



THE UTILISATION OF ḤADĪTH IN QUR'ĀNIC CRITICISM

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Abstract

The *Sunnah* contains of Qur'ānic explanation. It stands as the second most reliable interpretation of the Qur'ān. Qur'ānic critics has claimed that the Qur'ān consist of irreconcilable contradictory verses and the said notion might lead to rebuttal and rejection. Current contradiction claims differ from past claims. Current Qur'ānic critics are referring to Islamic sources to substantiate their criticism. On this matter, the Qur'ānic critics have cited a number of hadith to prove the inconsistency of the Quran. The research intend to study the contradiction claims in the Quran supported by the *Sunnah* as suggested by the Qur'ānic critics. The research is a qualitative study with analytical and critical approach. The research will study the assumed contradictory verses and the hadith used to support the contradiction claim. The research prove that current contradiction claims in the Quran has developed in a way that Qur'ānic critics has included *Sunnah* in their discussion. The inclusion of *Sunnah* has indeed made the claim seem to be more concrete. However, the research shows that the citation of *Sunnah* as evidence to the inconsistency of the Qur'ān is intangible. The assumed contradictory verses are in fact reconcilable and the citation of *Sunnah* do not corroborate the notion that the Qur'ān consist of contradiction. The research also suggest that any explanation by Islamic scholar on the assumed contradictory verses should include the evidences cited by the critics and on this occasion, the *Sunnah*.

Keywords: Ḥadīth, Qur'ānic criticism, Contradiction, *Sunnah*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi al-Sunnah refers to the Qur'anic explanations provided by the prophet SAW. On many occasions, the Prophet SAW offered clarifications to various verses of the Qur'ān. The Prophet SAW has explained many practices in the Qur'ān which included the fine details of Salah, Zakat, Hajj and fasting. Even the rulings such as financial transactions, the forbiddance of usury, social and criminal laws were all explained by the prophet SAW. In short, without the prophetic explanations, all the Islamic teachings and rulings will never be complete and could never be applied.

The prophetic explanations receive the highest endorsement by Allah SWT when He reveals the verse: (*and We have revealed to you the Reminder that you may make clear to men what has been revealed to them, and that haply they may reflect.*" (al-Qur'ān: al-Nahl: 44)) and verse: (*And We have not revealed to you the Book except that you may make clear to them that about which they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe*" (al-Qur'ān: al-Nahl: 64)). For that matter, scholars of Islam regard the prophetic explanations to be the highest authority when it comes to Qur'anic interpretation. The Prophet SAW himself also has accentuated the importance of his sayings and actions. The Prophet SAW said: "Beware! I have been given the Qur'ān and something like it, yet the time is coming when a man replete on his couch will say: Keep to the Qur'ān; what you find in it to be permissible treat as permissible, and what you find in it to be prohibited treat as prohibited. ... (Sunan Abi Dawud. Model Behavior of the Prophet, Chapter: Adherence to The Sunnah. No : 4604). Scholars explain the term 'something like it' as the *sunnah*¹.

Another hadith on the matter; the Prophet SAW said: "I have left two matters with you. As long as you hold to them, you will not go the wrong way. They are the Book of Allah and the Sunna of His Prophet." (Muwatta Malik, The Decree, Hadith no: 1628)

These evidences from the Qur'ān and Sunnah indicate that the *sunnah* compliments the Qur'ān in the sense that it further clarifies the Qur'ān notably the ambiguous verses of it. An example of the said point

is the prophet's explanation of al-Baqarah: 187; Narrated `Adi bin Hatim: "When the verse (*Until the white thread appears to you, distinct from the black thread,*) were revealed, I took two (hair) strings, one black and the other white, and kept them under my pillow and went on looking at them throughout the night but could not make anything out of it. So, the next morning I went to the Prophet SAW and told him the whole story. He explained to me, "That verse means the darkness of the night and the whiteness of the dawn" (al-Bukhari. Book of Fasting. Chapter: The Statement of Allah Taa'la: "And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from the black.". Hadith no: 1916). This narrations shows that if one disregard the prophetic explanation, he might distort the meaning of the Qur'ān.

2. METHOD OF THE STUDY

The Qur'ān and Sunnah are the two sources which Islam is based on. In order to reach to a perfect understanding of Islam, these two sources must be referred to. The Sunnah holds an important role in Qur'anic exegesis. The Sunnah occasionally validates what is written in the Qur'ān. A simple example is the multiple hadiths on the five pillars of Islam. These hadiths resound those five pillars mentioned in the Qur'ān in various verses. The Sunnah also explains the Qur'ān in many areas such as *bayān al-mubham, taqyīd al-muṭlaq, ṛdāḥ al-mushkil, takhṣīṣ al-'ām* etc. This paper is designed to conduct a study on the alleged contradiction in the Qur'ān supported by the Sunnah as per claimed by current Quranic critics. The data for the study is collected from published books and online works on the assumed contradictory verses in the Quran. The research is a qualitative study which is based on analytical and critical method.

Our research concludes the followings:

- a. Most of the hadith cited by Qur'ānic critics are sound and authentic hadith mostly came from Bukhāri and Muslim. Therefore, there is no requirement to double check those two sources. However, the problem does not lie in the authenticity of the hadith but the manner they are interpreted. This is the area where Islamic scholars need to provide further clarifications.
- b. The contradiction claims are based on misinterpretation on either two sides; the Qur'ānic verse or the hadith. In some cases, the

¹ see Ibn Kathir 1999 vol 1 p.7, Ibn al-Qayyim , *al-Tibyan fi Aqşam al-Qur'an*, Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah. p. 249. al-Zarkashi (1957) vol 2 p.257, al-Suyuthi (1974) vol. 4 p. 200.



Qur'ānic critics assumed that a particular verse or hadith attest to a certain point whereby they do not.² A misinterpretation on either two will certainly lead to a contradiction claim because both sources complement each other. A person cannot fully comprehend on a certain issue without referring to both of them. For instance, the assumed contradiction concerning the verses on intercession of the prophets and angels. Islamic scholars state that these verses give a complete picture on the topic intercession. They show that Allah SWT has blessed some of his creatures with the privilege to intercede on the Day of judgement. However, their intercession is bound to the will of Allah which means that only those who Allah permitted will receive intercession.

- c. The critics has neglected the method of *Ām* and *Khāṣ* and this has contributed to many contradiction claims.
- d. The critics fail to realize the context of the assumed contradictory verses. For instance, the treatment towards a non-Muslim parent. Islam exhorts its followers to be kind to their parents, however in the case of conflict where the two parties; son and father are in the opposite sides in a battle the mutual relationship between the two is no longer honored. In another word, should there be conflict between religion and family relationship, the religion must be favored at all time.
- e. From two cases presented below, the research concludes that none of the hadith cited substantiate the contradiction claim.

3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this paper only two (2) subjects will be fielded to support the previous conclusions. The first in on the topic of intercession on the day of Judgement and second is the treatment towards non-Muslim parents.

Subject 1: Intercession On the Day of Judgement³.

The critic claim that the Qur'ān consists of contradictory verses regarding intercession on the Day of Judgement.

﴿وَأَنْفُوا يَوْمًا لَا يَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَعَةٌ وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ٤٨﴾

(And be on your guard against a day when one soul shall not avail another in the least, neither shall intercession on its behalf be accepted, nor shall any compensation be taken from it, nor shall they be helped. *al-Qur'ān. al-Baqarah: 48*)).⁴

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِي يَوْمَ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا حُلَّةَ وَلَا شَفَعَةٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ٢٥٤﴾

(O you who believe! spend out of what We have given you before the day comes in which there is no bargaining, neither any friendship nor intercession, and the unbelievers-- they are the unjust. (*al-Qur'ān. al-Baqarah: 254*)).

﴿وَأَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْ يُحْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ لَيْسَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ٥١﴾

(And warn with it those who fear that they shall be gathered to their Lord-- there is no guardian for them, nor any intercessor besides Him-- that they may guard (against evil). (*al-Qur'ān. al-An'ām: 51*)).⁵

﴿أَفَمَنْ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَذَابُ أَفَأَنْتَ تُنقِذُ مَن فِي النَّارِ ١٩﴾

(What! as for him then against whom the sentence of chastisement is due: What! can you save him who is in the fire? (*al-Qur'ān. al-Zumar: 19*))⁶

To further emphasize on the notion that none of the Allah's creation will intercede on the day of judgement, the critics cited the following hadiths: Narrated Abu Huraira RA: "The Prophet SAW got up amongst us and mentioned *Al Ghulul*, emphasized its magnitude and declared that it was a great sin saying, "Don't commit *Ghulul* for I should not like to see

² The complex relation between the Quran and hadith has been analysed by the orientalist. See, Azmi, Ahmad Sanusi. (2016). "The Intricate Labyrinth of Qur'ānic References in Sirah Nabawiyah," *Journal of Hadith Studies*, Ulūm Ḥadīth Research Centre, vol.1. 1-6.

³ See Abdullah al-Fadi p. 302 and <http://www.answering-islam.org/Qur'an/Contra/intercession.html>.

⁴ another similar verse is *al-Baqarah: 128*.

⁵ Other similar verses: *al-An'ām: 70*, *al-Sajadah: 4*

⁶ Other verses cited are: *al-Nisa': 123-124*, *al-Taubah: 91*, *al-Zumar: 44-41*, *al-Infitar: 18-19*.



anyone amongst you on the Day of Resurrection, carrying over his neck a sheep that will be bleating, or carrying over his neck a horse that will be neighing. Such a man will be saying: 'O Allah's Messenger SAW! Intercede with Allah for me,' and I will reply, 'I can't help you, for I have conveyed Allah's Message to you nor should I like to see a man carrying over his neck, a camel that will be grunting. Such a man will say, 'O Allah's Apostle! Intercede with Allah for me, and I will say, 'I can't help you for I have conveyed Allah's Message to you,' or one carrying over his neck gold and silver and saying, 'O Allah's Messenger SAW! Intercede with Allah for me,' and I will say, 'I can't help you for I have conveyed Allah's Message to you,' or one carrying clothes that will be fluttering, and the man will say, 'O Allah's Messenger SAW! Intercede with Allah for me.' And I will say, 'I can't help you, for I have conveyed Allah's Message to you.'" (al-Bukhari. Book of Jihad. Chapter: Al-Ghulul. Hadith no: 3073).

Narrated Abu Huraira: When Allah revealed the Verse: "Warn your nearest kinsmen," Allah's Messenger SAW got up and said, "O people of Quraish (or said similar words)! Buy (i.e. save) yourselves (from the Hellfire) as I cannot save you from Allah's Punishment; O Bani `Abd Manaf! I cannot save you from Allah's Punishment, O Safiya, the Aunt of Allah's Messenger SAW! I cannot save you from Allah's Punishment; O Fatima bint Muhammad! Ask me anything from my wealth, but I cannot save you from Allah's Punishment." (al-Bukhari. Book of Wills and Testaments. Chapter: Are children and women included under the term of relatives. Hadith no: 2753). These evidences seem to indicate that there will be no intercession on the Day of Judgement. On the contrary, there are verses which state that there will be intercession on that day. The verses are as follow:

﴿اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ﴾

(Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Everliving, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who

is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? (al-Qur`ān .al-Baqarah: 255).

﴿مَا مِنْ شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِ﴾

(..there is no intercessor except after His permission; ..(al-Qur`ān. Yunus: 3)

﴿يَوْمَئِذٍ لَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَعَةُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ

وَرَضِيَ لَهُ قَوْلًا ۝ ١٠٩﴾

(On that day shall no intercession avail except of him whom the Beneficent Allah allows and whose word He is pleased with. (al-Qur`ān. Taha: 109)⁷.

These verses are supported by the following hadiths which were also cited by the critics:

Narrated `Abdullah bin `Umar: The Prophet SAW said, "A man keeps on asking others for something till he comes on the Day of Resurrection without any piece of flesh on his face." The Prophet SAW added, "On the Day of Resurrection, the Sun will come near (to, the people) to such an extent that the sweat will reach up to the middle of the ears, so, when all the people are in that state, they will ask Adam for help, and then Moses, and then Muhammad SAW." The sub-narrator added "Muhammad will intercede with Allah to judge amongst the people. He will proceed on till he will hold the ring of the door (of Paradise) and then Allah will exalt him to Maqam Mahmud (the privilege of intercession, etc.). And all the people of the gathering will send their praises to Allah. (al-Bukhari. Book of Zakat. Chapter: Whoever asks the people to increase his wealth. Hadith: 1474, 1475)

...'Surely! Allah wrongs not even of the weight of an atom (or a smallest ant) but if there is any good (done) He doubles it.' (4.40) The Prophet added, "Then the prophets and Angels and the believers will intercede, and (last of all) the Almighty (Allah) will say, 'Now remains My Intercession. He will then hold a handful of the Fire from which He will take out some people whose bodies have been burnt, and they will be thrown into a river at the entrance of Paradise, called the water of life. (al-Bukhari. The Book of Tawheed. Chapter: "Some faces that Day shall be Nadirah. Looking at their Lord. Hadith no: 7439).

⁷ Other verses cited: Maryam: 85-87, al-Anbiya: 25-29, Saba': 23, al-Zukhruf: 86, al-Najm: 26.

Discussion

According to the majority of the Muslim's belief, Allah SWT with his kindness has granted selected people the opportunity to mediate during the Day of Judgement. Among those who have given the chance to mediate are angels, prophets and pious people. There are abundance of evidences attested to the said matter. Al-Dzahabi has gathered more than fifty hadith as evidences for the intercessions⁸ in addition to the Qur'anic verses which have been mentioned above.

Concerning the Qur'anic verses on this matter, as we have seen above there are two types of verses; verses that assert there will be intercession and verses that deny it. According to the Islamic scholars, these verses do not contradict each rather they give a complete comprehension of intercession. Muqbil⁹ explains that the rebuttal verses¹⁰ refers to impermissible intercession, which is the intercession of the idols, and those who are worshipped other than Allah SWT. The idols do not have the blessings of Allah to save other people while they themselves are not safe. These verses also refer to the intercession for the *kuffar* (unbelievers) and it must be noted, according to the Muslims's belief, for a person to be worthy to be saved from hell, he must first be a Muslim in this world, hence intercession for the *kuffar* is denied, apart from one special case which is the uncle of the Prophet SAW, Abu Talib. Out of Allah's honor for the Prophet SAW, He has lessen the punishment on the Prophet's uncle¹¹. An example of impermissible intercession in the Qur'an is the intercession of Prophet Ibrahim AS for his father who was not a Muslim. The Qur'an says on the matter; *(And Ibrahim asking forgiveness for his sire was only owing to a promise which he had made to him; but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he declared himself to be clear of him; most surely Ibrahim was very tender-hearted forbearing. (al-Qur'an. al-Tawbah: 114).*

The right to intercede belongs solely to Allah SWT¹² and He is fully entitled to award His right of intercession to any of his creation which He had chosen to do so. The angels, the prophets and pious people are among those who are blessed by Allah SWT to mediate for others. Intercessors are not

associators of Allah rather they are only blessed creatures. Moreover, their intercessions are bounded to the will of Allah. Only those whom Allah sees as worthy will be saved by their intercessors. This is the understanding of al-Baqarah: 255, Yunus: 3 and Taha: 109.

On the rebuttal hadith cited by the critics, it does not actually deny the intercession of the Prophet SAW, it merely indicates that his intercession is bounded to the will of Allah SWT¹³. According to other attesting hadith, the Prophet SAW will intercede on the Day of Judgement subject to Allah's approval. It is also possible that the hadith occurred before he was granted Allah's permission. The Prophet SAW in this hadith wished to accentuate on the forbiddance of committing such an action which in this case is *Ghulul* (stealing from war booty)

The second rebuttal hadith substantiate our previous point that the intercession is not permissible for the unbelievers. Therefore the Prophet SAW insisted his family's tribe to embrace Islam in order for them to benefit from his intercession.

In conclusion, there is no contradiction between the two Quranic verses. Those alleged contradictory verses in fact give a perfect comprehension of intercession and the summary consists of two main points; firstly: Any intercession is subjected to Allah's SWT approval and it will only happen after Allah SWT has granted his permission. Second: No intercession will benefit the unbelievers with exception of Prophet Muhammad's SAW uncle, Abu Talib and even the Prophet's intercession will not save his uncle entirely rather it only lessens his punishment in hell. All the hadith cited by the critics must be interpreted according to this understanding.

Subject 2: The Treatment Towards Non-Muslims Parents¹⁴

The question on the relationship between a Muslim and his non-Muslim parents has been an issue to the critics. Stated below are the related verses to the topic:

﴿قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا

بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

⁸ See (al-Dzahabi (2000), 2000).

⁹ (Ibn Muqbil, 1999)p. 15-21.

¹⁰ He listed ten verses: al-Baqarah: 48, 254, al-An'am: 51, 70, Yunus 18, al-Shu'ara: 100-102, al-Sajdah: 4, Yasin: 23, al-Zumar: 43-44, Ghafir: 16.

¹¹ Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri: That he heard the Prophet SAW when somebody mentioned his uncle (i.e. Abu Talib), saying, "Perhaps my

intercession will be helpful to him on the Day of Resurrection so that he may be put in a shallow fire reaching only up to his ankles. His brain will boil from it." (al-Bukhari. Book of Merits of the Ansar. Chapter: The story of Abu Talib. Hadith no: 3885).

¹² See al-Zumar: 44.

¹³ see (Ibn Hajar, 1379H) vol. 6 p. 186.

¹⁴ See <http://www.answering-islam.org>.



(Say: Come I will recite what your Lord has forbidden to you-- (remember) that you do not associate anything with Him and show kindness to your parents, (al-Qur'an. al-An'am: 151).

﴿ وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصْلُ الْإِنْسَانِ فِي غَامِقِينَ ۖ وَإِنْ تُكَذِّبُوا عَلَيَّ إِنَّكُمْ لَأَعْيُنُنَا وَمَا لَكُمْ لِيَؤْتِكُمُ الْمَالَ ۖ قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُكُمْ لَخَسَفَ بِكُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۚ ﴾
﴿ وَإِنْ تُكَذِّبُوا عَلَيَّ إِنَّكُمْ لَأَعْيُنُنَا وَمَا لَكُمْ لِيَؤْتِكُمُ الْمَالَ ۖ قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُكُمْ لَخَسَفَ بِكُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۚ ﴾

(And We have enjoined man in respect of his parents- his mother bears him with faintings upon faintings and his weaning takes two years-- saying: Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual coming. And if they contend with you that you should associate with Me what you have no knowledge of, do not obey them, and keep company with them in this world kindly, and follow the way of him who turns to Me, then to Me is your return, then will I inform you of what you did. (al-Qur'an. Luqman: 14-15)

﴿ لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْتِ اللَّهَ بَشِرًا ذَلِيلًا ۚ ﴾
﴿ وَلَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْتِ اللَّهَ بَشِرًا ذَلِيلًا ۚ ﴾

(Let not the believers take the unbelievers for friends rather than believers; and whoever does this, he shall have nothing of (the guardianship of) Allah, but you should guard yourselves against them, guarding carefully; and Allah makes you cautious of (retribution from) Himself; and to Allah is the eventual coming. (al-Qur'an. Āli-'Imrān: 28).

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ كَانْتُمْ فِي أَعْيُنِنَا ۚ قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُكُمْ لَخَسَفَ بِكُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۚ ﴾
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سَبِيلِهِ فَنَرْبُّوهُ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الْفَاسِقِينَ ۚ ٢٤ ﴿

(O you who believe! do not take your fathers and your brothers for guardians if they love unbelief more than belief; and whoever of you takes them for a guardian, these it is that are the unjust. 24. Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your mates and your kinsfolk and property which you have acquired, and the slackness of trade which you fear and dwellings which you like, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait till Allah brings about His command: and Allah does not guide the transgressing people. (al-Qur'an. al-Taubah: 23-24)).

﴿ لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ
حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ
أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ۗ ... ٢٢ ﴿

(You shall not find a people who believe in Allah and the latter day befriending those who act in opposition to Allah and His Messenger, even though they were their (own) fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kinsfolk; .. (al-Qur'an. Al-Mujadilah: 22)).

The Qur'an in verse 151 in surah al-'An'am exhorts the believers to show kindness to their parents to the extent that the command is repeatedly listed right after the central command of Islam, which is to worship none but Allah. It gives special emphasis to it and can only mean that this command is to be taken very seriously. Furthermore, the Qur'an repeats this command in various ways, which shows the importance of the matter. The Qur'an even stressed in verse 14-15 in surah Luqman that even if the parents are non-believers who try to dissuade their children from following Islam, the Muslims still have to be kind to them. On the contrary, there are several verses such as Āli-'Imrān: 28, al-Mujadilah: 22 and al-Taubah: 23-24 which prohibit Muslims from loving and befriending unbelievers, even if they happen to be their own parents.

The critics also cited the story of Asyad bin Salamah and Abdullah bin Ubay bin Salul. Asyad bin Salamah was reported to contribute to the killing of his father in the battle against Qurata'. Ibn Saad reported: The Apostle of Allah SAW sent a force under al-Dahhāk



Ibn Sufyan Ibn 'Awf Ibn Abu Bakr al-Kilabi, against al-Qurata'. Al-Asyad ibn Salamah ibn Qart was with him. They encountered them at al-Zujj, the Zujj of Lawah and invited them to embrace Islam. They refused, so they attacked them and forced them to flee. Then al-Asyad met his father Salamah who was on his own horse, in a pond of al-Zujj. He invited his father to embrace Islam promising him amnesty. He (father) abused him and his creed. Consequently al-Asyad hamstrung the horse of his father. When the horse fell on his hoofs Salamah reclined on his spear in water. He (al-Asyad) held him till one of them (Muslims) came there and killed him. His son did not kill him.

Another incident was Abdullah bin Abdullah bin Ubay – the son of the chief of the hypocrites (munaqifin)- when he was reported to ask the permission from Rasullah SAW to kill his farther. al-Ṭabarī report on the story: Abdallah b. 'Abdallah b. Ubayy b. Salul came to the Messenger of God and said: "Messenger of God, I have been told that you want to kill 'Abdallah b. Ubayy because of what has been reported to you concerning him. If you are going to do it, command me to do it and I will bring you his head. By God, al-Khazraj know that there has never been among them a man more dutiful to his father than I. I am afraid that you may order someone else to do it and that he may kill him; and then my soul will not allow me to look on the slayer of 'Abdallah b. Ubayy walking among the people: I would kill him, killing a believer to avenge an unbeliever, and thereby enter the Fire [of Hell]." The Messenger of God said, "No, we will be gentle with him and associate with him on friendly terms as long as he stays with us."

Thus, after that day whenever he did anything objectionable, it was his own tribesmen who reproved him, corrected him, censured him, and threatened him. When word of how they were behaving reached the Messenger of God, he said to 'Umar b. al-Khattab: "What do you think, Umar? By God, had I killed him the day you ordered me to kill him, prominent men would have been upset, who, if I ordered them today to kill him, would do so." 'Umar said, "Now by God I know that what the Messenger of God ordered had more of a blessing in it that what I would have ordered".¹⁵

Both of the stories seem to vindicate the critic's claim that Islam discourage Muslims to continue family ties with their non-Muslims parents, hence the contradiction with Luqman: 14-15.

Discussion¹⁶

Islam is a religion which hugely emphasizes on the relationship between a son and his parents. It is an obligatory for a Muslim to respect and care for his parents, to show kindness and always fulfil their needs. There are many verses in the Qur'ān where Allah SWT stress on the importance of showing kindness to one's parent, to the extent that the command is repeatedly listed right after the central command of Islam, which is to worship none but Allah. There are also many of the sayings by the Prophet Muhammad SAW on this matter. Nonetheless, a Muslim must always abide to the boundaries set by Islam in any circumstances. To seek the blessings of Allah SWT and avoiding his wrath is always the utmost priority in the life of a Muslim. Should any other matter stand in contrast with this principle, a Muslim will always be in favour where the religion is concerned. On the issue, wherein the parents are non-believers and the son is a Muslim, it is clear in the Qur'ān that the son must always respect and show kindness to the parents even though they are non-Muslims. Should the parents advise him to leave his religion, the Muslim will have to ignore them but still befriend to them and fulfil their needs. If they are poor, the son must provide food and shelter for them. The son is also encouraged to convey the message of Islam to them in the most suitable way¹⁷.

The confusion that arose in the verses stated above is a result of misunderstanding of the terms used in each situation. It is important to differentiate between *Ihsan* (kindness) and *Musohabah* (befriend) to *Mawaddah* (love) and *wala'*. To befriend and to be kind is much more general than to love. The previous is in the category of outward action while the latter is more to inward emotions¹⁸. Hence, to be kind to someone does not require love or heartily attached to that person. For that matter, the Prophet SAW has allowed Asma' binti Abu Bakr to be kind to her mother although, she was then an unbeliever.¹⁹ As for *Wala'*, it gives a different

¹⁵ (Al-Ṭabarī, 1387H) vol 2, p. 608.

¹⁶ (Al-Syanqīfī, 1996) p 252, (Mausuāh Bayān al-Islām fī al-Radd 'āla al-Ifīrāāt wa al-Shubahāt., 2012) vol 7, p 173.

¹⁷ (Al-Qurṭubī, 1964) vol 14 p 65.

¹⁸ (Al-Syanqīfī, 1426H) p. 252.

¹⁹ Narrated Asma' bint Abu Bakr: My mother came to me during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger SAW and she was a pagan. I said to Allah's Apostle (seeking his verdict), "My mother has come to me and she desires to receive a reward from me, shall I keep good relations with her?" The Prophet SAW said, "Yes, keep

meaning than *Ihsan* or *Musohabah*. It gives the meaning of closeness, love, friendship, protection, assistance and alliance.²⁰ A *waliyy* usually supports, assist and protects its associate at all time and he usually stands in agreement with his associate. A Muslim is not permitted to be a *waliyy* with all its meaning to a non-Muslim because of the difference they have religious wise. The Qur'an prohibits Muslims to be attach completely to the Non-Muslims fearing that they will be in favour of the unbelievers on the expense of Islam²¹. It is the view of some commentators that verse 23-24 in surah al-Taubah was revealed during hijrah where some of the Muslims refrained from emigrating because of their families and trade.²² However, to be kind to a non-Muslim and to preserve their rights as a human being is an obligatory for a Muslims. Stated below several sayings from the Prophet Muhammad regarding the rights of the Non-Muslims. Narrated `Abdullah bin `Amr: The Prophet SAW said, "Whoever killed a Mu'ahid (a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims) shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years (of traveling). (Sahih al-Bukhari, Blood Money (Ad-Diyat), Chapter: The sin of a person who killed an innocent Dhimi, Hadith no 6516)

Narrated a number of Companions of the Prophet: Safwan reported from a number of Companions of the Messenger of Allah SAW on the authority of their fathers who were relatives of each other. The Messenger of Allah SAW said: "Beware, if anyone wrongs a contracting man, or diminishes his right, or forces him to work beyond his capacity, or takes from him anything without his consent, I shall plead for him on the Day of Judgment. (Abu Daud, Tribute, Spoils, and Rulership, Chapter: Levying the 'Ushur on Ahl A-Dhimmah if they deal in trade. Hadith no 3052).

Concerning the two stories; al-Asyad ibn Salamah and Abdullah ibn Abdillah bin Ubay, and in addition, another story of Abu Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah who indeed killed his father during the battle of Uhud. These stories, assuming they are authentic²³, do not substantiate the critics claim that Islam discourage family ties with non-Muslims parents. There are other stories how the Prophet SAW encourage the companions to respect their unbeliever parents such

the story of Aishah who stated the above and how the Prophet SAW respect Abu Quhafah, the father of Abu Bakr who embraced Islam on the day of *Fath Makkah*. Both stories referred to by the critics illustrates what we have asserted above, that when it comes to a conflict between family ties and the benefit of Islam, a Muslim must always favor the religion. Al-Asyad bin Salamah helped with his father's killing in a battle, while Abdullah bin Ubai who was the chief of hypocrites, has hurt the Islamic community from within and even so, the Prophet SAW did not approve his request. Another way to understand the relationship between a Muslim and his non-Muslims parents, is that during conflict with non-Muslims, he must refer to al-Taubah: 23-24 whilst in peaceful times, Luqman: 14 applies.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there is no contradiction on the verses above. The interpretation of the verses needs to consider the different terms used in different situation. *Ihsan* (kindness) and *Musahabah* (befriend) is different to *Mawaddah* (love) and *Wala* (alliance). The flaw in the method used by the critics is to equal two different types of actions, hence the contradictions. The Qur'an urge the Muslims to be kind to their parents at all times especially when they are also Muslims. In the event where the parents are non-Muslims, there are certain limitations to the relationship. However, a Muslim must always show kindness and respect them but they must not let their affections for their Non-Muslims parents deviate them from the right path. Their love for Allah must always surpass any other love for anyone even for themselves. The Prophet SAW said, "By Him in Whose Hands my life is, none of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father and his children. (Sahih Bukhari, the book of Belief, Chapter: To love the Messenger (Muhammad saws) is a part of faith, Hadith no 14). These stories support our statement where a Muslim must always favor his religion in the time of conflicts.

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²⁰ (Raghib al-Asfahani, 1412H) vol.1 p. 881, (Al-Ghazali, 1987) p.129, (al-Qahtani, 1988) p. 90, (Al-Burkati, 2012) p. 4, (Al-Auniy)p.3.

²¹ (Al-Maraghi, 1946) vol.3 p.136,

²² (Al-Tabari, 2000) vol.14 p.175, (Al-Baghawi, 1997) vol.2 p.328, (Al-Qurtubi, 1964) vol.8 pg 93-95, (Al-Mahalli, 2001) p. 214.

²³ Al-Waqidi, a renown Islamic historian disputed the fact that Abu 'Ubaidah killed his father claiming that the latter died before the revelation of Islam. (Ibn 'Asakir, 1995)



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