

The
Parables
— of the —
Qur'an



DR YASIR QADHI



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The Parables of the Qur'an

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Transliteration

A brief guide to some of the letters and symbols used in the Arabic transliteration in this book.

th ث

ḥ ح

dh ذ

ṣ ص

ḍ ض

ṭ ط

ẓ ظ

‘ ع

‘ ء

ā آ

ī ي

ū أُ

سَلَامٌ
وَبَرَكَاتٌ

May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

رَضِيَ
عَنْهُ

May Allah be pleased with him.

رَضِيَ
عَنْهَا

May Allah be pleased with her.

رَضِيَ
عَنْهُمَا

May Allah be pleased with them both.

عَلَّمَهُ

May He be glorified.

عَلَيْهِ

May peace be upon him.

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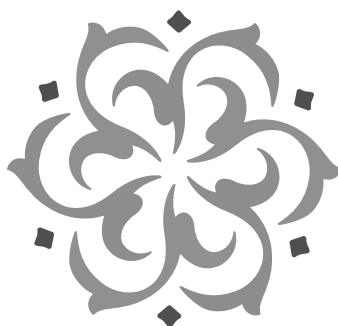
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Preface

All praise is due to Allah, and may salutations be upon the Messenger of Allah!

Every Ramadan for the last decade, it has been my habit to undertake a lecture series for my *masjid* that aims to both uplift the *īmān* of the attendees and provide wholesome spiritual benefit. Last year, in Ramadan 1442 AH, I decided to concentrate on some of the parables and aphorisms of the Qur'an. Each day, I would choose a parable or aphorism and explain it to the attendees during the *tarāwīḥ* prayers. This work in your hands is the culmination of that project.

The work begins with a chapter on the eloquence of the Qur'an and the role that parables (*amthāl*) play in it. We discuss what exactly a 'parable' is, the key components of a parable, and why it is so effective. Further, I illustrate the function of the parable in the Qur'an and how Allah references it. I then explain how 'aphorisms' have become so common that it is used as everyday sayings, or expressions of wisdom, by all Arabic speakers regardless of faith.

The work is divided into two sections. In the first section, 25 specific parables are discussed in the order of the Surahs of the Qur'an in which they are mentioned. The goal is to explain these parables in a simple manner without the technical language typically found in advanced works of exegesis. In the second section, a few aphorisms are chosen to illustrate

this phenomenon. Of course, it is difficult to have a comprehensive list, as any Qur’anic phrase can be used in such a manner if one chooses to do so.

I would like to thank Kube Publishing and their editorial staff for working with me so tirelessly to produce such a polished product. Of course, as always, I forever remain grateful to my Lord for blessing me with a loving family. I think of all of the introductions I have written over the last 25 years—for over a dozen books that I have published—I began as a bachelor, thanking my parents; then over the years I also thanked my wife; and one by one, my children were added to the list. Now to see that my ‘children’ are young adults, and my elderly parents have moved in with me, I can only say, as the Qur’an instructs,

*“My Lord! Inspire me to ever be thankful for Your favours which You blessed me and my parents with, and to do good deeds that please You. And instill righteousness in my offspring. I truly repent to You, and I truly submit to Your Will.”*¹

Dr. Yasir Qadhi

Plano, TX

January 30th, 2022 CE

(Jumādā al-Ākbarah 27th, 1443 AH)

¹ *Al-Abqāf*, 15.

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَلُ

نَضَّرَ بِهَا لِلنَّاسِ

وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا

إِلَّا أَلْمُؤْمِنُونَ

These are the parables that we cite
for mankind, and it is only those
who ponder and understand that
benefit from the parables.

AL-‘ANKABŪT, 43.



INTRODUCTION



Figures of Speech
in the Qur'an:
**The Use of
Symbolism
and Imagery**





There can be no doubt that the most honoured, revered, and eloquent of all speech is the speech of our Creator, Allah ﷻ. Furthermore, Allah ﷻ honoured us immensely by selecting us to be the recipients of such noble speech, in the form of the Qur'an that was revealed to our beloved Messenger ﷺ. This Qur'an holds great power as well as the ability to reform, rectify, and revolutionalise through its eloquent presentations. Part of this unparalleled eloquence is its impressive use of various linguistic mechanisms and rhetorical devices to beautifully convey its message. Facts are wonderfully presented, as well as striking themes of *targhīb* (inspiring) and *tarhīb* (warning) that incentivise us, push us to yearn and desire, and certainly fear those things that Allah ﷻ wishes for us to fear. Another powerful mechanism employed in the Qur'an is the presentation of stories and examples in order to convey distinct facts and remarkable messages. In fact, these are some of the Qur'an's most effective mechanisms, known as *amthāl* (parables).

Regarding this, Allah ﷻ says in the Noble Qur'an,

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ، وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ

*“These are the parables that we cite for mankind, and it is only those who ponder and understand that benefit from the parables.”*²

² *Al-'Ankabūt*, 43.