without doubt in the remembrance of God Do hearts find satisfaction.”⁴³

The term “dhikr” in this verse originally denoted the verbal mention of something; however, it's meaning subsequently evolved to encompass the concept of ‘remembering’. Consequently, the act of mentioning and remembering Allah serves as a means of attaining tranquillity of the heart and soul. Tranquillity is engendered within the chest through “dhikrullah”—the remembrance of Allah by invoking His names, His words, and the signs of His majesty as presented in the Qur'an, which is replete with profound meaning.⁴⁴ The term (تَطْمَئِنُّ) “tathma'innu”, translated as ‘find tranquillity’, is expressed in the present tense, thereby signifying a continuous and enduring peace rather than a

⁴³ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Tajwid dan Terjemahan*.

⁴⁴ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 6*, in *Lentera Hati* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002). 215.

transient calm. Moreover, “tathma’innu” elucidates the preceding concept of faith. Faith is not merely the cognitive recognition of the object of belief, for knowledge alone is insufficient to engender certainty and peace of heart. Indeed, knowledge devoid of awareness may instead provoke anxiety or rejection of the truth, as indicated in Qur’an Surah An-Naml [27]:14.

وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

“And they rejected those Signs In iniquity and arrogance, though their souls were convinced Thereof: so, see what was the end of those Who acted corruptly!”

Knowledge that engenders faith is characterised by an awareness of Allah’s majesty and a recognition of human frailty as His creation. When such awareness and knowledge converge within an individual’s soul, a state of tranquility is attained. Upon realising that Allah is the Sovereign over all things and engaging in remembrance and invocation of Allah alongside His attributes, the soul experiences authentic peace and serenity.⁴⁵ Returning to the narrative of Pharaoh and his followers, it is recounted that Pharaoh professed faith as he was about to drown in the Red Sea. Nevertheless, Pharaoh’s declaration of faith at the moment of death proved ineffectual. If faith emerges too late, merely as a means of self-preservation in the face of calamity, then Allah’s preservation of Pharaoh’s body following his demise serves as a cautionary exemplar for subsequent generations, both contemporaneous and future.⁴⁶

Sixth, the action plan. At this final stage, the author delineates action plans that may be implemented should similarly events from the past recur in the future, offering recommendations for improvement in subsequent times. With regard to the prevention of the spiritual pathology of the heart in contemporary life, individuals should avoid or distance themselves from those exhibiting such traits. It is imperative that people continually seek lessons by studying the histories of past nations, such as those of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, in order to retain the messages conveyed by Allah through these narratives in the Qur’an. Consequently, humanity must both avoid and consistently learn from every manifestation of the spiritual pathology of the heart demonstrated by individuals across generations, from the era of Pharaoh to the present day.

Cardiovascular ailments in historical communities are metaphorically illustrated through the narratives of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman. In contemporary society, analogous instances persist, exemplified by cases such as that of Harvey Moeis, who was implicated in the PT Timah Tbk corruption scandal, resulting in losses amounting to IDR 271 trillion.⁴⁷ Additionally, Zarof Ricar, an official of the Supreme Court, was involved in judicial corruption; he was reputedly a broker within the Court and was accused of accepting bribes totalling IDR 915 billion alongside 51 kilograms of gold.⁴⁸ More recently,

⁴⁵ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 6*.

⁴⁶ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah Jilid 5* (Jakarta: Lentera, 2017). 185.

⁴⁷ Lutfan Faizi, ‘Klasemen Liga Korupsi Indonesia 2025, Pertamina Menyodok Puncak Salip PT Timah’, Sindonews, 2025, <https://nasional.sindonews.com/read/1543001/13/klasemen-liga-korupsi-indonesia-2025-pertamina-menyodok-puncak-salip-pt-timah-1742014984>.

⁴⁸ Hidayat Salam, ‘Zarof Ricar Didakwa Terima Gratifikasi Rp 915 Miliar Hingga Emas 51 Kg’, Kompas, 2025, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/zarof-ricar-jadi-makelar-kasus-sejak-2012-2022-terima-gratifikasi-rp-915-miliar-hingga-emas-51-kg>.

the President Director of PT Pertamina Patra Niaga was implicated in a corruption case concerning the adulteration of crude oil, specifically the mixing of subsidised Peralite gasoline with Pertamina fuel. These cases collectively exemplify the avarice of individuals pursuing wealth through arbitrary and unethical means.

In addressing trends such as the flexing culture prevalent among affluent individuals who are highly active on social media, several strategies may be employed. It is essential to cultivate media literacy by critically assessing the content consumed. Furthermore, social media usage should be moderated, with an emphasis on prioritising positive and constructive material. Individuals might also consider engaging in digital detoxes by deliberately allocating time away from social media platforms. Crucially, there must be an increased awareness and empathy regarding the significant risks and consequences associated with displays of wealth and similar behaviours.⁴⁹ Based on the foregoing analysis, the author concludes that the reflection illustrates how negative traits, conceptualised as maladies of the heart and exemplified in the narratives of past communities such as those of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, are not only pertinent within historical contexts but also bear considerable relevance for contemporary life.

Conclusion

This study originated from the question of how the Qur'an portrays the spiritual pathology of the heart through the stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, as well as their relevance to modern human life. Based on the analysis of Qur'anic verses using a thematic interpretive approach and the interpretation of M. Quraish Shihab in Tafsir Al-Mishbah, it was found that these three figures represent various forms of the spiritual pathology of the heart, such as arrogance, *riyā'* (showing off), *'ujub* (self-admiration), stinginess, and injustice. These the spiritual pathology of the heart are reflected through behaviors such as the abuse of power, rejection of truth, the display of wealth, and the oppression of other groups. From a psychological perspective, their characters demonstrate tendencies similar to certain personality disorders, including narcissistic, antisocial, histrionic, and obsessive-compulsive personality disorders. These findings indicate that the Qur'anic narratives not only contain historical dimensions but also convey moral and psychological messages that remain relevant in understanding contemporary social phenomena, particularly those related to moral crises, abuse of authority, and spiritual degradation within modern society.

The implications of this study emphasize the importance of utilizing Qur'anic narratives as a means of ethical and spiritual reflection in developing human character that is morally and psychologically healthy. Through the stages of reflection, ranging from description to action plan, this study demonstrates that the spiritual pathology of the heart not only affect individuals, but may also generate broader social destruction when allowed to develop unchecked. Nevertheless, this study still has limitations, as it focuses solely on the interpretation presented in Tafsir Al-Mishbah and does not compare it extensively with classical or other contemporary exegetical works. In addition, the psychological discussion in this study remains conceptual and has not yet been explored through a more

⁴⁹ Laudia Tysara, 'Flexing Adalah: Ciri, Tujuan, Contoh, dan Cara Cerdas Menyikapi Budaya Pamer', *Liputan6*, 2024, <https://www.liputan6.com/hot/read/5747578/flexing-adalah-ciri-tujuan-contoh-dan-cara-cerdas-menyikapi-budaya-pamer?page=5>.

in-depth interdisciplinary approach. Future research may therefore be directed toward comparative studies of Qur'anic exegesis, approaches within Islamic psychology, or social analyses concerning the manifestations of the spiritual pathology of the heart in modern life. Thus, the stories of Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman remain relevant as moral warnings for humanity to continuously preserve the purity of the heart and avoid destructive traits that may lead to ruin.

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