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## Israiliyyat Prophet Sulaiman In Tafsir Bi Al-Ma'thur: A Study Of Tafsir Al-Tashil Li 'Ulum Al-Tanzil By Ibn Juzay Al-Kalbi

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### Keywords

*Israiliyyat, al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil, Ibn Juzay al-Kalbi, story of Prophet Sulaiman*

### Kata Kunci

*Israiliyyat, al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil, Ibn Juzay al-Kalbi, kisah Nabi Sulaiman*

### Abstrack

*This study aims to explore the existence of israiliyyat contained in Tafsir al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil by examining the verses of the story of Prophet Sulaiman in the Quran. The source of israiliyyat is essential to study in order to avoid deviant understandings that can damage the order of the creed of Islam and emphasize the interpretations that eliminate the kema'shuman of the Prophets. This research uses a qualitative method with a literature study. Data were obtained through an interpretive method using the hermeneutic approach to understand the phenomenon of shifting meaning and semiotics to get the most optimal meaning. The results showed that the story of the Prophet Sulaiman was classified into five themes, with four themes considered as the category that provide information only, and one theme was considered as the category of israiliyyat, namely the interpretation in Surah Shad verse 34 by providing a rebuttal to the false story and cannot be used as a reference for interpretation. Ibn Juzay also quotes some israiliyyat stories without criticism and judgment as to whether to reject or accept their narration, which can be called tawaqquf. Nevertheless, Ibn Juzay's interpretation does not contradict the Qur'an and the Hadith, does not damage the order of Islamic religious principles, and does not eliminate the humanity of the Prophet Sulaiman*

### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali keberadaan israiliyyat yang terdapat dalam tafsir al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil dengan menelaah ayat-ayat kisah Nabi Sulaiman dalam Alquran. Sumber israiliyyat penting untuk dikaji guna menghindari pemahaman menyimpang yang dapat merusak*

*tatanan akidah agama Islam dan untuk mempertegas penafsiran yang menghilangkan kema'shuman para Nabi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan studi kepustakaan. Data diperoleh melalui metode interpretatif menggunakan pendekatan hermeneutika untuk memahami fenomena pergeseran makna dan semiotika untuk mendapatkan makna yang paling optimal. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan kisah Nabi Sulaiman diklasifikasi menjadi lima tema, dengan empat tema dinilai masuk kategori pola penafsiran yang bersifat memberikan informasi saja, dan satu tema dinilai masuk kategori israiliyyat yaitu penafsiran dalam surah Shad ayat 34 dengan memberikan bantahan atas riwayat yang salah dan tidak bisa dijadikan rujukan penafsiran. Ibn Juzay juga mengutip beberapa cerita israiliyyat tanpa disertai kritikan dan penilaian apakah menolak atau menerima periwayatannya atau bisa disebut tawaqquf. Walaupun demikian, penafsiran yang dikemukakan Ibn Juzay tidak bertentangan dengan Alquran dan hadis, tidak merusak tatanan kaidah agama Islam, dan tidak menghilangkan kema'shuman Nabi Sulaiman*

## **Introduction**

The Qur'an is like an endless ocean (bahr la sahila lahu), and since its revelation, various interpretations have emerged, ranging from simple to complex. The existence of Tafsir (interpretation of the Qur'an) serves to elaborate, reveal meanings, and clarify all that is intended by the text, its indications, and its purposes.<sup>1</sup> Abu Hayyan and Al-Zarkashi argue that Tafsir is a discipline used to understand and uncover the meanings of the Holy Book revealed by Allah to His Prophet, and generalize the legal rulings and wisdoms within it.<sup>2</sup> Tafsir, as an effort to unveil the divine secrets embedded within the Qur'an, has seen rapid

development and a variety of approaches. Without Tafsir, the Qur'an would remain merely written texts with explicit words but without implicit meaning.<sup>3</sup> However, achieving complete objectivity in interpreting the Qur'an, as a mufassir (interpreter) often follows their pre-existing understandings, ideologies, and academic backgrounds, which sometimes do not align with the divine messages. Consequently, the Qur'an may not reveal its original meaning but may drift further from its universal message, since Qur'anic interpretation is inherently multi-faceted. As Muhammad Arkoun stated, the Qur'an allows for diverse interpretations in every word, making it

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<sup>1</sup> Noblana Adib, "Factors Causing Deviation in the Interpretation of the Quran," *Mawa'izh: Journal of Da'wah and Social Humanitarian Development* 8, no. 1 (July 1, 2017): 2, accessed May 31, 2024, <https://jurnal.lp2msasbabel.ac.id/index.php/maw/article/view/694>.

<sup>2</sup> Dede Ahmad Ghazali and Heri Gunawan, *Islamic Studies An Introduction With an Interdisciplinary Approach* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2015), 106.

<sup>3</sup> Since the role of the Quran cannot be fully appreciated, as its content primarily explains theological concepts, Sharia rules, spiritual conduct, and methods of thinking and practicing in a general manner, it is clear that the importance of tafsir lies in its ability to interpret the verses of the Quran, which were revealed in Arabic—a language rich in various meanings and nuances. M. Subhan et al., *Tafsir Maqashidi: A Thematic Study of Mawashid Al-Shari'ah* (Kediri: Lirboyo Press, 2013).

inherently uncertain, unbound, and not limited to a singular interpretation; rather, it remains open and can be freely interpreted with new explanations and ideas.<sup>4</sup>

Many believe that the tafsir texts cannot be questioned or criticized, yet all human works are susceptible to flaws and mistakes. Even the most informative tafsir works still have aspects of credibility and validity that warrant scrutiny and reevaluation, including efforts to preserve the authenticity of the Qur'an within the field of *'Ulum al-Qur'an* (sciences of the Qur'an). There is a particular discipline aimed at protecting and sterilizing the Qur'an from any form of distortion, known as *Ilmu Dakhil* (the science of internal criticism).<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Ulinnuha<sup>6</sup> in his book *Metode Kritik Dakhil fi al-Tafsir* (The Method of Internal Criticism in Tafsir), classifies *dakhil* into three elements: the element of *al-ma'thur* (narrations), *al-ra'y* (reason), and *al-isharah* (intuition). During the era of the *tabi'in* (the generation following the companions of the Prophet), weaknesses in tafsir began to emerge, such as a lack of adherence to the methodology of the companions in filtering stories coming from the People of the Book.<sup>7</sup> Some *tabi'in* even started to incorporate miraculous and false stories derived from the People of the Book, known as *Isra'iliyyat*. The story of *Isra'iliyyat*<sup>8</sup> saw rapid development, especially during the period of the *tabi'in* (the generation following the companions of the

Prophet) and *tabi'it tabi'in* (the generation after the *tabi'in*).<sup>9</sup> During this time, there was an extraordinary fascination with *Isra'iliyyat* stories, which led many to accept them carelessly.<sup>10</sup> Ignaz Goldziher emphasizes that one of the main factors behind the rise of *Isra'iliyyat* was the conversion of many Jewish scholars to Islam, such as Ka'ab ibn Akhbar, 'Abdullah ibn Salam, and Wahab ibn Munabbih. According to Goldziher, these individuals played a significant role in introducing *Isra'iliyyat* narratives into the corpus of tafsir and hadith.<sup>11</sup> Regarding the status of *Isra'iliyyat*, the majority of scholars (*jumhur ulama*) maintain the following views: *Isra'iliyyat* can be accepted as long as it does not contradict the Qur'an and hadith; however, *Isra'iliyyat* stories are rejected if they are in conflict with the Qur'an and hadith. In cases where the stories neither support nor contradict the Qur'an and hadith, their status is considered *tawaqquf* (suspended or left unaddressed).<sup>12</sup>

The story of *Isra'iliyyat* is often found in the Qur'an in several verses that recount the stories of the prophets and past peoples, and it is present in various tafsir works that use the *bi al-ma'thur* method. This method involves using narrations as a way to interpret a verse by quoting various hadith sources, with or without including the chain of narrators (*sanad*).<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, Manna' Khalil Qattan describes the *bi al-ma'thur* method as a way of interpreting the Qur'an through the Qur'an itself

<sup>4</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Grounding the Qur'an* (Bandung: Mizan, 1992), 72.

<sup>5</sup> Rofiq Junaidi, "Al-Ashil Wa Dakhil Fi Tafsir," *Al-A'raf: Journal of Islamic Thought and Philosophy* 11, no. 2 (December 30, 2014): 69, accessed June 3, 2024, <http://ejournal.iainsurakarta.ac.id/index.php/al-araf/article/view/1192>.

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad Ulinnuha, *Ad-Dakhil Fit-Tafsir Critique Method* (Jakarta: Penerbit Qaf, 2019), 76.

<sup>7</sup> The exegetes did not first scrutinize the Israeli traditions they quoted. In fact, some of these stories are false and fabricated. Therefore, those who read tafsir books should avoid what is useless and only quote what is truly necessary, provided that the accuracy of the transmission and the truth of the information have been verified. Manna Khalil Al-Qattan, *Studies in the Qur'anic Sciences*,

terj. Mudzakir AS. (Bogor: Pustaka Litera Antar Nusa, 2015), 510.

<sup>8</sup> Rachmat Syafe'i, *Introduction to the Science of Tafsir* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2012), 106.

<sup>9</sup> Ahmad Khalil Arshad, *Dirasah Fi Al-Qur'an* (Mesir: Dara al-Ma'arif, 1972), 20.

<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Husain Al-Zahabi, *Israiliyyat in Interpretation and Hadith* (Jakarta: Litera Antar Nusa, 1993), 20.

<sup>11</sup> Ignaz Goldziher, *Madzahib Al-Tafsir al-Islam* (Kairo: al-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyah, 1995), 113.

<sup>12</sup> Rusydie Anwar, *Introduction to Ulumul Qur'an and Ulumul Hadith: Theory and Methodology* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2015), 124.

<sup>13</sup> Abuddin Nata, *Methodology of Islamic Studies*, cet 22. (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2016), 73.

or through hadith, with the aim of explaining the words of Allah by citing the statements of the companions of the Prophet. This is because the companions were the ones who directly knew and interacted with the Prophet. Alternatively, interpretations may refer to the sayings of prominent figures among the *tabi'in*, as they generally received knowledge from the companions.<sup>14</sup>

Khoirul Umami, in his article, conducted a bibliographic study that aimed to explore the interpretation used by MTA (Majelis Tafsir Al-Qur'an) by employing *dakhil* as a theory of critique from a puritan ideology. According to him, through examining the ambiguity in MTA's approach to interpreting sources, four elements of *dakhil* were found: the presence of *dakhil al-naql* in the form of *Isra'iliyyat* narratives, the influence of the puritan ideology of Muhammad Abduh, the assertion that the Old Testament is a scripture containing complete truth and is treated as a careless tafsir by equating the Old Testament with the Torah of Moses. This indicates a lack of consistency in MTA's interpretation.<sup>15</sup> Ahmed Hasan Saleh al-Fakih and his colleagues found that deviations in *tafsir dirayah* (rational interpretation) cannot be confined to a particular method. Instead, it should involve extrapolating words in the Qur'an based on linguistic literature and other valid sources, while considering the credibility of those sources to ensure they do not distort the Qur'anic rules or Islamic teachings.<sup>16</sup> Fadhlurrahman Armi elaborated that Ibn Juzay employed the Ash'ariyah doctrine in his style and approach to tafsir. However, he set aside the ego of his sectarian affiliation by presenting dialogical

evidence, leading to the conclusion that Ibn Juzay was not a fanatical mufassir of his sect and did not impose interpretations of the Qur'anic verses according to the teachings of his madhhab.<sup>17</sup>

The inclusion of *Isra'iliyyat* narratives in tafsir has raised doubts about the authenticity of a mufassir's interpretation in their works, also tarnishing the image of Islam and potentially negating the *'ismah* (infallibility) of the Prophets and Messengers from sin. Therefore, this research aims to critically analyze *al-dakhil fi al-tafsir* (the internal critique in tafsir) as applied by Ibn Juzay to the verses concerning the story of Prophet Sulaiman in his tafsir *al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil*. This analysis will involve examining the interpretative patterns of several mufassirs who employ the *bi al-ma'thur* method. The choice of this tafsir as the material object of the research is based on the consideration that academic studies on *al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil* are relatively scarce. As such, a study of Ibn Juzay's works will enrich the scholarly discourse on tafsir.

## Method

This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach, focusing on the concept of infiltration of interpretation used by Ibn Juzay in his tafsir and its application in the interpretation of the verses concerning the stories of the Prophets. The primary source used is Ibn Juzay's tafsir *al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil*. As for the secondary sources, they are divided into two categories. First, books and journals that are relevant to the research topic, including disciplines related to tafsir, *'Ulum al-Qur'an* (sciences of the Qur'an), and *Dakhil fi Tafsir* (infiltration in tafsir).

<sup>14</sup> Al-Qattan, *Studies in Qur'anic Sciences*, 488.

<sup>15</sup> Khoirul Umami, "Pseudopuritanism: Al-Dakhil's Study of the Tafsir of the Qur'an Interpretation Assembly (Mta)," *FALASIFA: Journal of Islamic Studies* 11, no. 2 (October 22, 2020): 1–16, accessed June 3, 2024, <https://ejournal.uas.ac.id/index.php/falasifa/article/view/367>.

<sup>16</sup> Ahmed Hasan Saleh al-Fakih et al., "Intruder Detection Methods in the Tafsir Al-Dirayah," *QALAM International Journal of Islamic and Humanities Research* 1, no. 2 (2021): 1–19.

<sup>17</sup> Fadhlurrahman Armi, "The Kalam Thought of 8th Century Andalusian Cleric Hibnu Juzay Al-Kalbi in his Tafsir Book: Al-Tas-Hil Li 'Ulum Al-Tanzil," *BIDAYAH* 10, no. 2 (2019): 131–139.

Second, tafsir literatures that employ the *bi al-ma'thur* method, which serve as comparative materials. These include works such as *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ayi al-Qur'an* by Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, *al-Muharrar al-Wajiz fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz* by Abi Muhammad 'Abd al-Haqq ibn 'Atiyyah, *al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir* by al-Tahir ibn 'Ashur, and *Tafsir al-Misbah* by Quraish Shihab.

The data analysis method used in this study is interpretative. An interpretative approach involves delving into the thoughts of a figure as expressed in their works in order to capture the nuances of meaning and understanding that are specifically intended, thus achieving an accurate comprehension.<sup>18</sup> This research is limited to the verses in the Qur'an concerning the story of

Prophet Sulaiman. Since this story is often contaminated with false narratives commonly referred to as *Isra'iliyyat*, it is hoped that this story can provide a clear representation of the concept of *al-dakhil fi al-tafsir* (infiltration in tafsir) in various tafsir literatures.

## Result and Discussion

In the Qur'an, the name of Sulaiman (Sulaiman) is mentioned in various surahs. To make it easier, this study presents a thematic discussion of several verses that recount the story of Prophet Sulaiman in the Qur'an, as shown in Table 1 below:

Tabel 1. Israiliyyat the story of Prophet Sulaiman in the Qur'an

Discussion		Qur'anic Verses	
Theme	Sub-theme	Location in Verse	Form of Israiliyyat
The Personality of Prophet Sulaiman	Obedience in Worship	QS. Shad: 30-32	نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ
	Wisdom in Decision-Making	QS. Al-Anbiya': 78-79	فَفَقَّهُمَهَا سُلَيْمٌ وَكَلَّا إِنَّا حُكَمَا وَعِلْمًا
Prophet Sulaiman as the Successor to Prophet Daud's Throne		QS. An-Naml: 15-16	وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَأَوْتَيْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
Miracles of Prophet Sulaiman	Subjugation of Wind	QS. Al-Anbiya': 81	وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ
		QS. Shad: 36	فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ
	Subjugation of Jinn and Satan	QS. Al-Anbiya': 82	وَمِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ مَنْ يَعْزُوزُونَ لَهُ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ
		QS. Saba': 13	يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَحَارِبٍ وَتَمَاثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رُسَيْدٍ
		QS. Shad: 37-38	وَالشَّيْطَانِ كُلِّ بَنَاءٍ وَعَوَاصٍ
	The Army of Prophet Sulaiman	QS. An-Naml: 17	مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ

<sup>18</sup> Kaelan, *Interdisciplinary Qualitative Religious Research Methods* (Yogyakarta: Paradigma, 2010), 134.

Discussion		Qur'anic Verses	
Theme	Sub-theme	Location in Verse	Form of Israiliyyat
	Prophet Sulaiman and the Ant	QS. An-Naml: 18-19	لَا يَخْطَمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمٌ وَجُنُودُهُ
	Prophet Sulaiman and the Hoopoe Bird	QS. An-Naml: 20-22	فَقَالَ مَا لِي لَا أَرَى الْهُدُودَ
The Trial and Test of Prophet Sulaiman	The Trial by the Jews	QS. Al-Baqarah: 102	وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيْطَانُ عَلَىٰ مَلِكِ سُلَيْمَانَ
	The Test from Allah	QS. Shad: 34	وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلَىٰ كُرْسِيِّهِ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ أَنَابَ
The Death of Prophet Sulaiman		QS. Saba': 14	فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَوْتِهِ إِلَّا دَابَّةُ الْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنسَأَتَهُ

### Israiliyyat in the Story of Prophet Sulaiman

*Obedience in Worship:*

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ نِعَمَ الْعَبْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ

"We granted to Daud (a son named) Sulaiman. He is the best of servants. Indeed, he was always returning (to Allah)". (QS. Shad: 30)

The divinity and grace of Allah are reflected in His gift to Prophet Daud, a son named Sulaiman. Allah praises Sulaiman by calling him "Ya 'Abd" (servant) and "Awwab" (one who constantly returns), which signifies that Sulaiman is a servant who always returns to Allah. The word "Awwab" shows his compliance and consistency in worship.<sup>19</sup>

Quraish Shihab explains that the verse above states: "And We gave Daud a son, Sulaiman, who was the best of servants in his time. Indeed, he was very obedient and always returned to his Lord in every matter."<sup>20</sup> He further interprets that this verse is connected to the following verses;

إِذْ عَرَضَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْعَشِيِّ الصُّفُوفُ الْجِيَادُ

فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّي حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ

<sup>19</sup> Abi Muhammad 'Abd al-Haq ibn Ghalib ibn 'Atiyyah al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4. (Beirut: dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1993), 279.

"(Remember) when, in the afternoon, the horses that were swift and beautiful were presented to him". (QS. Shad: 31)

"So, he said, "Indeed, I have come to love the love of good (the horses) so much that I forgot the remembrance of my Lord until it (the sun or the horses) disappeared behind the veil". (QS. Shad: 32)

The word (الصَّفَانَات) "al-shofinat" is the plural form of the word (صَافِن) "shofin," which can only be used for horses. Therefore, although the word "al-shofinat" is an adjective with no explicitly mentioned subject, it can be inferred that the subject is horses because the word "shofin" refers to a four-legged animal, where one of its legs is lifted in such a way that only the tip of the hoof touches the ground. A horse in this position demonstrates agility and calmness when it stands still or halts. Some scholars also interpret the word to mean "continuously standing," indicating that the horses are always ready to obey commands.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an, Revised edition*. (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2017), 139.

<sup>21</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 140.

The word (الجياد) "al-jiyad" is the plural form of the word (جواد) "jawad," which refers to a special or excellent horse. A horse that runs with all its strength is called "jawad," as it pours all its energy into running. The word (الخير) "al-khair" is commonly interpreted as goodness, or something valuable and precious. Horses were considered among the most valuable possessions in Arab society, which is why the word (الخيال) "al-khail" is also sometimes referred to as "al-khair".<sup>22</sup> Thus, in this verse, Prophet Sulaiman can be depicted as someone who is agile, calm, strong, and valuable.

Unlike Ibn Juzay, he interprets this verse by citing a story with differing opinions. Prophet Sulaiman inherited a thousand winged horses from Prophet Daud, which were brought by the devils from the depths of the sea. This caused Sulaiman to feel so pleased with the sight of these horses that he continued to gaze at them until sunset, forgetting to perform the afternoon prayer (Asr). Soon after, Sulaiman regretted this and struck the necks and legs of the horses with his sword, killing them, leaving only a few behind. As a result, Allah replaced the horses with a miracle, granting Sulaiman the ability to control the wind.<sup>23</sup>

Ibn Juzay also mentions that some scholars reject the narration of this story, arguing that it is unlikely for Prophet Sulaiman, who was a prophet, to commit a sin such as neglecting prayer. Regarding the next verse (QS. Sad: 32), Ibn Juzay also elaborates on the differing interpretations of this verse. Some scholars believe that the act of slaughtering the horses led to him neglecting his prayer. The use of the term *al-khair* in this verse has been classified into three different opinions. First, *al-khair* is understood to mean horses, indicating that Prophet Sulaiman's love for horses distracted him from worshipping Allah. Second, *al-khair* is interpreted to mean wealth, as horses were

considered very valuable and could be regarded as wealth. Third, *al-khair* is understood to mean positive wealth or goodness, implying that Prophet Sulaiman's love for the horses was a manifestation of his love for Allah, who bestowed him with blessings and miracles. Although outwardly it appeared that Prophet Sulaiman loved the horses, the deeper meaning suggests that he loved Allah, who granted him such gifts.<sup>24</sup>

#### *Intelligence in Decision-Making*

وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمُونَ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَسَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَاهِدِينَ  
فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكُلًّا آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

“(Remember) Daud and Sulaiman when they gave judgment concerning the field damaged at night by the sheep of their people. We were witnesses to the decision they made”. (QS. Al-Anbiya’: 78)

“Then, We gave Sulaiman understanding of the more appropriate decision. To each of them (Daud and Sulaiman), We granted wisdom and knowledge. We subdued the mountains and the birds to glorify Us along with Daud. It is We who accomplished this”. (QS. Al-Anbiya’: 79).

According to Ibn Juzay, there was once a vineyard that had been damaged at night by a flock of sheep, leading to a dispute between the vineyard owner and the sheep owner. They came to Prophet Daud for a resolution, and Daud ruled that the sheep, which had caused the damage, should be given to the vineyard owner as compensation, as the value of the sheep was equal to the value of the damaged vineyard. At that time, Prophet Sulaiman, who was only eleven years old, was present at the door, and the two disputing men explained the issue to him. Sulaiman suggested that “the sheep owner should temporarily hand over his sheep to the vineyard

<sup>22</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 140.

<sup>23</sup> Muhammad bin Ahmad Ibn Juzay Al-Kalbi, *Kitab Al-Tashil Li Ulum al-Tanzil Jilid 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 2017), 1118.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab Al-Tashil Li Ulum al-Tanzil Jilid 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1119.

owner so that the vineyard owner could benefit from them (by obtaining milk, wool, and offspring) while restoring the damaged vineyard. Once the vineyard was restored to its original condition, the sheep would be returned to their owner". Thus, the matter was resolved according to Sulaiman's recommendation, which provided mutual benefit rather than simply judging in favor of one party. Sulaiman's decision was based on personal reasoning (ijtihad) rather than divine revelation, as was also the case with Prophet Daud's decision. Therefore, although Daud's judgment was not ultimately implemented, every person who exercises ijtihad is considered correct and rewarded for their efforts.<sup>25</sup>

Ibn Juzay also interpreted Prophet Sulaiman's decision by referencing a hadith regarding the legal ruling on crop damage according to the Maliki and Shafi'i schools of thought, which states that livestock owners are responsible for any damage caused by their animals, whether it occurs during the day or at night.

Ibn 'Atiyyah interprets the verse "واتينا داود" in connection with the verse "ولوطا اتيناه حكما وعلما" (Al-Anbiya': 74), indicating that Sulaiman was the son of Daud and that Daud was a just prophet and king. When Daud was faced with a dispute between two parties—a farmer and a shepherd—Sulaiman offered a wise decision: the owner of the sheep should compensate the landowner with the benefits derived from the sheep, while the landowner worked to restore his land. Daud praised this decision as a reflection of Sulaiman's sense of justice.<sup>26</sup>

Allah granted Sulaiman a firm understanding of the more accurate ruling, making his judgment more precise. The verse above hints at a difference of opinion between two prophets, a father and a

son, in their ijtihad concerning a single case. Allah endowed the son with a solid comprehension, as indicated by the phrase *fahhamnaha* (فَهَمَّنَاهَا), leading the father to acknowledge the accuracy of his son's judgment and ultimately retract his own opinion in favor of his son's.<sup>27</sup>

Prophet Sulaiman's opinion was more precise, as Prophet Daud's view, which prescribed compensation, fulfilled justice alone. In contrast, Sulaiman's judgment encompassed justice, rehabilitation, and development. This reflects Prophet Sulaiman's intelligence and wisdom in resolving matters.

### Prophet Sulaiman was the heir to the throne of Prophet Daud.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُدَ وَقَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا مَنْطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأُوتِينَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِينُ

*Indeed, We have certainly granted knowledge to Daud and Sulaiman. And they said, "Praise is due to Allah, who has favored us over many of His believing servants".* (QS. An-Naml: 15)

*Sulaiman inherited Daud, and he said, "O mankind, we have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given everything. Indeed, this is truly a clear bounty".* (QS. An-Naml: 16)

According to Ibn Juzay, Prophet Sulaiman inherited three things from his father: prophethood, knowledge, and kingship. He was also granted various miracles, such as the ability to understand the speech of birds.<sup>28</sup> The knowledge granted by Allah to Prophet Daud and Sulaiman was vast and unique. For example, Prophet Daud was endowed with the ability to make armor (Qur'an, Al-Anbiya: 80) and was taught wisdom and the ability to resolve disputes (Qur'an, Sad:

<sup>25</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab Al-Tashil Li Ulum al-Tanzil Jilid 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 812–813.

<sup>26</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 349.

<sup>27</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 488.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 932.



20). Prophet Sulaiman, in addition to being granted wisdom and the ability to understand cases of conflict, was also blessed with the ability to understand the language or speech of birds.<sup>29</sup>

This verse calls on every scholar to first acknowledge the blessing of Allah for the knowledge they possess and then express gratitude for it. Gratitude should not only be verbal but also manifested through practice and aligning one's actions with the knowledge they have been granted.

This verse first states that Sulaiman inherited the kingdom and authority of his father, King Daud. He expressed gratitude to Allah for this blessing and ruled with great wisdom. Sulaiman acknowledged that everything within his domain was solely a gift from Allah. He addressed his people, not to boast, but to encourage them to obey his commands and guidance, saying: "O mankind, we have been granted (by Allah—not by our own effort) the understanding of the language of birds (so that we comprehend their meaning when they chirp), and we have been given everything that strengthens the kingdom and authority bestowed upon us by Allah."<sup>30</sup>

The verse "وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُودَ" (And Sulaiman inherited Daud) is understood by some scholars to refer to inheriting prophethood. However, according to Quraish Shihab, this interpretation is not accurate, as prophethood is a divine gift that cannot be inherited. Other scholars argue that what Sulaiman inherited from his father was wealth and knowledge. However, interpreting this inheritance as material wealth is also less appropriate, not only because prophets do not pass on material wealth to their families, but also because the issue of inheritance of wealth is not significant here. Moreover, it is not only Sulaiman who inherited; his eleven brothers also inherited their father's

wealth. Therefore, the most logical interpretation is that Sulaiman inherited the authority or kingship of his father..<sup>31</sup> It is also explained that Allah SWT bestowed upon Sulaiman all the abilities and everything he needed to govern his kingdom. As a result, his reign marked the period of prosperity and greatness for the Children of Israel.

According to Ibn 'Atiyyah, this story begins with a supernatural element, which is different from the parables of the Quraysh. Daud was the king of the Children of Israel and a prophet. Sulaiman inherited both the kingdom and the prophetic status from his father after his death, making him the heir. Scholars agree that prophets do not inherit wealth, as the Prophet Muhammad SAW said, "We, the prophets, do not leave inheritance." However, some prophets, such as Zechariah, did pass on wealth. Prophet Sulaiman was granted the ability to understand the language of birds and animals, a great blessing from Allah. He was also known for his wisdom in leadership and managing his army, including birds that sheltered him from the sun and assisted in royal matters. Prophet Sulaiman's kingdom was vast, with an army made up of humans, jinn, and birds. His throne was magnificent, and his army was well-organized, with a carefully arranged distribution and positioning of soldiers, following a specific system.<sup>32</sup>

## The Miracles of Prophet Sulaiman

### *Controlling the Wind*

وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا  
وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَالِمِينَ

*And We subjected to Sulaiman the fiercely blowing wind, which blew by his command toward the land that We had blessed. And We have knowledge of all things. (QS. Al-Anbiya': 81)*

<sup>29</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 198.

<sup>30</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 200–201.

<sup>31</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 201.

<sup>32</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 593.

Allah begins to mention the special blessings granted to Prophet Sulaiman, one of which is that He subjected the wind to Sulaiman, making it obey his commands. For example, the wind would blow towards a specific land, either with a strong, forceful gust or a gentle, slow breeze, depending on the will of Prophet Sulaiman.<sup>33</sup>

By the permission of Allah, Prophet Sulaiman had the ability to control the wind according to his command and needs. For instance, if he desired the ships carrying goods or his army to move swiftly, he would pray to Allah for the wind to blow strongly, propelling the ships forward. Conversely, if he sought a gentle, refreshing breeze, that too would occur by Allah's will. It can also be said that the wind subdued for him was inherently good, not destructive. Therefore, even though the wind could be described as *'asifah* (stormy or very strong), it would never cause destruction or chaos.<sup>34</sup> Ibn 'Atiyyah interprets the verse " إلى الأرض التي باركنا فيها " (to the land which We had blessed) as referring to the region of Sham (the Levant) or the places Sulaiman passed through during his journey. In this context, the wind was used to lift and move his army, symbolizing the blessings and divine planning in his travels. The verse highlights the prosperity and success of Sulaiman's journey, where everything was carried out according to Allah's will and with His blessings.<sup>35</sup>

At that time, Prophet Sulaiman was in Palestine, and this verse states that the wind followed his command to the blessed land, which refers to Palestine. This implies that Sulaiman's mastery over the wind began in Palestine and extended wherever the wind blew, according to the will of the noble prophet. The verse signifies that Sulaiman's control over the wind was not limited

to a specific place but was a continuous blessing granted to him by Allah, enabling him to direct the wind as he desired, no matter where he was,<sup>36</sup> As stated in Surah Sad (38:36):

فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ رُخَاءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ

*So We subjected to him the wind blowing by his command, gently wherever he directed.* (QS. Shad: 36)

In line with the interpretation of Ibn Juzay, one of the miracles of Prophet Sulaiman was his ability to travel a journey that would normally take a month, but he could complete it in a single morning or evening, aided by the wind. Despite Prophet Sulaiman simply sitting on his wooden throne, with four thousand horsemen accompanying him, the wind would blow and carry him and his army swiftly to the intended destination. Ibn Juzay also quotes from Ibn 'Abbas that Prophet Sulaiman was granted the miracle of being able to melt copper without the need for fire, in Yemen. With this ability, he was able to mold and shape whatever he wished from the molten copper. These miracles highlight the extraordinary power and blessings bestowed upon Prophet Sulaiman, reflecting both his divine authority and the special gifts granted to him by Allah.<sup>37</sup>

In line with Ibn 'Ashur's interpretation, the subjugation of the wind for Prophet Sulaiman can be understood as Allah regulating the speed of the wind to facilitate the journey of his ships. This means that during specific seasons, the wind would blow in such a way as to propel the ships, allowing them to reach their destination within a month. Similarly, when the ships needed to return, the wind would blow in the opposite direction, ensuring that the ships could make their way back

<sup>33</sup> Department of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and its Tafsir*, Fourth edition. (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia, 1985), 218.

<sup>34</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 492.

<sup>35</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 629.

<sup>36</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 493.

<sup>37</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1042.

efficiently. This divine control over the wind helped to ensure smooth and timely travel for Sulaiman's ships, reflecting the unique blessings granted to him by Allah.<sup>38</sup>

Ibn 'Atiyyah explains that Allah SWT controlled the wind for Prophet Sulaiman, who had a magnificent throne that could accommodate up to 4,000 horsemen, and possibly even more according to some interpretations. In his leadership, Sulaiman was surrounded by an army of jinn, birds that provided him with shade, and strong winds that lifted him into the air, ensuring his well-being and mobility. He was known as a figure of gentleness, strength, justice, and unwavering in his purpose, untempted by excessive desires. This divine arrangement allowed him to travel from morning to a journey lasting a month, with clear determination and purpose.<sup>39</sup>

#### *Control the Jinn and Devils*

وَمِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ مَنْ يَغْوُونَ لَهُ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حَافِظِينَ<sup>٤١</sup>

*And We subjected to Sulaiman a group of devils who dived into the sea for him and did other works besides that. And We were protecting them. (QS. Al-Anbiya': 82)*

Allah explains His special mercy granted to Prophet Sulaiman, stating that He also subdued a group of devils (jinn) who obeyed Sulaiman's commands. These devils were tasked with various duties, such as diving into the sea to retrieve whatever was needed by Sulaiman, or performing other tasks like constructing buildings.<sup>40</sup> According to Ibn Juzay, these devils dived into the sea to obtain precious gems for Sulaiman and also served him in constructing buildings as

instructed.<sup>41</sup> Ibn 'Atiyyah further explains that the phrase (وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حَافِظِينَ), meaning "And We were protecting them," refers to Allah's protection over these devils, ensuring they did not cause harm or deviate from His command. None of them went astray, remaining under the complete control and authority of Allah's knowledge and sovereignty. This verse reflects the divine favor granted to Sulaiman, enabling him to harness the power of supernatural beings for his kingdom's prosperity.<sup>42</sup>

Among the blessings granted to Prophet Sulaiman was the subjugation of the jinn to work on whatever he desired. These jinn were always obedient and compliant with his commands because they were threatened by Allah with being cast into a blazing fire if they failed to fulfill Sulaiman's orders. This divine control over the jinn ensured that they served Sulaiman faithfully, carrying out various tasks such as building structures, retrieving treasures, and performing other duties under his command. The threat of punishment in the hereafter kept the jinn in line, showcasing the power and authority bestowed upon Sulaiman by Allah.<sup>43</sup>

يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَحَارِبٍ وَتَمَاثِيلٍ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رُسِيَّتٍ إِعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

*They (the jinn) always worked for Sulaiman according to his will. Among them were (the tasks of making) lofty buildings, statues, large dishes like ponds, and cauldrons that were set (on stoves). Work, O family of Daud, in gratitude. But few of My servants are truly grateful. (QS. Saba': 13)*

Ibn Juzay interprets the term "maharib" as palaces, mosques, and statues of such immense size that

<sup>38</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 357.

<sup>39</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 731.

<sup>40</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and Tafsir*, 313.

<sup>41</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 813.

<sup>42</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 742.

<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and Tafsir*, 72.

they could not be moved by anyone.<sup>44</sup> The jinn diligently carried out the commands of Sulaiman, constructing places of worship, statues made from materials such as wood, copper, glass, and marble, as well as large cooking pots capable of preparing food for dozens of people. They also created enormous cauldrons for Sulaiman, so large that they could not be lifted or moved. The jinn, with their immense power, easily fulfilled Sulaiman's every desire, such as building grand and luxurious palaces, digging canals for irrigation, and establishing a highly prosperous and renowned kingdom. The Kingdom of Sulaiman became famous as one of the greatest and most prosperous empires of its time, unmatched by any other kingdom. This shows the supernatural power of the jinn under Sulaiman's command, as well as the extraordinary prosperity and achievements of his reign, which was unparalleled during that era.<sup>45</sup>

#### *The Army of Prophet Sulaiman*

وَحَشِيرَ إِسْلِيمَانَ جُنُودَهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ

*For Sulaiman, an army was gathered from among the jinn, humans, and birds, and they were organized in order. (QS. An-Naml: 17)*

This verse explains that Sulaiman was able to form an army composed of various creatures of Allah, such as jinn, humans, birds, and other animals. All of these forces were organized and united under his leadership.<sup>46</sup> According to **Quraish Shihab**, Allah granted Prophet Sulaiman a miracle by gathering armies from different species, including jinn, which are ethereal beings created from fire. These jinn were brought together to obey Sulaiman, despite their rebellious nature. Additionally, humans with various interests and birds, both tame and wild, were also gathered and

organized by Allah to follow Sulaiman's command.<sup>47</sup> However, **Ibn Juzay** does not specify the number of Sulaiman's army to avoid potential misinterpretations or incorrect assumptions. His focus is more on the unity and order in which Sulaiman's army, consisting of different beings, was gathered and how they all obeyed his leadership under the divine will of Allah.<sup>48</sup>

This verse refers to the gathering and division of opinions regarding the number of Prophet Sulaiman's army, where the available information only highlights the truth of his vast kingdom, which spanned the entire earth and conquered the world. His kingdom consisted of human and jinn forces, with birds providing shade from the sun and managing various affairs. His throne, which was a special place for Sulaiman, housed an orderly and well-organized army, meaning that each unit would be properly aligned and supported by the following units. This indicates the high level of coordination and discipline within Sulaiman's realm, emphasizing both the power and the harmony of his rule under Allah's command.<sup>49</sup>

#### *Prophet Sulaiman and the Ants*

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا آتَوَا عَلَىٰ وَادِ النَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمَلَةٌ يَأْتِيهَا النَّملُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَكِنَتَكُمْ  
لَا يَخْطَمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

*When they reached the valley of the ants, the queen of the ants said, "O ants, enter your homes so that you will not be trampled by Sulaiman and his army, while they do not notice". (QS. An-Naml: 18)*

When Sulaiman and his army were marching, suddenly Sulaiman heard the voice of the queen of the ants, instructing her people to enter their burrows quickly to avoid being stepped on by

<sup>44</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1043.

<sup>45</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and Tafsir*, 72–73.

<sup>46</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and Tafsir*, 218.

<sup>47</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 205.

<sup>48</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 932.

<sup>49</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 491.

Sulaiman and his army. Sulaiman and his troops, unaware of the tiny creatures, nearly trampled them, as the ants were too small to be seen.<sup>50</sup>

According to Ibn Juzay, ants are clever creatures with sharp senses. In this story, the distance between Sulaiman's army and the ant army is said to be three miles.<sup>51</sup> Ibn 'Atiyyah, on the other hand, believes that the ants represent a larger macrocosmic structure, and that Sulaiman was able to hear the voice of the ants from such a great distance—about three miles—resulting in a smile on his face. This smile is considered a manifestation of the joy typical of the prophets. Another interpretation links Sulaiman's smile to a divine gift and the praise the ants gave him.<sup>52</sup>

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#### *Prophet Sulaiman and the Hoopoe Bird*

وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدُودَ<sup>٥٤</sup> أَمْ كَانِ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ

*He (Sulaiman) inspected the birds and said, "Why do I not see the hoopoe? Is it among those who are absent?".. (QS. An-Naml: 20)*

In the previous verse, it was explained that Allah had appointed Prophet Sulaiman as a king and His messenger sent to the Children of Israel as a successor to his father, Prophet Daud, who had passed away. It was explained that Sulaiman inherited the wisdom and knowledge of his father, in addition to the knowledge that Allah granted him. Among these knowledges was the ability to understand the language of animals, and the animals themselves became part of his army. In this verse, the conversation between Sulaiman and one of his soldiers, the Hoopoe bird (Hud-hud), is narrated.<sup>54</sup> The Hud-hud bird had left without Sulaiman's permission, but returned with an important message that was valuable to Sulaiman both as a king and as a messenger sent by Allah.<sup>55</sup>

Ibn 'Atiyyah, quoting Ibn Abbas and other scholars, notes that Sulaiman threatened to punish the Hoopoe bird (Hud-hud) by plucking its feathers as a result of its disobedience.<sup>56</sup> When Sulaiman was inspecting his army, he said: "If the Hoopoe bird returns without giving a strong reason for its absence and without seeking permission, I will punish it by plucking its feathers, so it can no longer fly, or I will slaughter it. One of these two punishments will be carried out as a lesson for others who might act like the Hoopoe bird did."<sup>57</sup> According to Ibn Juzay, the most widely accepted interpretation of Sulaiman's punishment for the Hoopoe bird (Hud-hud) is that he would pluck its feathers if the bird was proven to be at fault.<sup>58</sup>

From this verse, it can be understood that if the Hoopoe bird (Hud-hud) could present valid reasons for its departure without permission, and

<sup>50</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and Tafsir*, 218.

<sup>51</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 933.

<sup>52</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 542.

<sup>53</sup> Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 205.

<sup>54</sup> The Hud-hud bird is a type of bird that has the distinction of being able to find from a distance places of water deep underground. It is characterized by expanding its wings. While scholars are of the opinion that this is why the Prophet

Solomon made it a member of his army. Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Message, Impression, and Concordance of the Qur'an*, 210.

<sup>55</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and Tafsir*, 222.

<sup>56</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 432.

<sup>57</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and Tafsir*, 223.

<sup>58</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 933.

those reasons could be believed to be true, then Sulaiman would not carry out the punishment he had threatened, as stated in the following verse;

لَا عَذَابَئَهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَا أَدْبَحْتَهُ أَوْ لِيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ

*"I will surely punish it with a severe punishment or slaughter it, unless it comes to me with a clear reason". (QS. An-Naml: 21)*

## The Trial and Test of Prophet Sulaiman

### The Trial of the Jewish People

Indeed, after the death of Prophet Sulaiman, some of the Jewish people made the false accusation that Prophet Sulaiman practiced magic. This claim is mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 102:

وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيْطٰنُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمٰنَ ؕ  
وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمٰنُ وَلٰكِنَّ الشَّيْطٰنَ كَفَرُوۡا  
يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ الْمَلَكِ  
يٰۤاٰدَمُ هٰرُوۡتَ وَمَارُوۡتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمٰنِ مِنْۢ بَيْنِ  
حَتّٰى يَفُوۡرَا۟ اِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ؕ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ  
مِنْهُمَا مَا يَفِرُّوۡنَ بِهٖ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَرَوْجِهٖ ؕ وَمَا  
هُمۡ بِضٰرِّۙيۡنَ بِهٖ مِنْۢ بَدَا۟ءِ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ  
وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمۡ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمۡ ؕ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوۡا  
لَمَنِ اشْتَرٰهُ مَا لَهٗ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنْۢ خَلٰقٍ ؕ  
وَلَيْسَ مٰشِرُوۡا بِهٖ اَنْفُسَهُمۡ ؕ لَوْ كَانُوۡا يَعْلَمُونَ

*They followed what the devils had recited during the reign of Sulaiman. It was not Sulaiman who disbelieved, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic and that which was revealed to the two angels in Babylon, Harut and Marut. But neither of the two taught anyone without saying, 'We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve.' And they learned from them that by which they could cause separation between a man and his wife. But they do not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allah. And they learned what harms them and does not benefit them. But they certainly knew that whoever bought it would have no share in the Hereafter. And wretched is that for which*

*they sold themselves, if they only knew. (QS. Al-Baqarah: 102)*

According to Ibn Juzay, during the reign of Prophet Sulaiman, he buried evidence of magic in order to eradicate magic during his time. However, after his death, the Jewish people falsely accused Sulaiman of being a magician, saying, "Indeed, Sulaiman was a magician. The devils eavesdropped and conveyed this to the soothsayers, and then Sulaiman gathered all the magic they wrote and buried it." Allah will then give a fitting recompense to the Jewish people on the Day of Judgment for accusing Prophet Sulaiman of magic.<sup>59</sup>

### Allah's Test for Prophet Sulaiman

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمٰنَ وَالْقَيْنٰ عَلَىٰ كُرْسِيِّهٖ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ اٰنَابَ

*Indeed, We certainly tested Sulaiman, and We placed him upon his throne as a body (weak due to illness), and then he repented. (QS. Shad: 34)*

According to Ibn Juzay, the interpretation of this verse has various differences found in several stories. First, it is said that Sulaiman had a ring engraved with the name of Allah, which symbolized his kingdom. He would always remove the ring when entering the toilet out of reverence for the name of Allah. One day, he took off his ring and entrusted it to a servant. The jinn took advantage of this opportunity by transforming itself into a human resembling Sulaiman in order to take the ring that had been entrusted to the servant. In one narration, the jinn's name is Sakhar. The jinn then entered Sulaiman's palace and sat on the throne, ruling over the people, with everyone thinking it was Sulaiman, while in fact, it was a jinn in disguise. Eventually, Sulaiman traveled far from his kingdom until he was struck by hunger. He discovered a whale, and when its belly was cut open, he found his royal ring inside. It is narrated

<sup>59</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab Al-Tashil Li Ulum al-Tanzil Jilid 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 147–148.

that the jinn Sakhar had thrown the ring into the sea, which then ended up inside the whale's belly. Sulaiman then used his ring and returned to his kingdom. Afterward, he sought forgiveness and prayed to Allah for the trial that had befallen him.<sup>60</sup>

Second, it is said that Sulaiman had a wife whom he loved, and her father was an unbelieving king whom Sulaiman had killed. Sulaiman asked his wife to place a picture of her father in their home, but the image was instead turned into an idol that was worshipped by Sulaiman's wife. Sulaiman remained unaware of this for forty days, and when he discovered it, he destroyed the image.<sup>61</sup> Third, it is narrated that Sulaiman had a son whom he loved dearly. The jinn told Sulaiman, "If this child survives, he will inherit his father's kingdom, and we will all become his servants." Sulaiman then believed that his son had died while on his throne.<sup>62</sup> Fourth, it is said that Sulaiman declared, "Tonight, I will sleep with one hundred women, and each will give birth to a son who will fight in the way of Allah." Sulaiman slept with all of his wives, but only one woman gave birth to a son.<sup>63</sup>

After presenting these four stories, Ibn Juzay concluded that these narrations are weak and unreliable because they tarnish the image of Sulaiman as a prophet.<sup>64</sup>

### The Death of Prophet Sulaiman

فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَى مَوْتِهِ  
إِلَّا دَابَّةُ الْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنْسَأَتَهُ فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ  
الْجِنُّ أَنْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ الْعَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا فِي  
الْعَذَابِ الْمُؤَيَّنِّ

*So, when We decreed his death, nothing showed them his death except for a termite eating his staff. When he fell, the jinn realized that if they had*

*known the unseen, they would not have remained in the humiliating punishment. (QS. Saba': 14)*

According to Ibn Juzay, some scholars interpret this verse by narrating a story that is considered weak or questionable in its authenticity. The story goes that when Prophet Sulaiman entered a chamber to pray while leaning on his staff, Allah took his soul while he was still leaning on it. This continued for an entire year, during which no creature knew that Sulaiman had passed away. His staff was consumed by termites, the insects that feed on wood and other materials.<sup>65</sup>

When Prophet Sulaiman was nearing the end of his life, he sat on his throne, leaning on his staff. It was at that moment that he passed away, and no one realized he had died—not his guards, the inhabitants of the palace, nor the jinn who tirelessly carried out his orders. It was only when Sulaiman's body fell, as his staff, now weakened by the termites, could no longer support his weight and broke, that people realized he had passed away. Likewise, the jinn who had been diligently working for him acknowledged their weakness, for they did not know that Sulaiman had died. Had they known, they would not have continued their hard labor, as they were only commanded by Allah to obey Sulaiman, not the other dignitaries in his palace. The verse does not specify how long Sulaiman remained leaning on his staff before he fell.

### The Pattern of *Israiliyyat* Interpreting

*Isra'iliyyat* is divided into three categories: (1) *Isra'iliyyat* related to principles (kaidah), (2) *Isra'iliyyat* related to law (hukum), and (3) *Isra'iliyyat* related to advice and information

<sup>60</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1120.

<sup>61</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1120.

<sup>62</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1120.

<sup>63</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1120.

<sup>64</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1120.

<sup>65</sup> Al-Kalbi, *Kitab al-Tashil li Ulum al-Tanzil Volume 1 (Juzu' 1-2)*, 1043.

(other than those related to principles and law).<sup>66</sup> This study finds that Ibn Juzay's interpretation of the verses about the story of Prophet Sulaiman falls into the second and third categories: Isra'iliyyat related to law and those that contain advice and information. However, the majority of Ibn Juzay's interpretations of the story of Sulaiman belong to the third category, which provides advice and information.

Muhammad Husayn al-Zahabi divides Isra'iliyyat into two categories;<sup>67</sup> (a) Isra'iliyyat as ancient stories and myths that infiltrate tafsirs and hadiths, with their sources traced back to Christian, Jewish, or other traditions, and (b) Stories and myths deliberately inserted by the enemies of Islam into tafsirs and hadiths that have no basis in the ancient sources. These stories are intentionally inserted with the aim of corrupting the beliefs of Muslims. Therefore, Ibn Juzay's interpretation falls into the second category, where stories were deliberately inserted with the intent of distorting the faith of Muslims.

Ibn Taymiyyah holds the view that authentic Isra'iliyyat stories can be accepted, while false ones, known to be false, must be rejected. Meanwhile, stories whose authenticity is uncertain should be left unaddressed; they should neither be affirmed nor denied, and neither believed nor falsely condemned.<sup>68</sup> The Isra'iliyyat found in Ibn Juzay's *al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil* belongs to the second and third categories.

When looking at the classification of Isra'iliyyat according to the majority of scholars, the first category is that Isra'iliyyat may be accepted as long as it does not contradict the Qur'an and hadith. The second category is when a story contradicts the Qur'an and hadith, in which case the scholars agree to reject it. The third category involves

*tawaqquf* (suspending judgment), as seen in Ibn Taymiyyah's view.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, Ibn Juzay's interpretation in his tafsir *al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil* is considered very clear in quoting Isra'iliyyat reports, even though he does not provide valid and detailed sources. This is because, in his interpretation of the story of Prophet Sulaiman, no interpretation by Ibn Juzay is considered to contradict the Qur'an and hadith. However, some interpretations may conflict with the Qur'an and the principles of Islamic jurisprudence, but Ibn Juzay provides clarification that he rejects interpretations based on weak narrations, which are deemed incorrect interpretations.

In some of his interpretations, Ibn Juzay evaluates and criticizes mufassirs who interpret the Qur'anic verses using stories or narratives with weak or questionable chains of transmission, even though he does not explicitly name the mufassirs or the books that quote such Isra'iliyyat stories. On the other hand, Ibn Juzay also quotes several Isra'iliyyat stories without offering any critique or judgment on whether he accepts or rejects the narration, as he does not provide the chain of transmission or the source.

This study also found that when interpreting the verses of the stories, particularly the story of Prophet Sulaiman, Ibn Juzay never mentions the chain of transmission or the source in his tafsir. However, the researcher discovered identical narrations and interpretations in tafsir books that serve as sources for Ibn Juzay's work *al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil*, such as *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ayat al-Qur'an* by Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari and *al-Muharrar al-Wajiz fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz* by Abi Muhammad 'Abd al-Haqq ibn 'Atiyyah. Among the five themes of the story of

<sup>66</sup> Al-Madinah International University, *Al-Dakhil Fi al-Tafsir* (Madinah: Jami'ah al-Madinah al-'Alamiyah, 2009), 22.

<sup>67</sup> Husain al-Dzahabi, *al-Israiliyyat Fi al-Tafsir wa al-Hadith*, (Kairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 1990), 35-41.

<sup>68</sup> Taqiyyudin Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Halim ibn Taimiyah, *Muqaddimah Fi Usul al-Tafsir*, (Beirut: Dar ibn Hazm, t.th), 100.

<sup>69</sup> ibn Taimiyah, *Muqaddimah Fi Usul al-Tafsir*, 101.



Prophet Sulaiman discussed above, four themes are categorized as providing information only, while one theme is classified as *Isra'iliyyat*, specifically the interpretation in Surah Sad, verse 34.

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَانَ عَلَىٰ كُرْسِيِّهِ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ أَنَابَ

*Indeed, We certainly tested Sulaiman, and We placed him upon his throne as a lifeless body (weak due to illness), and then he repented. (QS. Shad: 34)*

Al-Tabari interprets this verse by stating that Allah tested Sulaiman and made a devil appear on his throne in the form of a human. The devil's name was Shakhr, although other opinions suggest names such as Ashaf, Ashar, or Habqiq. He narrates from Muhammad ibn 'Amr from Ibn Abi Najih from Mujahid regarding the verse "wa alqoyna 'ala kursiyihi jasad" (And We placed upon his throne a body), meaning that the devil's name was Ashif.<sup>70</sup> Al-Tabari also adds a narration from al-Muharibi from al-Dahhak about the verse "thumma anab" (Then he turned back), explaining that Sulaiman met a woman selling fish, bought a fish from her, and when he cut open its belly, he found his ring. Consequently, everything he passed by, be it a tree, a rock, or any object, would prostrate to him. Finally, Sulaiman returned to his kingdom and his wives.

bn 'Atiyyah, in his tafsir, explains that Allah tells the story of the trial of Sulaiman and the test of his kingdom's demise. It is narrated that one of Sulaiman's wives said, "My brother has had a dispute with someone, and I wish for you to rule falsely on the matter." Sulaiman agreed, and as a punishment, Allah placed a jinn on his ring. One day, when Sulaiman went to relieve himself, he entrusted his ring to one of his wives. A jinn named Sakhr, according to a narration from Ibn 'Abbas,

took the opportunity to change its appearance and assumed the form of Sulaiman. This jinn ruled the kingdom for forty days before throwing Sulaiman's ring into the sea, causing chaos among the people of Sulaiman's kingdom. Meanwhile, Sulaiman had fled in disguise, suffering from hunger and poverty. One day, he encountered a woman washing whale fish, and he asked her for some. She gave him two whale fish, and when Sulaiman cut them open, he found his ring inside one of them. From that point on, his kingdom was restored to him. The jinn fled, but Sulaiman ordered it to be cast upon his throne and imprisoned in the sea until the Day of Judgment. Ibn 'Atiyyah considers this to be the most accurate account.<sup>71</sup>

### Conclusion

This study focuses on Ibn Juzay's interpretation of the story of Prophet Sulaiman. In his interpretation, Ibn Juzay does not provide detailed references or sources, but after analysis and research in the sources of the *al-Tashil li 'Ulum al-Tanzil* commentary, similar interpretations of Surah Sad, verse 34 were found in the *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ayi al-Qur'an* by Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari and *al-Muharrar al-Wajiz fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz* by Abi Muhammad 'Abd al-Haqq ibn 'Atiyyah. The study shows that the discussion of Prophet Sulaiman's story is classified into six themes. Of these six themes, five are categorized as providing merely informational interpretations, while one theme is classified as *Isra'iliyyat* (biblical narrations), namely the interpretation of Surah Sad, verse 34. Although Ibn Juzay quotes *Isra'iliyyat* stories in this verse, he refutes them at the end of his interpretation, asserting that these stories are certainly false and should not be used as a source of interpretation. Ibn Juzay's presentation of the interpretations of

<sup>70</sup> Abu Ja'far Muhammad Bin Jarir Ath-Thabari, *Tafsir Ath-Thabari al-Musamma Jamiu' al-Bayan Fi Ta'wil al-Qur'an Volume 1*, print. 3. (Jakarta: Al-Maktabah al-Tawfiqiyah, 2013), 580.

<sup>71</sup> al-Andalusi, *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz Fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-'Aziz*, Juz 4, 504.

the verses in the story of Sulaiman and his quoting of *Isra'iliyyat* narrations are deemed purely informational because he strongly criticizes other commentators who interpret Quranic verses using weak or questionable narrations, even though he does not directly name the commentators or the books that quote these *Isra'iliyyat* stories. On the other hand, Ibn Juzay also quotes some *Isra'iliyyat* narrations without providing criticism or judgment about their authenticity, which can be considered as *tawaqquf* (suspension of judgment). Nevertheless, the interpretations presented by Ibn Juzay do not contradict the Quran or Hadith, do not harm the structure of Islam, and do not diminish the sanctity of Prophet Sulaiman.

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