# The Message in the Story of the Prophet Sham'un AS From the Perspective of the Interpretation of Al-Qurțubī

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# Abstract

Prophet is a messenger from Allah SWT to convey several messages to all mankind. Equipped with knowledge and advantages such as miracles to melt the hearts of humans so that they obey and obey him. There are several prophets and apostles who are very familiar because the Qur'an has told about them or mentioned their names. Like the 25 prophets who are commonly known and often taught in various schools, from the prophet Adam to the prophet Muhammad SAW. Apart from that, there are many more prophets and apostles that we can know about and study their lives in fighting for Allah's religion. Imam al-Qurtubī explains in his interpretation of Surah Yasin verse 14 that there was a Prophet who was sent to spread monotheism in a kingdom until he struggled in various ways to spread the religion of monotheism to the king and his people. The prophet is said to be named Syam'un. Prophet Syam'un was a prophet who was sent not long after the prophet Isa AS was lifted up by Allah SWT to heaven. For westerners, the story of the prophet Syam'un is quite familiar as it tells of various struggles to bring the religion of monotheism after the prophet Isa AS. Western people call Sham'un Samson. Studying the Qaşaş al-Qur'an is certainly an effort to deepen the sciences of the Koran. Apart from that, Qaşaş al-Qur'an also has its own appeal for readers, especially young people who are interested in past history and stories of role models in ancient times. This research is library research which focuses on library data, tafsir books, journal articles and various other tafsir literature using qualitative methods. Data collection techniques use documentation techniques by collecting as much data as possible to be analyzed and explained clearly. To analyze the data that the author has obtained using descriptive analysis. The theory used uses historical theory or Qaşaş al-Qur'an which is a scientific discipline from the Ulumul Qur'an. From the research results obtained, the researcher concluded that the prophetic message from the story of the Prophet Sham'un As in the tafsir of al-Qurtubī includes an invitation for people to believe in Allah SWT, to always rely on Allah SWT when we do something, an invitation to thank Allah SWT for all His gifts, to always maintain our trust and keep the promises we have been given and there are many other prophetic messages contained in the story of the Prophet Syam'un As. Keywords: Prophet Sham'un, Prophetic Message, al-Qurtubī

## A. Introduction

The holy Al-Qur'an which was brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, as a guide for Muslims, does not only discuss various ubudiyyah issues. The Qur'an also explains various stories of previous role models, whether prophets or figures in a people, so that they can be lessons for future generations.<sup>1</sup> There is even the 28th serial number of the Qur'an named al-Qaṣaṣ, which means stories or narratives of previous peoples.<sup>2</sup> There are 25 prophets and apostles whose names we usually hear because the Qur'an has clearly mentioned the names of these prophets and apostles.

Adam, Idris ,Nuh, Hud, Sholeh, Ibrohim, Luth, Ismail, Ishaq, Ya'qub, Yusuf, Ayyub, Syu'aib, Harun, Musa, Ilyasa', Dzulkifli, Daud, Sulaiman, Ilyas, Yunus, Zakariyya, Yahya, 'Isa, dan Nabi Muhammad Saw.".<sup>4</sup>

The names of the prophets and apostles above are only a small part of the large number of prophets and apostles that exist. The Qur'an uses many global sentences, so it needs further explanation by the interpreters to find out the meaning stored in it. The stories in the Koran are quite dominant and have high urgency for every Muslim and non-Muslim, such as the story of the Prophet Musa AS who was chased by Pharaoh and his army until he drowned in the Red Sea. The discovery of various pieces of evidence, such as the wheels of Pharaoh's army chariots and various other war equipment preserved in the Red Sea, indicates that the stories in the Koran are not just fictional stories or made-up fairy tales.

One of the many works of tafsir which contains various interesting stories in the Qur'an is the book of tafsir "Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān" by Imam al-Qurtubī, which is more famous under the name Tafsir al-Qurtubī. Apart from being known to contain a lot of Sharia laws, this book of tafsir also tells a lot of prophetic or prophetic stories because al-Qurtubī's attention to prophetic interpretation was also high so that he told many stories of the prophet in his tafsir in more detail than several other commentators. This book of tafsir has become a source of tafsir literature which is usually studied by the academic community in studying the verses of the Qur'an, especially in the discipline of sharia law or fiqh. The author of the book of tafsir al-Qurtubī is Abû Abdillah Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Qurtubī. al-Qurtubī is one of the many tafsir scholars who has had a great influence on the development of Islamic science and treasures.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Abd Haris, "Kajian Kisah-kisah dalam Al-Qur'an (Tinjauan Historis dalam Memahami Al-Qur'an)", *Jurnal Penelitian dan Pemikiran Islam*, 5.1(2018), hlm. 60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Bunyanul Arifin, "Metode Kisah dalam Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah dan Urgensinya dalam Pendidikan Karakter", *Tadarus Tarbawy*, 1.2 (2019), hlm. 110

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Ahmad marzuqi, *Aqidatul Awam* (Kudus: Perc. Menara kudus, tt), hlm. 15-16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Dwi ratnasari, Sejarah nabi-nabi dalam Al-Qur'an1.1, Komunika, (2011) hlm. 1

### **B.** Discussion

# 1) The story of the Prophet Sham'un AS. in Tafsir al-Qurțubī

The holy book Al-Qur'an tells many stories about the Prophets and Apostles. Some of the Prophet's stories are told in detail, others are only mentioned by name, or are even mentioned implicitly so that interpreters need information to understand and study his life story and several other stories from exemplary figures whose prophethood cannot be ascertained.

Prophet Syam'un AS is a prophet who may not be familiar among the Muslim community. The name of the Prophet Sham'un AS is also not mentioned in the Koran. But that doesn't mean the Koran never tells the story. Imam al-Qurtubī in his interpretation told the story of the Prophet Sham'un from several verses of the Koran. The Qur'an only tells it implicitly in various letters and requires further explanation by the interpreters to find out more about the story. Because of Imam al-Qurtubī's great attention to prophetic stories in the Koran, he told many prophetic or prophetic stories from the Koran, including the story of the Prophet Sham'un AS.

# a. Interpretation of al-Qurțubī in QS. Yasin verse 14

Prophet Syam'un AS is a prophet sent by Allah SWT to the people of Israel. Before being appointed as a prophet, Syam'un still had the name Syamwil. Then when he reached the age of 40, Allah SWT elevated him to the status of a prophet. Allah SWT ordered the angel Gabriel to meet Syamwil. Then somewhere, when Syamwil was alone, Jibril came calling Syam'un. Meanwhile, there was no one there besides him. Then Jibril told him to purify himself and called on the people of Israel to worship Allah SWT and follow the teachings of the prophet Isa AS and the holy book Torah. At that time, Syam'un was elevated to the status of a prophet to call on the people of Israel.<sup>5</sup>

It is told in the tafsir al-Qurtubī, from the interpretation of Surah Yasin verse 14 that once Allah SWT ordered two messengers to preach to a people. The two messengers were students of the Prophet Isa As. When the two of them invited the people to worship Allah SWT and abandon worshiping idols, the people asked the two messengers "who are you?", "we are messengers of the prophet Isa As. "We invite all of you to abandon idols and worship Allah SWT, the one God," answered the two messengers. "If the two of you are indeed messengers from the Prophet Isa As, we demand that you show greatness as did the Prophet Isa As," asked the people to the two messengers. The two envoys answered "we can heal sick people". Then the two messengers were confronted with a man who had a mental illness and was paralyzed. He just lay limp on the cloth as a base. Then, with their greatness, the two messengers rubbed the body of the person they wanted to heal. So, with the permission of Allah SWT, the paralysis he was suffering from disappeared and his mental illness was also cured.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Muhammad bin ahmad bin iyyas al-Hanafi, *Badai'u al-Zuhur fi Waqai'i al-Duhur* (Indonesia: darul kutub al-salafi) tt

He stood like a normal healthy person. So the people who witnessed the greatness of the messenger of the Prophet Jesus also believed in Allah SWT.<sup>6</sup>

Then the news spread to various corners of the Israelites. The two messengers preached from one place to another and many sick people were cured of their greatness. Until one day, news reached a king who led the area about the existence of two messengers from the Prophet Isa As who preached to spread monotheism and cure various diseases suffered by the people. The king ordered his aides to bring the two envoys to him. The king was an idol worshiper. He said, "What is your proof that you are messengers of the Prophet Isa As?", "We can cure various diseases with the permission of Allah SWT and we invite you to worship only Him," answered the two messengers. Without waiting a long time, the king immediately took him prisoner and whipped both of them a hundred lashes and then put them in prison. Then the news reached the ears of Prophet Isa As and a third messenger named Syam'un was sent to release the two messengers who were being held captive by the king and invited the king to believe only in Allah SWT.

Syam'un bravely went to the king and said "news has reached me that the king has captured two messengers of the Prophet Isa As, even though they wanted to show proof to the king, but the king immediately punished them by whipping and taking them prisoner." The king replied, "At that time I was provoked by emotion and thought the words of the two envoys were just nonsense." Then Syam'un said, "Let them go! and let them show proof of what they say.". The two messengers were released from prison and Syam'un said "show the king that you two were indeed sent by the Prophet Isa As for the king to worship Allah SWT, the one God." The two messengers said "we can cure various diseases with the permission of Allah SWT". Then the king brought a man who was blind from birth. His face does not have eyes like most people have. The forehead is flat and has no depressions for the eyes. Then the two messengers prayed to Allah SWT for the healing of the blind man. One of them took a handful of soil and then placed it on the person's forehead. So with the permission of Allah SWT, his forehead seemed to be split into two parts to house the two eye organs. Then he rubbed his forehead and immediately two eyes appeared on the person's forehead. At that moment he was able to see the world for the first time thanks to the two envoys. Seeing such an incident, the king was shocked and amazed. However, all this did not open the king's heart to believe in Allah SWT.<sup>7</sup>

Then the king brought a man who had been dead for a week to the three messengers. The king said, "Indeed, this is a corpse that has not been buried for a week and I will not bury it until the father comes. Can your god bring him back to life?" Then the two messengers prayed openly to Allah SWT for the healing of the corpse from death. Meanwhile Syam'un prayed secretly. So with the permission of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Anshari al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jami li Ahkam al-Qur 'an*, (Beirut: al-Resalah Publishers, 2006 M/1427 H)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Anshari al-Qurțubī, *al-Jami li Ahkam al-Qur 'an*, (Beirut: al-Resalah Publishers, 2006 M/1427 H)

Allah SWT, the corpse came back to life. How shocked the king was to see this incident. Then the corpse came to life and shouted to the people around him, "Indeed, I have been dead for seven days and I found myself to be someone who does not worship Allah SWT. Then I was faced with the seven valleys of hell and at that moment the sky opened and I met three messengers of the prophet Isa As. They were Syam'un and his two friends and they helped me from the valley of hell. So I woke up from my death and was brought back to life. So I hereby declare that there is no god but Allah SWT and there is no partner with him, and indeed the prophet Isa As is the spirit of Allah wakalimatuh. I also testify that these three messengers are messengers of Allah SWT." Then the king believed in Allah SWT and abandoned worshiping idols and his people followed in droves to believe in Allah SWT.

Another narration from Imam Qusyairi says that not all of these people believe in Allah SWT. Some still worship idols. Then the angel Gabriel came shouting in a voice so loud that every unbeliever who heard it died instantly. Imam Qusyairi said that the incident occurred in the Inthokiyyah area.

## b. Interpretation of al-Qurțubī in QS. Al-Qadr verse 3

Apart from what is found in Surah Yasin verse 14, the story of the Prophet Syam'un is also found in a fragment of the interpretation of Surah al-Qadr, precisely in the 3rd verse and becomes the asbabun nuzul of Surah al-Qadr.

Narrated from Abdullah bin Mas'ud: Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad SAW was once with his companions and he told of a Prophet who was sent to the Bani Israel. It is said that the Prophet had powers above the average human being and always fought to spread the teachings of monotheism. With a sword made from the lower jawbone of a camel, the prophet always fought alone to spread the religion of monotheism. He was blessed by Allah SWT to live long enough to fight in His path. History says that the prophet struggled for a thousand months in the path of Allah SWT. The Prophet's name was Syamsun.<sup>8</sup>

Hearing what was told by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, his friends were amazed by the prophet's story. "It is truly fortunate to be given the gift to fight in the path of Allah SWT for a thousand months," said one of his friends after hearing the story told by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. A moment later the angel Gabriel came who brought revelation to the Prophet Muhammad SAW surah al-Qadr verses 1-5. In Surah al-Qadr it is explained that Allah SWT sent down the entire Koran from Lauh al-Makhfudz to the heavens of the world. Then Jibril from the heavens of the world conveyed it to the Prophet Muhammad SAW in stages. The night the Koran was revealed was the night of glory or the night of a thousand moons. Tafsir scholars say that the meaning of the night of a thousand months is that if a Muslim performs worship on that night, the reward he gets is the same as worshiping for a thousand months. The angel Gabriel said, "Your

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Abu Abdillah Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Anshari al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jami li Ahkam al-Qur 'an*, Juz 23 (Beirut: al-Resalah Publishers, 2006 M/1427 H)

people, O Muhammad, are truly fortunate to have received a great gift from Allah SWT in the form of the night of Lailatul Qadr."

The revelation of Surah al-Qadr was the answer to the request of the friends to be able to worship with the value of a thousand months of worship as told by the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

It is narrated that the Prophet Syam'un As was a prophet who had miracles in the form of extraordinary strength, being able to soften iron, fighting alone against thousands of enemies, bringing dead people back to life and so on. He preached from one place to another carrying a weapon in the form of a sword made from the lower jawbone of a camel.

Prophet Syam'un As was sent to the people of Israel who were of the same era as Prophet Isa AS. The greatness of the Prophet Syam'un made the Israelites jealous, including the royal rulers at that time. Once there was a king who intended to kill the Prophet Syam'un so a contest was held to capture the Prophet Syam'un As and bring him before the King. Whoever succeeds in bringing the Prophet Syam'un to the royal palace, whether alive or dead, the king will give him a big reward. People used various methods to get the Prophet Sham'un As and hand him over to the king, but these efforts always failed. Until one day the wife of the Prophet Syam'un As betrayed him by intending to arrest him and hand him over to the king. The wife secretly tied her husband's body while he was sleeping, but when Prophet Syam'un As woke up from his sleep he easily untied the ties wrapped around his body. The wife tried several times but still failed. Until one day his wife persuaded Prophet Syam'un As and asked him whether with the strength he had he had any weaknesses? Then the Prophet Syam'un As told his wife about her weakness, that her weakness was that when she tied it with her own hair, she would not be able to let it go. Unconsciously, Prophet Syam'un As had broken his promise to Jibril that he should not tell anyone about his weaknesses. If someone knows his weakness then he will no longer have the strength he used to have. Sure enough, one night his wife again tried to tie up Prophet Syam'un As and hand him over to the king. The wife cut several long strands of Prophet Syam'un As's hair and then used them to bind his hands, feet and body. This time her efforts were successful. When Prophet Syam'un As woke up from sleep he could not move his body, then Prophet Syam'un As was taken to the king's palace.<sup>9</sup>

Seeing Prophet Syam'un As helpless, the king was very happy. Then the Prophet Syam'un As was tied in the middle of the palace. His legs and arms were stretched between the large palace pillars. He was no longer helpless. The power he once had had disappeared after he broke his agreement with Jibril. Then the king took a sword. When Prophet Syam'un As's hands and feet were still tied, the king slashed a sword at both legs until both legs were cut off. Prophet Syam'un As can no longer do anything, he only prays to Allah SWT, asking forgiveness for the mistakes he made, asking for the strength he once had to return and promising to spend the rest of his life worshiping and spreading the teachings of monotheism to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ahmad bin Ali al-Mahdi, *Tarikh al-Anbiya*' (Beirut: Darul kutub, 2004) hlm. 407-408

the people. The Children of Israel. Then the king again tortured Prophet Syam'un with repeated lashes. Then the Prophet Syam'un As was forced to stick out his tongue and cut it off with a sword. When the king was about to slash his sword into the hands of Prophet Syam'un As, the Angel Gabriel came with help. The strength of Prophet Syam'un As was restored and the two legs and tongue that had been cut off were reunited with his body. With both hands still tied to the pillars of the palace, Prophet Syam'un As pulled with all his strength causing the entire palace to collapse and the ruins of the palace hit everyone who witnessed the incident, including the king and the wife of Prophet Syam'un As himself.

#### 2) Prophetic Message of the Prophet Sham'un As in Tafsir al-Qurtubī

Telling the stories of previous Prophets is one way for the Prophet Muhammad SAW to preach and invite Muslims to be more devoted to Allah SWT, carrying out His commands and abandoning His prohibitions. Apart from that, we can also know that Allah SWT not only sent the Prophet Muhammad SAW to invite mankind to worship Him, but since the beginning of human creation, humans have had the duty to worship Allah SWT with the proof that Allah SWT sent Prophets and Apostles in every generation of the people. man to call all mankind to worship Him. In the prophetic story of Syam'un As which is the object of research this time, among the prophetic messages are:

 Always try to uphold monotheism. Inviting people to believe in Allah SWT, the one God and not to associate partners with Him. Be pious by carrying out all His commands and staying away from all His prohibitions. As Allah SWT says in Surah Ali Imran verse 102. Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says:

مُّسْلِمُوْنَ نْتُمْ وَأَ إِلَّا تَمُوْثُنَّ وَلَا تُقْتِهِ حَقَّ اللهَ اتَّقُوا أَمَنُوْا الَّذِيْنَ يَأَيُّهَا

Meaning: "O you who believe! Fear Allah truly and truly fear Him and do not die unless you are a Muslim." (QS. Ali 'Imran 3: Verse 102)

2) Along with the great gift of Allah SWT to His servants, the responsibility they bear is also great. Like the gift given to the Prophet Syam'un As in the form of strength above the average human and having the ability to cure various diseases including bringing the dead back to life, the consequence was that he was hated by many people, including his own wife, who betrayed him. This test of patience is indeed postponed to the prophets who carry out the difficult task of spreading the religion of Allah SWT. Allah SWT says:

Meaning: "And how many prophets fought accompanied by a large number of (their) pious followers. They did not (become) weak because of the disasters that befell them in the way of Allah, did not lose their spirit and did not (nor)

surrender (to the enemy). And Allah loves those who are patient." (QS. Ali 'Imran 3: Verse 146)

Also the glory of Syam'un who was appointed as a Prophet meant that he had to be ready to face the various trials that befell him. The greater the gift that Allah SWT gives us, the greater the trust that we are accountable to Him.

3) As mentioned above, when the Prophet Syam'un As healed the sick or brought the dead to life, he always prayed for help from Allah SWT. Which means that whatever we do, we must always rely on Allah SWT. Because what we plan is not necessarily in line with Allah SWT's plan. Ask Him to always make things easier in all matters and always be under the protection of His grace and blessing. Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says:

الْخُشِعِيْنَ عَلَى إِلَّا لَكَبِيْرَةٌ نَّهَا وَإِ رَّ وَالصَّلُوةِ بِالصَّبْرِ وَاسْتَعِيْنُوْا

Meaning: "And ask for help (from Allah) with patience and prayer. And (prayer) is truly difficult except for those who are humble," (QS. Al-Baqarah 2: Verse 45)

4) Thank Allah SWT for all His gifts, especially as the people of the Prophet Muhammad SAW who were given glory in the form of the night of Lailatul Qadr in the month of Ramadlan. With Lailatul Qadr, our deeds of worship will be multiplied like a thousand months of worship, just like the worship performed by the Prophet Syam'un As. No ummah of the Prophets and Apostles received such a gift except the ummah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says:

لَشَدِيْدٌ بِيْ عَذَا إِنَّ كَفَرْتُمْ وَلَئِنْ زِيْدَنَّكُمْ لَا شَكَرْتُمْ لَئِنْ رَبُّكُمْ ذَّنَ ذَتَا وَإ

Meaning: "And (remember) when your Lord announced, "Indeed, if you are grateful, I will surely increase (favors) to you, but if you deny (My favors), then My punishment will certainly be very heavy." (QS. Ibrahim 14 : Verse 7)

5) Always maintain trust and keep the promises that have been given to us. If we break our promise or betray our trust, then immediately repent and ask Allah SWT for forgiveness for the sins we have committed. Like the Prophet Syam'un As when he broke Jibril's promise that he would not tell anyone about his weakness but he told his wife so that Allah SWT gave him a trial by eliminating all the strength he had and was tortured by the King until he repented to Allah. SWT and promised not to make mistakes again, then Allah SWT forgave him and gave him the strength he had as before.

# **C.** Conclusion

The interpretation of al-Qurtubī regarding the Prophet Sham'un As in various verses of the Qur'an, where the Qur'an does not mention him by name but only by demonstrative words, is a very significant explanation in the exegetical literature, especially in the Qaṣaṣ discipline. Al-Qur'an. This makes the tafsir al-Qurtubī not only contain various kinds of sharia law according to the name of the tafsir but also rich in interpretations that lead to stories in the Qur'an. The tahlili

method used by al-Qurţubī in his interpretation also makes it easier for readers to find topics of discussion in the interpretation according to the sequence of verses and letters in the Qur'an. Syam'un was a prophet who was sent after the prophet Isa AS was lifted up by Allah SWT to heaven. The Prophet Syam'un fought alone to spread the religion of monotheism to the people. He fought jihad in the path of Allah SWT accompanied by a sword-like weapon made from a camel's jawbone. It was from this weapon that Allah SWT gave the prophet Syam'un various extraordinary miracles. The prophetic message brought by the prophet Syam'un was a command to believe in Allah SWT. Among the messages that can be taken from the story of the prophet Syam'un are: always try to uphold monotheism, always maintain trust and keep promises, always be patient in facing the trials and tests given by Allah SWT, thank Allah SWT for all His gifts, especially for us as the people of the Prophet Muhammad SAW with various glories that the people of other prophets do not have.

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