

Repetition of *al-Ma'* and *Ma'* in Quranic Context: Meanings and Intents

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Abstract

Repetition of words and verses in the Quran is among the miracle aspects of the Quran. It reveals the eloquence of the Quran as the Quran only contains pertinent repetition hence, preserves it from abhorred repetition. Among the word that is mentioned repeatedly is the word *al-ma'* or *ma'*. However, the word is mentioned repeatedly in different context. The two words literally mean water but due to the different context, the real meaning of the words must be understood according to their respective context. The word *al-ma'* or *ma'* in the same context refers to the same meaning but repetition of each context in different styles have certain intents. For this study, special focus is given only to seven context because there is repetition of verses according to those context which justifies the study on the intent of repetition. This study is a qualitative study and the approach is content analysis. Data were collected through content and document analysis upon which data were analyzed thematically using descriptive and analytical methods. Results demonstrate that the word *al-ma'* and *ma'* in seven context refers to different meaning which are rainwater, drink, disaster, creation of human being, place, water in paradise and hellfire and analogy. Repetition in each context also has certain intents. The implication of the study establishes that repetition of the word *al-ma'* or *ma'* in the Quran proves the Quranic miracle in terms of the eloquence which cannot be disputed since the Quran is the only miracle which last forever until the Day of *al-Qiyamah*.

Keywords: *al-Tikrar*, *al-Ma'*, Quranic context, i'jaz al-Quran, antioxidant

Abstrak

Pengulangan perkataan atau ayat di dalam al-Quran merupakan salah satu aspek kemukjizatan al-Quran. Ia mencerminkan kefasihan bahasa al-Quran kerana al-Quran hanya mengandungi pengulangan yang sangat penting maka, memelihara al-Quran daripada pengulangan yang dikeji. Antara perkataan yang disebut berulang kali adalah perkataan *al-ma'* atau *ma'*. Walaubagaimanapun, perkataan ini disebut berulang kali di dalam konteks berbeza. Kedua-dua perkataan ini bermaksud air secara literal tetapi disebabkan konteks yang berbeza, maksud sebenar perkataan mestilah difahami berdasarkan konteks terbabit. Perkataan *al-ma'* atau *ma'* di dalam konteks yang sama membawa pengertian yang sama namun, pengulangan di setiap konteks dengan gaya berbeza mempunyai tujuan yang tersendiri. Untuk kajian ini, fokus utama diberikan hanya kepada tujuh konteks kerana terdapat pengulangan ayat pada konteks tersebut yang mewajarkan kajian terhadap tujuan pengulangan. Kajian ini adalah kajian kualitatif dan pendekatannya adalah analisis kandungan. Kaedah analisis kandungan beserta dokumen digunakan bagi mendapatkan data, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik menggunakan kaedah deskriptif dan analisis. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan perkataan *al-ma'* atau *ma'* di dalam tujuh konteks merujuk kepada maksud yang berbeza iaitu air hujan, minuman, bencana, kejadian manusia, tempat, air di dalam syurga dan neraka dan analogi. Pengulangan di setiap konteks pula mempunyai tujuan tertentu. Implikasi kajian menunjukkan bahawa pengulangan perkataan *al-ma'* atau *ma'* di dalam al-Quran membuktikan kemukjizatan al-Quran dari sudut kefasihan bahasa yang tidak dapat dipertikaikan disebabkan al-Quran adalah satu-satunya mukjizat yang kekal hingga hari Kiamat.

Kata kunci: pengulangan, air, konteks al-Quran, mukjizat, antioksidan

1. Introduction

Quran has many aspects of miracle and one of the aspects is rhetorical inimitability. The phenomenon of repetition (*al-tikrar*) in the Quran is included in the rhetorical inimitability of the Quran. This means that the miracle of the Quran can be witnessed through the fact that the Quran only repeats important words or sentences

or events that are pertinent since the Quran is preserved from abhorred repetition. There are many words and verses that are mentioned repeatedly in the Quran (Al-Atrash 2007). The word *al-ma'* or *ma'* which literally means water is among the word that is mentioned repeatedly in different places in the Quran. Water is mentioned for 63 times in the Quran (Muhammad Ismail n.d).

Word in Arabic language is not restricted to only one specific meaning. A single term may denote several meanings depending on the context the term is being used in the Quran (al-Sya'rawi n.d; Hikmat 1999). This phenomena proves the versatility of the Quranic structure where a single word carries different meanings depending on the context (Ahmad Abdul Wahab n.d). In this case, the word *al-ma'* and *ma'* denotes several meanings according to its respective context. Thus, depending on context, the proper meaning of a term can be determined.

The topic of water in the Quran has received considerable critical attention among certain scholars. Previous studies such as Muhammad Ismail (n.d), Ahmad Abdul Wahab (n.d), Hamid Sadiq (1979) and Husni Hamdan (2014) have confirmed that the Quran mentions the word of water repeatedly in different context. Thus far, these studies focused particularly on the Quranic verses of rainwater and its importance. However, these studies have not dealt with the meaning of *al-ma'* and *ma'* in each context.

In addition, repetition of words or sentences in the Quran is pertinent because repetition has many intents and secrets (al-Zarkasyi 1957; al-Baqilani 2001; al-Atrash 2007). Repetition of Quranic verses that have the same meaning in different places of the Quran with different styles have certain intents. For example, it is to manifest the eloquence of the Quran and the beauty of the Quranic styles (Sofiah 2006). Previous studies in the sciences of Quran by several scholars such as al-Zarkasyi (1957), al-Baqilani (2001) and al-Atrash (2007) have focused on the intents of repetition in the Quran. These studies were focusing on the sciences of Quran, thus, they did not take account on the intent of repetition of *al-ma'* and *ma'* in each context.

Up to now, there is no study neither focuses on the meaning of *al-ma'* or *ma'* in seven different context, nor do focuses on the intents of repetition of the verses in each context. Due to this, it is crucial for this study to analyze the meaning of *al-ma'* and *ma'* in seven context and the intent of repetition in each context.

2. Research Methodology

This study is a qualitative study and the approach is content analysis. Data in this study were collected through content and document analysis. The content of the Quran was studied to collect the Quranic verses of *al-ma'* and *ma'*. Two keywords which are; *al-ma'* and *ma'* were used in a software which known as *al-Maktabah al-Syamilah* to collect the Quranic verses. To ensure the smooth process of gathering the Quranic verses, the content of the Quran was studied in two formats; electronic and hard copy to compare and improve the exactness of each finding. Other than *al-Maktabah al-Syamilah*, electronic form of the Quran from ksu website (<http://quran.ksu.edu.sa>) was used in the searching process of the Quranic verses.

For validity and reliability, data were collected from multiple sources including several Quranic *tafsir* and books on the sciences of the Quran. Certain Quranic *tafsir* were analyzed to understand the meaning of *al-ma'* and *ma'* in each context. Those *tafsirs* are *Tafsir al-Sa'di*, *Tafsir al-Wasit* by Tantawi, *Tafsir Jalalain*, *al-Tafsir al-Munir* by al-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Maududi* and *Tafsir Ibn Ashur*. The *tafsirs* were analyzed in two formats; electronic and hard copy. Electronic form of certain Quranic *tafsir* is also from KSU website (<http://quran.ksu.edu.sa>). Certain books on the science of the Quran were analyzed to understand the intent of repetition in each context.

Data were analyzed thematically using descriptive and analytical methods. Descriptive method was applied on the meaning of *al-ma'* and *ma'* and the verses. Analytical method was applied on the intent of repetition in each context.

3. Results and Discussion

The word *al-ma'* or *ma'* in seven context means rainwater, drink, disaster, creation of human being, place, water in paradise and hellfire and analogy. The Quranic verses for the seven context are as follows; firstly, rainwater in al-A'raaf 7:57, al-Haj 22:5, al-Sajdah 32:27, Fussilat 41:39, Abasa 80:25, al-Baqarah 2:22, al-Baqarah 2:164, al-Ana'am 6:99, al-Anfaal 8:11, Ibrahim 14:32, al-Nahl 16: 65, Taha 20:53, al-Hajj 22:63, al-Mukminun 23:18, al-Furqan 25:48, al-Naml 27:60, al-Ankabut 29:63, al-Rum 30:24, Luqman 31:10, Fathir 35:27, al-Zumar 39:21, al-Zukhruf 43:11, Qaf 50:9, al-Waqiah 56:31, al-Naba' 78:14, al-Ra'd 13:4 and al-Mulk 67:30.

Secondly, drink in al-Qamar 54:28, al-Waqi'ah 56:68, al-Hijr 15:22, al-Nahl 16:10 and al-Mursalat 77:27. Thirdly, disaster in Hud 11:43, Hud 11:44, al-Haqah 69:11, al-Qamar 54:11 and al-Qamar 54:12. Fourthly, creation of human beings in al-Furqan 25:54, al-Sajdah 32:8, al-Mursalat 77:20 and al-Thariq 86:6. Fifthly, place in Hud 11:7 and al-Qasas 28: 23. Sixthly, paradise and hellfire in Muhammad 47:15, al-A'raaf 7:50, Ibrahim 14:16 and al-Kahf 18: 29. Seventhly, analogy in Yunus 10:24, al-Kahfi 18:45, al-Baqarah 2:74, al-Ra'd 13:14, al-Nur 24:39 and al-Ra'd 13:17. The intent of repetition in each context is due to the style of the Quran and the objective of the verses.

Rainwater

The word *al-ma'* and *ma'* in the Quran always means water that descends from the sky which is rainwater (Ahmad Abdul Wahab n.d). The Quran uses certain styles to denote the rainwater. One of the styles is by characterizing the rainwater with special attribution which is by displaying the nature of the rainwater. For example, rainwater in al-Naba' 78:14 is characterized with the word (تَجَانًا). According to al-Sa'di (2000), (تَجَانًا) means abundant water. Tantawi (1997) and Ibn Ashur (1984) understood the word as strong effusion. Other attribution is (صَبًا) as mentioned in Abasa 80:25 which means in abundance (al-Sa'di 2000; Tantawi 1997) and by force (Tantawi 1997). Rainwater in Qaf 50:9 has a special attribution which is (مُبَارَكًا). This attribution has the meaning that rainwater has been created with many goodness and benefits. The benefits of the rainwater have caused the growth of grains, grapes and dates (Ibn Ashur 1984).

Each attribution of the rainwater in the Quran has its purpose. For example, the attribution of (مُبَارَكًا) which means blessed in Qaf 50:9 is for the purpose of deeply contemplation about the rainwater as the main cause of the creation of various plants (Ibn Ashur 1984). Rainwater in al-Furqan 25:48 is characterized with pure (طَهُورًا). The objective of this attribution is to increase the sense of blessing and perfection of gift hence, it is more beneficial than any other waters (Tantawi 1997). All the verses refer to the rainwater but the Quran uses different attribution to denote the rainwater. Repetition of rainwater with different attribution exhibits that each attribution has its significant purpose and displays the miracle aspect of the Quran in terms of the beauty of the Quranic styles.

Rainwater is the factor of other living lives such as humans, animals and plants. Most of the verses on rainwater states that it has caused the growth of plants. The Quran presents various plants and fruits that grow by the cause of the rainwater. For example, al-A'raaf 7:57, al-Baqarah 2:22, Ibrahim 14:32 and Fathir 35:27 talk about fruits (*al-thamarat*), plants (*nabat*) in Taha 20:53, crops (*zar'*) in Al-Sajdah 32:27 and al-Zumar 39:21, gardens (*hadaiq*) in Al-Naml 27:60, gardens and grains (*janat wa habbal hasid*) in Qaf 50:9, plants of every noble kind (*kulli zauj karim*) in Luqman 31:10. Some verses provide examples of fruits that grow by the cause of the rainwater such as dates, grapes, olive, pomegranate like in al-Ana'am 6:99 and grapes and dates in al-Ra'd 13:4. All these verses that deal with the issue of the growth of plants with the descendance of rainwater is among the sign of complete ability of Allah (al-Syanqiti 1995; Sayid Qutb 1991; al-Razi 1999; al-Zuhaili 1998), His knowledge and His Oneness (*al-Wahdaniah*). Besides, these verses also expose that the rainwater is blessing from Allah which requires gratitude, obedience and sincerity in worshipping Allah (Tantawi 1997).

One of the intents of repetition in the Quran is to demonstrate the importance of a topic. Repetition is a way to affirm a subject and as a sign to demonstrate the importance (Sofiah 2006). Rainwater verses is frequently repeated on the subject of the growth of every plant. Repetition on this matter displays the importance of rainwater as the main factor that causes the growth of plants including various fruits. The various plants and fruits which have benefiting compounds such as antioxidant will never exist without the rainwater. The Quran repeats the same matter and stresses on this issue to affirm that the rainwater is the cause of the creation of the plants and fruits.

Other intent of repetition is for the purpose of glorification (al-Atrash 2007). The main objective of rainwater verses is to convey the message of *al-Tauhid*, *al-Wahdaniah*, existence of the Creator, absolute power, ability and knowledge of Allah through the descendance of rain as His blessings (al-Syanqiti 1995; Sayid Qutb 1991; al-Razi 1999; al-Zuhaili 1998).

In addition, repetition demonstrates gratefulness and gratitude and it encourages human to ponder on the blessings and the Divine gift (al-Atrash 2007). Rainwater is a blessing from Allah (al-Razi 1999; Tantawi 1997). Thus, repetition of rainwater verses inspires human to be grateful and encourages to ponder on the blessing.

Certain rainwater verses come as a reminder of Allah's blessings to human beings (Ibn Ashur 1984). The Quran uses a few styles in the repetition of these rainwater verses. For instance, Fathir 35:27 derives in the form of inquiry (al-Razi 1999) with the phrase "Do you not see that Allah" and al-Naml 27:60 ends with an inquiry "is there any god who is able to create all these?". Fathir 35:27 is a reminder of Allah's blessings to human beings (Ibn Ashur 1984), encouraging and motivating human to look upon the signs of God and His Oneness (al-Sa'di 2000), for the purpose of contemplating and pondering (Sayid Qutb 1991). al-Naml 27:60 deliberates five signs of Allah's complete ability and His knowledge. The verse begins with an inquiry "is He who created" and each sign ends with a question "is there any god who is able to create all these?". The inquiry in the beginning of the verse "is He who created" is for the purpose of denial and blame (Tantawi 1997). It means: yet, say to us if you use your reason o those who are astray who has created all these?. The answer for this question "is there any god who is able to create all these?" is certainly no because Allah is the Only one who has created all His creation (Tantawi 1997).

Al-Mukminun 23:18 also acts as a reminder (Ibn Ashur 1984) and a menace that Allah has the ability to take the rain away (al-Qurtubi 1964; al-Zuhaili 1998; al-Sabuni 1997). The verse mentions that the rainwater is in a measured amount. The verse manifests Allah's ability by presenting a clear proof as it ends with "and indeed We are able to take it away". As Allah is able to descend the rain, He also has the ability to take it away (al-Zamakhsyari 1986) and He is the one who abstain the rainwater with His absolute ability by diverting it away (Sayid Qutb 1991). With Allah's will, He will abstain the rain from descending (al-Syanqiti 1995).

Other than that, al-A'raaf 7:57 ends with the phrase "perhaps you may be reminded". The verse carries a preaching message (al-Razi 1999). This verse encourages remembrance and contemplation upon the signs of God and looking at them with the purpose of learning (al-Sa'di 2000). Ibn Ashur (1984) clarified that remembrance in the verse refers to in-depth remembrance. Ibn Ashur (1984) described that in-depth remembrance increases faith and will prevent from polytheism belief and the denial of the resurrection.

Moreover, al-A'raaf 7:57 is for the attention of people who are responsible for the obligations (Said Hawa 2003). Al-Zuhaili (1998) and al-Sabuni (1997) elucidate that this is an illustration of a believer who listens to the preaching and they benefit from it. Said Hawa (2003) expounds on this matter that for those who succeed in this preaching are the believers and for those who are not, are the disbelievers. This is a real evidence like other previous evidences mentioning rainwater and descendance of the rainwater onto the dead land and the land produces fruits.

In addition, al-A'raaf 7:57 is about the resurrection as the verse derives with the phrase "thus will We bring forth the dead". Revitalization of the earth after its death is the greatest affirmation for resurrection after death (al-Syanqiti 1995). Thus, revitalization of the earth after its death is an absolute evidence of the power of the One who does that. Remembrance of the signs of God will lead man to believe the resurrection (Said Hawa 2003). Likewise, reviviscence after death is real as several other verses also deals with the issue of revitalization after death and bringing into being (al-Syanqiti 1995).

Other verses that cover the issue of revitalization of the earth after its death are; al-Haj 22:5, Fussilat 41:39, al-Hajj 22:63, al-Baqarah 2:164, al-Nahl 16:65, al-Ankabut 29:63, al-Rum 30:24 and al-Zukhruf 43:11. The objective of these verses is to demonstrate the power of Allah and as a sign and proof of His ability for reviviscence (al-Syanqiti 1995). The aim behind this kind of verses and the repetition of these verses is for grateful people and they are the believer who ponder and learn from the evidences (Said Hawa 2003).

Besides, the Quran also uses different styles in the repetition of the verses that talks about revitalization of the earth. For instance, al-Baqarah 2:164 and al-Rum 30:24 end with the phrase "are signs for a people who use reason". Mind is linked in these verses to signify the importance of it in pondering upon the signs of God. The mind is a tool for reflection and contemplation (Sayid Qutb 1991). The word (يَعْقِلُونَ) which means people who use reason imposes important meaning which is looking to those signs with the eye of mind and take benefit from the sign as the signs portray the great ability of the Creator (al-Syaukani 1994). Thus, only people who contemplate and ponder will comprehend the signs (Said Hawa 2003). Al-Nahl 16:65 ends with the sense of listening as mentioned in the verse 'a sign for a people who listen'. Tantawi (1997) explained the meaning of listening in this verse is listening with heart and mind not only listening with ears.

Al-Ana'am 6:99 which talks about the growth of fruits such as dates, grapes, olive and pomegranate is linked with other character which is the faith as mentioned in this phrase "are signs for a people who believe". Ibn Ashur (1984) explains that the phrase people who believe (لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ) is mentioned instead of (لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ) or (لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا) to express people who has faith as an inborn character in them which leads to their firm practice as previously mentioned in al-Baqarah 2:164 "are signs for a people who use reason". This type of verse is like

an appendix for learning through evidences about the condition of the creations and the blessing of the Creator for human beings (Ibn Ashur 1984).

The Quran uses affirmation inquiry in some verses such as al-Zumar 39:21 and al-Hajj 22:63. This type of inquiry is used for the purpose of confirming previous matter (Tantawi 1997; al-Baidhawi 1997; al-Syaukani 1994) and it has the meaning of amazement (al-Sabuni 1997; al-Zuhaili 1998). Affirmation inquiry is for an obvious matter. The verse uses affirmation inquiry since it is obvious that descendance of rainwater gives benefit. Everyone knows that rainwater is the life of the earth and the verse is strengthened with this type of inquiry (al-Razi 1999). Al-Sajdah 32:27 also comes in the form of affirmation inquiry as it ends with "Then do they not see". The verse mentions eyesight because revitalization of the dead earth is a phenomena that can be witnessed with eyes (Ibn Ashur 1984).

In certain verse, the Quran uses a specific word to describe an issue that is related to the rainwater. Al-Mukminun 23:18 states that Allah has sent down the rainwater in a measured amount and settled it in the earth. The verse ends with "And indeed, We are able to take it away". In this phrase, the Quran uses specific word which is (ذَهَابٍ) with indirect approach. The indirect approach is used to demonstrate aggrandizement and glorification which refers to various ways of taking away the rain (Ibn Ashur 1984). Taking away the rain may occur in various ways (al-Syaukani 1994) such as earthquake, drought season and abstention of rain for a long period (Ibn Ashur 1984). Without rain, all creations will perish and causes thirst and hunger (al-Syanqiti 1995). Therefore, water by itself is a blessing and it is the cause of receiving other blessings (al-Razi 1999).

One of the intents of repetition in different places of the Quran with different styles is to manifest the eloquence of the Quran and the beauty of the Quranic styles (Sofiah 2006). From the above discussion, repetition of rainwater verses on the topic of revitalization of the earth with different styles not only affirms the Quranic miracle of the Quran but also manifests the eloquence of the Quran and the beauty of the Quranic styles.

Drink

The word *ma'* in al-Hijr 15:22 and al-Nahl 16:10 refers to rainwater for the purpose of drinking. The verses acknowledges that Allah sends down water from the sky for humans to drink. Rainwater in al-Nahl 16:10 fertilizes the plants and the plants are the source of food for the cattle. Repetition of these verses encourages human to be grateful on the blessings and the Divine gift as water is a blessing and it is the cause of receiving other blessings as mentioned earlier. Al-Hijr 15:22 ends with a great reminder that humans are not the one who have the authority on this water but Allah is the retainer of it as a mercy and gift (al-Sa'di 2000).

Al-ma' in al-Qamar 54:28 also refers to the water for drinking purpose. But the drinking water is mentioned in the story of Prophet Saleh and people of Tsamud. The water should be shared between the people and the she-camel, with each one's right being established by taking turn for the water (al-Tabari 2000). The she-camel was sent as a test for the people (Maududi n.d).

Al-ma' in al-Waqiah 56: 68 also refers to drink. This verse is in the form of question 'And have you seen the water that you drink'. The pleasant drink is a blessing from Allah (al-Sa'di 2000). This verse acts as an evidence of possibility of the resurrection and complete ability of Allah (Tantawi 1997). *Ma'* in al-Mursalat 77:27 also refers to drink. This verse is another argument for the possibility and reasonableness of the Hereafter (Maududi n.d) and the expression of Allah's blessing for His creation with His mercy and His bounty (Tantawi 1997). Drinking water is mentioned in al-Qamar 54:28 in the form of narration while, al-Waqiah 56: 68 is in the form of question. Repetition of water for drinking purpose with different styles manifests the beauty of the Quranic styles.

Disaster

Water is a blessing but water also can be a punishment to those who disobey Allah. The Quran delivers a story, full with lessons; for example, the destruction of son and people of Prophet Nuh who drowned in water as the result of disobeying Allah (Maududi n.d). The verses that acknowledge about this matter are; Hud 11:43-44, al-Haqah 69:11 and al-Qamar 54:11-12.

The intent of repetition of these verses is as a reminder from the example of the destruction of previous people. The same story is mentioned repeatedly in these verses. Thus, repetition of these verses is for the purpose of learning from the destruction of previous people who disobey Allah and His prophet and to educate

Muslim ummah through the lessons and examples from the previous people (al-Atrash 2007).

Creation of Human Beings

Water in the Quran sometimes refers to human semen in the creation of human beings. For example, *al-ma'* in al-Furqan 25:54 means a mere sperm drop (Maududi n.d). At certain places in the Quran, the word *ma'* is linked with an attribution like (مُهَيِّن) which means dirty (al-Sa'di 2000) and weak (Ibn Ashur 1984; al-Sa'di 2000) as mentioned in al-Sajdah 32:8 and al-Mursalat 77:20. The aim of applying this characteristic is to learn from the creation of human beings as Allah has created it from a type of shed water.

Other characteristic for the word *ma'* is (دَافِي) as mentioned in al-Thariq 86:6. It also refers to human semen in the creation of human beings. It is characterized with this attribution for the purpose of education, learning and taking example from the perfect creation and to offer an awakening message to the disbeliever and to instill certainty in the heart of a believer (Ibn Ashur 1984). Thus, the intent of repetition of these verses is as a reminder for humans to contemplate and ponder on their creation as the Quran repeatedly reminds humans that they are weak as they were created from a mere sperm.

Place

Al-ma' in Hud 11:7 refers to place. Allah's throne was on the water as mentioned "and His throne had been upon water". This verse establishes that God's kingdom was over water (Jalal al-Din n.d; Maududi n.d). *Ma'* in al-Qasas 28: 23 also refers to a place which was known as water of Madyan where Prophet Musa found a group of men watering their flocks and apart from them two women waited for their turns (Maududi n.d). These two verses do not deliver the same meaning. As such, there is no repetition in this context.

Paradise and Hellfire

The word *ma'* in Muhammad 47:15 refers to a type of water in paradise. The pious are promised with rivers of incorruptible water in paradise (Maududi n.d). Al-Sa'di (2000) describes the characteristic of the water in which it does not change and do not contain filth element, septic smell and stones. In fact, it is the freshest and purest, has nicest smell and the tastiest drink. The word *ma'* in the end of the verse refers to boiling water that will tear the bowels apart (Maududi n.d) since the water is critically hot (al-Sa'di 2000). The dwellers of the hellfire will be drinking this type of water.

Ibrahim 14:16 also speaks the same matter in which the dwellers of Hell will be made to drink boiling water with the worst colour, taste and smell (al-Sa'di 2000). Al-Kahf 18: 29 describes a situation in which if the dwellers of Hell (Zalimun; polytheists and wrong-doers) ask for water, they will be granted with drink that its residue is like oil and will burn their lips (Maududi n.d). Other than terrible drink, they will not be given water although they are begging for it from the people of Paradise (Maududi n.d) as a result of extreme hunger and painful thirst (al-Sa'di 2000). This situation is mentioned in al-A'raaf 7:50: 'and the companions of hell will call to the companions of Paradise, "Pour upon us some water" '.

Only one verse mentions about the water as a reward in paradise whilst the other verses talk about water in the hellfire as a severe punishment for its dwellers. Any matter that is repeatedly mentioned in different time and places indicates a serious prohibition or warning (al-Atrash 2007). Thus, repetition of the punishment in the hellfire is a warning not to fall into polytheism and sinful acts.

Analogy

Verses of water also appear as an analogy in the Quran. The Quran offers the best analogy of worldly life in Yunus 10:24 and al-Kahfi 18:45. These two verses remind that the beauty of a worldly life is temporary. This world is portrayed as an enthralling image of a well adorned land with many kinds of vegetation which grow opulently as the cause of the rainwater. However, the beauty of the land will fade away (Maududi n.d). Thus, the worldly life may seem attractive like the land but it is momentary. Only these two verses have the same meaning in this context. Thus, repetition of these two verses conveys a vital message to the reader not to fall into the guile of the worldly life.

The Quran also mentions water in other analogy. For example, al-Baqarah 2:74 provides an example of the heart of Bani Israel that hardened and became as hard as rocks, or even harder than rocks even after seeing the signs. The word *al-ma'* is mentioned when the verse talks about type of rocks in which there are of them which split open to allow water flows from them (Maududi n.d).

Al-Ra'd 13:14 also mentions the word *al-ma'* in the analogy of the prayers of the disbelievers (polytheists). The analogy is as if a man stands afar from a well but wishes to drink water in it by preparing his hands towards it and calling for it. This is an illogical condition of drinking water. This is an analogy that their prayers are nothing but aimless efforts (Jalal al-Din n.d).

Ma' is mentioned in al-Ra'd 13:17 in the analogy of the truth and falsehood. The word *ma'* in this analogy refers to rainwater that fills the valleys. The valleys flow according to their capacity and the torrent carries a rising foam. The foam and dirt from the metal during the heating process will vanish, but the clean water and the ore that becomes adornments and utensils which benefit people, it remains on the earth. This is an analogy of the falsehood that will vanish and the truth will remain (Jalal al-Din n.d).

Ma' in al-Nur 24:39 refers to water in the analogy of the deeds of the disbelievers. Their deeds like a mirage in a desert. Thirsty people thinks it is water, until he moves toward it and finds it to be nothing (Maududi n.d).

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the word *al-ma'* or *ma'* denotes seven meanings according to its context. This determines the precision of the Quranic structure which reflects the Quranic miracle aspect in terms of the language. Repetition of the Quranic verses in the seven context unveils the rhetorical inimitability of the Quran. The Quran was revealed firstly to the Arabs as they were the most eloquent nation of the Arabic language. As such, they were tested from this rhetorical aspect. The rhetorical aspect of the Quran cannot be defeated even by the Arabs because the Quran is the greatest miracle (*mukjizah*) of Prophet Muhammad. The Quran is the only everlasting miracle that is well preserved until the Day of al-Qiyamah. Due to this, a new discovery will prevail the miracle side of the Quran which attracts the attention of everyone who reads and understands it.

The most frequent repetition of the Quranic verses of *al-ma'* and *ma'* in the seven context is in the context of rainwater. The intent of repetition of rainwater verses is to demonstrate the importance of the rainwater as the main cause of other living creatures. The repetition of these verses in different places of the Quran with different styles affirms the Quranic miracle of the Quran and manifests its eloquence and the beauty of the Quranic styles. Some verses in the context of drinking water also have this intent. Other context such as disaster, creation of human beings, water in paradise and hellfire and analogy serve as a great reminder for humans.

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