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تحلیل ساختاری منحصر به فرد انسجام سوره آل عمران در پرتو نظریه نظم مقارن؛ جلوه‌ای از اعجاز لغوی- معنایی قرآن کریم

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چکیده

قرآن کریم، کتاب مقدس مسلمانان، به عنوان معجزه پیامبر اسلام (ص) شناخته می‌شود. از این رو، در طی ۱۴ قرن اخیر محققان و اندیشمندان بسیاری به بررسی جنبه‌های گوناگون اعجاز قرآن پرداخته‌اند. در دهه‌های اخیر، یکی از شاخه‌های برجسته در مطالعات قرآنی که هم در میان دانشمندان مسلمان و هم در میان مستشرقان مورد توجه قرار گرفته، تحقیقات نوین در زمینه کشف ابعاد جدیدی از بررسی ساختاری لغوی- معنایی و به‌ویژه نظم در قرآن کریم است. در این راستا، مطالعاتی که بر پایه نظم مقارن استوار هستند، توانسته‌اند جایگاه ویژه‌ای را در این حوزه کسب کنند. سوره آل عمران سومین سوره و از سوره‌های مدنی قرآن است که در دو جزء سوم و چهارم جای دارد. مقاله حاضر، با استفاده از رویکرد توصیفی و تحلیلی، به بررسی و تحلیل نظم ساختاری سوره آل عمران می‌پردازد. این تحقیق ابتدا به تعریف و معرفی مفهوم نظریه نظم مقارن می‌پردازد و سپس با تجزیه و تحلیل بلاغی، به بررسی سوره آل عمران می‌پردازد. این سوره به یازده بخش تقسیم شده و نظم مقارن حلقوی آن با استفاده از یک الگوی کلی و جامع از ترتیب و ارتباط درونی بخش‌های سوره اثبات شده است. اثبات وجود یک ساختار منظم حلقوی در سوره آل عمران نشان‌دهنده عمق و دقت بی‌نظیر در ساختار قرآن کریم و از جنبه‌های اعجاز می‌باشد.

واژه‌های کلیدی

قرآن کریم، سوره آل عمران، بلاغت سامی، نظم معکوس، ترکیب حلقوی، صنعت قلب.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

A Unique Structural Analysis of the Coherence of Surah Āl-e 'Imrān in Light of the Theory of Symmetrical Order: An Aspect of the Linguistic-Semantic Miracle of the Holy Qur'an

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ABSTRACT

The Holy Qur'an, the sacred book of Muslims, is recognized as the miracle of the Prophet of Islam (pbuh). Therefore, over the past 14 centuries, numerous scholars and thinkers have devoted themselves to studying the various aspects of the Qur'an's inimitability (I'jāz). In recent decades, one prominent field in Qur'anic studies attracting Muslim scholars and Orientalists is innovative research in discovering new dimensions of the linguistic-semantic structure, particularly the order in the Qur'an. Surah Āl-e 'Imrān is the third Surah and one of the Medinan Surahs of the Qur'an, located in the third and fourth Juz' (sections) of the Qur'an. This study, using a descriptive and analytical approach, examines the structural order of Surah Āl-e 'Imrān. It begins by defining and introducing the concept of symmetric order theory, followed by a rhetorical analysis of Surah Āl-e 'Imrān. This Surah is divided into eleven sections, and its circular symmetric order is proven using a comprehensive pattern of sequence and internal connection among its sections. Proving the existence of a circular structured order in Surah Āl-e 'Imrān demonstrates the unparalleled depth and precision in the structure of the Qur'an.

KEYWORDS

Holy Qur'an, Surah Āl-e 'Imrān, Semitic Rhetoric, Concentric Composition, Art of Inversion.

1. Introduction

The question of the Qur'an's order arose early in the Islamic world. Muslim scholars initially endeavoured to prove the Qur'an's textual coherence by producing works on "Order of the Qur'an," "Correlation of Verses and Surahs," and "Miracles of the Qur'an." Among the classical works on this subject are "Mafatih al-Ghayb" by Fakhr Rōdī (d. 606) (Fakhr Rōdī, 1420 AH), "Bada'i al-Qur'an wa Kawakib al-Durriyah fi Nazm al-Qawa'id al-Diniyyah" by Ibn Abi al-Asba' (d. 654) (Ibn Abi al-Asba', 1383 AH), and "Nazm al-Durar fi Tanasub al-Ayat wa al-Suwar" by Burhan al-Din Ibrahim ibn Muhammad Baqā'ī (d. 885) (Baqā'ī, 1415 AH).

In the contemporary era, many non-Muslim orientalist, such as Richard Bell, Arthur John Arberry, Goldziher, and Gustave Le Bon, have regarded the Qur'an, especially in its longer Medinan Surahs, as lacking structural and thematic coherence, as there seems to be no connection between the various topics presented within a Surah. For example, Arthur John Arberry (1955) (Arberry, 1955) writes in his Qur'an translation's introduction, "The Qur'an is far from any coherence related to the order of revelation and also from logical coherence. The reader of the Qur'an, especially if forced to rely on one of the translations, although linguistically accurate, will undoubtedly be astonished by the disordered state of many Surahs."

Recent Western scholarship has seen a significant increase in understanding the thematic coherence and structural unity of the Qur'anic Surahs. For example, Michel Cuypers demonstrates the value of using symmetry, correlation, and circular composition methods in analyzing Qur'anic verses (Cuypers, 2009: 56). However, such studies have been criticized

by researchers like Nicolai Sinai (Sinai, 2017: 55-57) for neglecting the actual text in discovering circular composition.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the symmetric order of the Qur'an's structure. The research started with Angelika Neuwirth in 1980, followed by Mustansir Mir in 1986, examining the coherence in the Qur'an. His study focused on the Qur'anic order from Amin Ahsan Islahi's perspective. Neuwirth's research emphasized symmetry in short Meccan Surahs. Mustansir Mir (2000) and Javad Anwar Qureshi (2017), following Neuwirth, explored symmetry in long Meccan Surahs. Michel Cuypers also pointed out the existence of symmetry in long Medinan Surahs, indicating the remarkable order in their structure.

Recently, an article in the Qur'anic-Literary Research journal titled "A Study of Semitic Rhetoric and Rules of Symmetrical Order in Surah As-Saf" challenges Cuypers' symmetric order theory (Ahmadiyar et al. 2022: 26-63). Also, Hosseini Kashani discusses "Reading Surah Hal-Ati based on the theory of 'symmetrical order' Cuypers" in his article (Hosseini Kashani, 2021: 67-92). Research like "Discourse Genres in Ruku'at (Case Study of Surah Al-Baqarah)" by Ahmad Zare Zardini et al. in 2019 explores symmetric order in Surah Baqarah. Additionally, Nevin Rida (2017) has analyzed the structure of Surah Baqarah in her book.

Regarding Surah Āl-e 'Imrūn, research history includes Zahniser's work titled "God's Word (Zahniser, 1991: 77-112) and Jesus's Mission: Narrative Analysis of Āl-e 'Imrūn and Aesthetics of Narrative Structure of Surah Āl-e 'Imrūn" by Nevin Reda (2021), addressing its structural coherence.

This research initially discusses symmetric order theory and ultimately examines the structural order of Surah Āl-e 'Imrān with an analytical and content-based approach, along with word correlation.

2. Research Methodology

In the research methodology section, the library-based approach is utilized as a primary method for data collection and analysis. This method involves the comprehensive study and analysis of textual sources, including books, scientific articles, and religious documents. Initially, pertinent primary and secondary sources are identified and selected. To this end, academic libraries, online databases, and other credible sources are extensively used. Subsequently, through rigorous and systematic techniques, vital information and key data are extracted. This process facilitates the orderly management and accessibility of the collected data, which is later utilized for detailed analysis and interpretation.

3. Theory of Symmetric Order

Scholars who believe in the Qur'an's coherence are convinced that the textual units of Surahs, contrary to their initial appearance, are presented in a continuous structure, forming a cohesive whole. They explain symmetric order by pointing out repetitions in the text. They believe these repetitions in the Qur'an create symmetry and order in the text.

Although the theory of symmetric order originates from Western research dating back about 250 years, its application in literary Qur'anic research does not exceed three decades. This theory, also called "rhetorical analysis," explains textual order (feast; reading from the fifth Surah of the Qur'an).

By identifying the existing relationships among textual elements, rhetorical analysis seeks to prove coherence and order and determine the different forms of symmetry that constitute the text.

Researchers identify three text composition patterns based on symmetric order:

3.1 Parallel Structure (Parallelism or parallel construction): Different textual units are repeated in the same initial order in this structure. ('C'B'A/ABC).

A Qur'anic example of this structure is part of the verse

«الزَّانِي لَا يَنْكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَالزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ»

which contains parallel symmetric order. As observed, the symmetric order of this verse section is such that the phrases "*al-zānī*", "*lā yankihu*", and "*aw mushrikatan*" are correspondingly and symmetrically repeated as "*al-zānīyata*", "*wa lā yankihuhā*", and "*aw mushrikin*".

3.2 Concentric Composition (Circular or ring composition): This structure is formed when the textual units are arranged in a concentric circle. (ABC/X/ 'C'B'A).

A Qur'anic example of this structure is Āyat al-Kursī, which has a circular symmetric structure:

"اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ (A) لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ (B) لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ (C) مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ (D) يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ (E) وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ (') (D) وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ (C) وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا (B) وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ (A)'"

The symmetric order of this verse is such that part A (*Allah lā ilāha illā huw al-hayy al-qayyūm*) corresponds with part A' (*wa huw al-*

'alī al-'azīm), as both refer to two divine attributes. Part B (*lā ta'khudhuh-u sinatun wa lā nawm*) corresponds with part B' (*wa lā ya'ouduh-u hifzahumā*). Similarly, part C (*lahou mā fi al-samāwāt wa mā fi al-'ard*) corresponds with part C' (*wasi'a kursīyyuh-u al-samāwāt wal-'ard*). Part D (*man dha al-ladhī yashfa'-u 'indahū 'illā bi 'idhnihi*) corresponds with part D' (*wa lā yuhītouna bi shay'in min 'ilmih-i 'illā bi mā shā'*). Part E (*ya'lam-u mā bayn-a 'aydihim wa mā khalfahum*) is recognized as the central part of this verse.

3.3 Inverse Order (Mirror composition or Chiasmus)

Applied when the same circular structure exists but without the asymmetrical middle part. (ABC/CBA)

A Qur'anic example of this symmetry is part of verse 187 from Surah Baqarah:

« هُنَّ (A) لِبَاسٌ (B) لَكُمْ (C) وَأَنْتُمْ (C') لِبَاسٌ (B') »
 « (A') هُنَّ »

As observed, the symmetric order of this verse section is such that parts A and A' with the phrases "*hunna*" and "*lahunna*" correspond with each other. Parts B and B' with the phrase "*libāsun*" overlap entirely, and parts C and C' with the phrases "*lakum*" and "*'antum*" both denote a plural male second-person pronoun.

4. Introduction to Surah Āl-e 'Imrān

Surah Āl-e 'Imrān, the third Surah and among the Medinan Surahs of the Qur'an, is located in the third and fourth parts. This Surah is named Āl-e 'Imrān due to the mention of 'Imrān (father of Mary) and his family. Surah Āl-e 'Imrān has 200 verses, 3508 words, and 14984 letters. It is the second Surah among the Muqatta'ūt (disjointed letters) Surahs, starting with the disjointed letters "A-L-M" (Sarmadi, 2017: 679), and after Surah Baqarah and Surah Nisā', it is the third largest Surah of the Qur'an,

covering about one and a half part of the Qur'an, and is counted among the 'seven long' Surahs. This Surah and Surah Baqarah are collectively called 'Zahrāwān' (Khorramshahi, 1998: 1236)

The title "Āl-e 'Imrān" in this Surah refers to 'Imrān, the father of Moses; however, it is better to say it refers to 'Imrān, the father of Mary (pbuh). According to narrators and historians, there is a significant time gap between the 'Imrāns. This fact is confirmed by God Almighty's report on the selection of the family of 'Imrān: "And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. When the wife of 'Imrān said: 'Lord, I dedicate what is in my womb to Your service...' and about the selection of Mary (pbuh), it states: "And [mention] when the angels said, 'O Mary, indeed Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the worlds.' " (Āl-e 'Imrān/42) "And then when the angels said: 'O Mary! Undoubtedly, God has chosen you, purified you, and specially selected you among all women of the world.'" The 'Imrān mentioned in this Surah is the father of Mary (pbuh), and the family of 'Imrān refers to Jesus (peace be upon him) and Mary (Tabātabā'ī, 1972: 3/167)

Tabrisī, in his commentary "Majma' al-Bayan," narrates a tradition from the Prophet (pbuh) stating, "Whoever recites Surah Āl-e 'Imrān, God will grant him safety from passing over the bridge of Hell for each verse." He also narrates another tradition from the Prophet, "Whoever recites Surah Āl-e 'Imrān on Fridays until sunset, God and His angels send blessings upon him." (Tabrisī, 1993: 2/693)

5. Structural Coherence of Surah Āl-e 'Imrān

The order of Surah Āl-e 'Imrān is circular (ABCDE/F/E'D'C'B'A'). This Surah can be divided into 11 parts, where ten parts

correspond in pairs (A and A', B and B', etc.) in terms of linguistic and semantic structure, and the eleventh part (F) has a unique structure. We will examine the relationship between the corresponding sections and the structure of the central section (F) in six parts:

5.1 The Order between Sections A and A'

5.1.1 Section A (v1-9): Reminder of the written verses for those with understanding, who have various requests from God and believe that He does not break His promise

That is a reminder of the written verses for the wise, who have various desires from God and believe that He does not break promises (verses 1-9).

This section begins with attention to the written verses, the revelation of the Qur'an to the Prophet (pbuh) affirming the previous scriptures and introducing the purpose of the revelation of the Qur'an, Torah, and Gospel as guiding people. It warns disbelievers of severe punishment for denying divine signs (verses 3:1-4). It then categorizes Qur'anic verses into clear (Muhkam) and ambiguous (Mutashābih), considering the clear ones as the foundation of the book (the Qur'an). Those with deviation in their hearts follow the ambiguous verses, seeking discord and interpretation, but the firmly grounded in knowledge believe in all verses (clear and ambiguous) from God. Only the wise heed the divine signs (verse 3:7). These wise people have various requests from God, like not allowing their hearts to deviate after guidance and asking for His mercy. They believe God does not break His promises (verses 3:7-9).

«هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ

كُلُّ مَنْ عِنْدَ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ * رَبَّنَا لَا تَزِفْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ * رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَأَ رَيْبَ فِيهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِعَادَ»

5.1.2 Section A' (v189-200): Reminder of the cosmic verses for those with understanding, who have various requests from God and believe that He does not break His promise

Reminding of cosmic verses for the wise, who have various desires from God and believe that He does not break promises (verses 189-200).

This section refers to cosmic signs, including the creation of heavens and earth and the alternation of night and day, as reminders for the wise. These wise individuals remember God in all positions and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth. They have various requests from God, like being saved from the Hellfire, forgiveness of sins, covering their misdeeds, being among the righteous, granting what His messengers promised, and not being disgraced on the Day of Judgment. Ultimately, their Lord answers their prayers and rewards them with Paradise. The Surah ends with three pieces of advice: patience, perseverance, and piety towards believers.

«إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لَأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ * الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ * رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَنْ تَدْخُلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْرَجْتَهُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ * رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ * رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِعَادَ» (١٩٤:٣ – ١٩٥)

5.2 The Order between Sections B and B'

5.2.1 Section B (v10-30): The ultimate fate of disbelievers and believers in the hereafter and the absence of injustice towards them

The hereafter outcomes of disbelievers and believers and no injustice to them (verses 10-30).

The first part of this section addresses the contrasts between faith and disbelief and their hereafter outcomes, emphasizing that their reward and punishment in the afterlife are based on their deeds, with no injustice to them. It states that wealth and children will not prevent disbelievers from punishment in the hereafter, as exemplified by the people of Pharaoh and those before them who suffered severely for denying divine signs and their sins (verses 3:10-11). It then refers to the Battle of Badr, where Muslims triumphed over disbelievers, as a lesson for the insightful. The subsequent verses describe worldly pleasures like women, sons, heaps of gold and silver, branded horses, cattle, and farmland as adornments of this life. It invites people to better things in the hereafter, prepared for the righteous who exhibit qualities like patience, truthfulness, obedience, charity, and seeking forgiveness for sins, emphasizing that Paradise and God's pleasure are the ultimate rewards (verses 3:14-17). The section ends by warning believers against coming under the domination or patronage of disbelievers.

«فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَاهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ» (٢٥:٣)

5.2.2 Section B' (v176-188): The ultimate fate of disbelievers and believers in the hereafter, and the absence of injustice towards them

The hereafter outcomes of disbelievers and believers and no injustice to them (verses 176-188).

The second part of this section also addresses the contrasts between faith and disbelief and their outcomes in the afterlife, assessing each based on the scale of justice and

without injustice. It encourages the Prophet and believers not to grieve seeing people hastening toward disbelief, as they cannot harm God and will face a great punishment in the afterlife (verse 3:176). Those who exchanged faith for disbelief will also face a painful punishment (verse 3:177). The delay granted to disbelievers in this life only increases their sins, leading to a humiliating punishment (verse 3:178). Hoarding wealth will be a burden for them on Judgment Day (verse 3:180). God heard the disbelievers' claim of being wealthy and not needing God and will account for their wrongful killing of prophets and those who ordered justice, resulting in a painful punishment in the hereafter (verses 3:181-182). The section emphasizes that every soul will taste death. Total compensation will be given on the Day of Resurrection. Those saved from the Fire and admitted to Paradise are genuinely successful (verse 3:185)

«ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ»
 «كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفُّونَ أُجُورَكُمْ
 يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ» (١٨٥:٣)

5.3 The Order between Sections C and C'

5.3.1 Section C (v31-34): Obedience to God and the Prophet and invitation to God's love for the forgiveness of sins

Obedience to God and the Prophet and the call to love God for forgiveness of sins (verses 31-34). The first part of this section emphasizes obedience to God and the Prophet, leading to God's love for the obedient. The Prophet (pbuh) is commanded to tell believers that if they love God, they should follow him (the Prophet), so God will love them and forgive their sins (verse 3:31). God also commands that believers should obey God and the Prophet. If they turn away, they should know that God does not love the disbelievers (verse 3:32). The section

continues by naming some of God's chosen prophets whom He loves: Adam, Noah, the family of Abraham, and then,

«قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ * قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ» (٣:٣٢-٣١)

5.3.2 Section C' (v130-175): The consequences of not obeying God and the Prophet in the Battle of Uhud and an invitation to good morals for the forgiveness of sins

Consequences of Disobeying God and the Prophet in the Battle of Uhud and Inviting to Good Ethics for Forgiveness of Sins (Verses 130-175)

The second part of the third section also emphasizes obedience to God and the Prophet, inviting believers to adopt good ethics to attain forgiveness for their sins. It begins by urging obedience to God and the Messenger, as this would bring mercy upon the believers (verse 3:132). The believers are encouraged to hasten towards forgiveness from their Lord and a Paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the righteous (Verse 3:133). They are reminded to engage in good deeds even in times of prosperity and adversity, suppress anger, pardon people, and seek forgiveness from God immediately after committing a sin or wronging themselves, without persisting in it knowingly (Verses 3:136).

The section then recounts the Battle of Uhud, highlighting the consequences of disobeying the Prophet (pbuh). The believers are advised not to be weak-hearted or grieve, as such feelings result from disobedience to God and the Prophet during the battle (verse 3:139). They are reminded of their human frailties. That entry into Paradise is not possible without patience and striving in the way of God (verse

3:142). The believers are further reminded that if Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) were to be martyred or pass away, they should not turn away from their faith, as such a reversal would not harm God. It is emphasized that every soul shall taste death only by God's will and that God is capable of granting rewards in this world and the hereafter to whom He pleases (verses 3:144-145). The section also praises many prophets who, along with their followers, struggled in the path of God without showing weakness, defeat, or submission to the enemy. Their words were nothing but seeking forgiveness for their sins, persistence in struggle, and victory over the disbelievers (verses 3:146-147). It warns that believers will face loss and harm if they obey the disbelievers instead of God and His Messenger. They are reminded that their only protector and helper should be God (verses 3:149-150). The subsequent verses, which are not detailed here for brevity, further elaborate on these themes.

«وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ * وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ * الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظِ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ * وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرِ اللَّهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ * أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ» (٣:١٣٦-١٣٢)

5.4 Coordination between sections D and D'

5.4.1 Section D (v35-60): Divine miracles

The first part of the fourth section refers to several extraordinary events and miracles, including:

1. Prophet Zechariah (AS) found summer fruits in winter and winter fruits in summer when visiting Mary (SA) in her sanctuary.

Zechariah asks Mary where this provision came from, and she replies that God provides without measure to whom He wills (3:37).

2. The acceptance of Prophet Zechariah's prayer by God for a righteous child (3:38).
3. The sign of Zechariah's becoming a father was his inability to speak to people (3:41).
4. Jesus (AS) speaks to people from his cradle (3:46).
5. The miraculous birth of Jesus (AS) without a father, with Mary (SA) questioning how she could have a child when no man had touched her. The response was that it is easy for God, who creates what He wills, commanding "Be," and it is (3:47).
6. Some of Jesus's (AS) extraordinary deeds, like creating a bird from clay and bringing it to life with God's permission, curing congenital blindness and leprosy, and reviving the dead (3:49).
7. The ascension of Jesus (AS) to God (3:55). This part also mentions angels and their glad tidings in these miracles, like angels giving glad tidings to Zechariah and Mary about their children.

«لَمَّا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكَ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ * هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ * فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصْرًا وَنَبِيًّا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ * قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْرًا» (٣٧-٤١:٣) «إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ * وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ * قَالَتِ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَى أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ * وَرَسُولًا إِلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

وَأُورِي الْأَكْمَهَ وَاللَّبْرَمَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ * إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ خُذْ زِينَتَكَ وَرَافِعَكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهَّرَكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ» (٤٥-٥٥:٣)

5.4.2 Section D'(122-129): Divine miracles

The second part of the fourth section also refers to several extraordinary events and miracles, such as:

1. God's assistance in the Battle of Badr despite the believers being fewer and having limited war resources (3:123).
2. Believers are aided by three thousand angels (3:124).
3. By the patience and piety of believers, five thousand angels rushed to their aid (3:125).

This part also mentions the presence of angels and their glad tidings in divine miracles. «وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ * إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آلافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنَزَّلِينَ * بَلَى إِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّنْ فَوْرِهِمْ هَذَا يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ * وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَى لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُم بِهِ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ» (١٢٣-١٢٦:٣)

5.5 Coordination between sections E and E':

5.5.1 Section E (v61-103)

The Qur'an's Strategy for Muslim Interaction with the People of the Book (61-103):

This section addresses the varied groups among Jews and Christians, suggesting different strategies for engagement. It mentions the story of Prophet Jesus (AS) and the debate with the Christians of Najran, whom the Prophet invited for Mubahala (a form of mutual cursing). However, they declined (3:61). The

Prophet then invites the People of the Book to agree on a common word, to worship none but God, and not to take others as lords besides Him. If they turn away, Muslims are to declare their submission to God (3:64). Subsequent verses discuss Prophet Abraham (AS), arguing that he was neither a Jew nor a Christian but a monotheist, to counter the claims of the People of the Book. It is stated that those closest to Abraham followed him, Prophet Muhammad and believers of his time (3:65-68). The People of the Book are then divided into two groups: one that desires to lead Muslims astray and another that faithfully returns entrusted wealth, contrasting their integrity and faith in God (3:75).

« وَمِنَ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بدينارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قائماً ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذْبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ (٣:٧٥) »

5.5.2 Section E' (v110-121): The Qur'an's Strategy for Muslim Interaction with the People of the Book

This section continues to discuss different groups among the People of the Book. One group is characterized as having faith, while the other is described as disobedient and causing harm. The latter is said not to cause significant harm to Muslims and to flee from battle. Their destiny is marked by humiliation and divine wrath due to their disbelief and unjust killing of prophets (3:111-112). In contrast, the first

group among the People of the Book is portrayed positively, as they recite God's verses at night, believe in God and the Last Day, and encourage good deeds (3:113-115).

«... وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ - لَنْ يَضُرُّوكُمْ إِلَّا أَذًى وَإِنْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ يُؤَلُّوكُمُ الْأَذْيَارَ ثُمَّ لَّا يُنصِرُونَ - ضَرَبْتُ عَلَيْهِمُ الذَّلَّةَ أَيْنَ مَا تَقَفُوا إِلَّا بِحَبْلِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَضَرَبْتُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةَ ذَلِكَ بَأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ - لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مَنْ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ - يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ - وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُكْفَرُوهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ» (١١٥:٣-١١٠)

5.6 The Central Unified Section (Section F) (v104-109): Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong

This section, the central part of the Surah, states that a group of believers should invite people to goodness, command righteous deeds, and prevent wrongdoings. Those who possess these qualities will attain salvation and success (3:104). Following this, the section mentions those with bright faces in paradise and those with darkened faces in hell due to their actions and conduct (3:106-108).

«وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ» (١٠٤:٣)

Table 1. Summary of the Circular Structure of Surah Āl-e 'Imrān

§	Description	Verse
A	A reminder of the written verses for those with understanding, who have various requests from God and believe that He does not break His promise	1-9

B	The ultimate fate of disbelievers and believers in the hereafter and the absence of injustice toward them	10-30
C	Obedience to God and the Prophet and invitation to God's love for the forgiveness of sins	31-34
D	Divine miracles	35-60
E	The Qur'an's strategy for Muslims' interaction with the People of the Book	61-103
F	Commanding right and forbidding wrong	104-109
E'	The Qur'an's strategy for Muslims' interaction with the People of the Book	110-121
D'	Divine miracles	122-129
C'	The consequences of not obeying God and the Prophet in the Battle of Uhud, and invitation to good morals for the forgiveness of sins	130-175
B'	The ultimate fate of disbelievers and believers in the hereafter, and the absence of injustice towards them	176-188
A'	Reminder of the cosmic verses for those with understanding, who have various requests from God and believe that He does not break His promise	189-200

6. Conclusion

Initially, Qur'anic recitation may seem a mere straightforward and continuous process. However, a more profound and comprehensive examination of the text reveals coherence and harmony among the various sections of the Qur'anic Surahs, the result of an intricate and meticulous structure based on a symmetrical order. In this research, we have elucidated the specific sequence and arrangement in Surah Āl-e 'Imrān through meticulous scrutinizing and analysis of the structure. The study demonstrated the existence of a cohesive 11-part circular structure, with ten sections correlating in pairs, both linguistically and thematically, and a single distinct section interspersed among these 10. Despite the theoretical divergences among exegetes and scholars in Qur'anic sciences, these findings allowed us to substantiate the complexity and structural precision inherent in Surah Āl-e 'Imrān, the third chapter of the Holy Qur'an, thereby unveiling new dimensions of the depth and beauty of this Surah.

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