

A Qur'anic Approach to Family Communication: The Example of Noah's Dialogue with His Son

Aile İçi İletişimde Kur'anî Bir Yaklaşım: Hz. Nuh'un Oğluyla Diyalogu Örneği

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ABSTRACT

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The family is not only the primary social institution that meets individuals' basic needs, but also the oldest structured unit in which ongoing communication between parents and children is sustained. It plays a vital role in the transmission of religious, moral, and cultural values, as well as in the socialization of individuals. Accordingly, the presence of a healthy family structure is a prerequisite for a healthy society. While parents bear significant responsibilities in transmitting tradition, flawed methods and inappropriate wording may harm communication, particularly with individuals susceptible to modern ideologies. The frequent generational conflicts observed today often originate from such communication problems. In this context, Qur'anic narratives—especially the dialogue between Prophet Noah and his son—offer valuable insights into the principles of intra-family communication. The incident that took place during the Flood is described in the Qur'an as follows: "And [the Ark] sailed with them through waves like mountains. And Noah called out to his son, who stood apart: 'O my dear son! Embark with us and do not be among the disbelievers.' He replied: 'I shall take refuge on a mountain that will protect me from the water.' Noah said: 'There is no protection today from the decree of God, except for those to whom He grants mercy.' Then a wave came between them, and he was among the drowned" (Hūd 11:42-43). The aim of this study is to offer reflections on family communication in light of this brief yet profoundly meaningful dialogue, in which Noah's son ultimately rejects his father's plea. The central objective is to identify the core principles of family communication exemplified in this exchange. This study employs both descriptive and analytical methods, with the analytical approach being the predominant one. While Noah's son is portrayed as bold, determined, and defiant, Noah himself is presented as a hopeful and compassionate father and prophet who persistently uses a gentle and persuasive tone. Ultimately, this Qur'anic narrative underscores the significance of compassion, patience, hope, and persuasion as fundamental elements in effective family communication.

ÖZET

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Aile, bireylerin temel ihtiyaçlarını karşıladığı ilk sosyal yapı olmanın yanı sıra, ebeveyn ve çocuk arasında sürekli iletişimin sürdüğü en eski kurumsal birlikteliktir. Dinî, ahlaki ve kültürel değerlerin kuşaklar arasında aktarımı ve bireylerin toplumsallaşması bakımından temel bir işleve sahiptir. Bu nedenle sağlıklı bir aile yapısı, sağlıklı bir toplumun ön şartıdır. Kadim geleneğin aktarımında ebeveynlere önemli sorumluluklar düşmekte; ancak yanlış yöntem ve üsluplar, özellikle modern ideolojilere açık bireylerle bağı zedeleyebilmektedir. Günümüzde sıkça görülen kuşak çatışmalarının temelinde de bu iletişim sorunları yer almaktadır. Bu bağlamda, Kur'an kıssaları—özellikle Hz. Nuh'un oğluyla olan diyalogu—aile içi iletişimde dikkat edilmesi gereken ilkelere ışık tutmaktadır. Tufan hadisesi esnasında yaşanan hadise Kur'an'da şu şekilde anlatılmaktadır: "Gemi yolcularıyla birlikte dağ gibi dalgalar arasında yol almaya başladı. Bu esnada Nuh, kendi başına bir kenarda duran oğluna: "Yavrucuğum! Haydi gel, sen de bizimle beraber gemiye bin; ne olur o inkârcular arasında kalma!" diye seslendi. Fakat oğlu: "Ben bir dağa tırmanırım, o dağ beni boğulmaktan kurtarır" diye cevap verdi. Bunun

Anahtar Kelimeler:
Tefsir, Hz. Nuh,
Tûfan, Aile İçi
İletişim, Davet Dili,
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üzerine Nuh ona: "Bugün Allah'ın merhamet ettiği kimseler hariç hiç kimse onun helâk hükmünden kaçıp kurtulamaz." diyerek davetini yeniledi. Tam o esnada aralarına büyük bir dalga girdi ve oğlu sulara gark olup gitti." (Hûd 11/42-43) Bu çalışmanın amacı, Hz. Nuh'un davetine karşılık vermeyen oğluyla kurduğu kısa fakat anlam yüklü diyalogdan hareketle aile içi iletişim sorunlarına çözüm önerileri sunmaktır. Araştırmanın hedefi bu diyalogdan hareketle aile içi iletişimde gözetilmesi gereken temel ilkeleri ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmada tasvirî ve tahlilî yöntemler kullanılmıştır. Literatürde Hz. Nuh kıssası aile içi iletişim yönüyle ele alınmamıştır. Bu çalışma bu eksikliği tamamlamayı hedeflemektedir. Bu sahnede Hz. Nuh'un oğlu cesur, kararlı ve inatçı; Hz. Nuh ise ümitvar, yapıcı ve ikna temelli bir dil kullanan baba ve peygamber olarak tasvir edilir. Bu kıssa, aile iletişiminde merhamet, sabır, umut ve iknaya dayalı bir yaklaşımın önemini vurgular.

INTRODUCTION

Family, whether nuclear or extended, refers to a community of individuals who share a common living space, consisting of members differing in age, gender, status, role, authority, and responsibility.¹ The foundation of a healthy society lies in strong families, and one of the most important elements that contributes to such strength is effective and healthy communication among family members. Communication, a fundamental human need, refers to the exchange and dissemination of information and the establishment of meaningful connections with others.² In an ideal family structure, communication holds vital importance. Miscommunication is one of the most common issues in dysfunctional families. Therefore, the first step in resolving arguments, conflicts, violence, and incompatibility within the family is to overcome communication barriers. Many intellectual and political movements and ideologies, such as anarchism, fascism, populism, atheism, deism, and nihilism, have increased their impact in the modern period and have attempted to undermine various religious and cultural values. The destructive impact of these movements is clearly observable within the family structure, particularly on its younger members.³ Several factors contribute to this situation: the younger generation has received a higher level of education than their predecessors. This education often reflects a more positive worldview, and they are significantly more engaged with technological developments. These dynamics have caused a growing distance between the younger generation and the moral and religious values upheld by their families and society. This resulted in widening the generational gap. In response to

¹ To examine the notion of family from different aspects, you may see in: V. Santiago Arias-N. Punyanunt-Carter, "Family, Culture, and Communication", *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication* 2017), (Accessed on 14 May 2025), 26-27; Esther Dermott-Tim Fowler, "What Is a Family and Why Does It Matter?", *Social Sciences MDPI* 9/83 (2020), (Accessed on 12 May 2025), 2; Hayati Hökelekli, "Aile Psikolojisi ve Aile İçi İletişim", *Diyanet İlmî Dergi* 40/2 (2004), 42; Mustafa Cabir Altıntaş, "Family relations and religious education among Assyrians in Türkiye", *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 2025), (Accessed on 09 May 2025).

² Bonachristus Umeogu-Ojiakor Ifeoma, "Constructionist Theory of Representation in Language and Communication: A Philosophical Analysis", *Open Journal of Philosophy* 2/2 (2012), 130.

³ Aykut Kaya, "Aile İçi Sorunların Çözümünde Babanın Rolü: Yusuf Kıssası Örneği", *Değişen Dünyada Aile XII. Uluslararası Din Görevlileri Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı*, ed. İbrahim Kutluay et al. (Konya: Mehir Vakfı Yayınları, 2023), 154.

this negative trend, many families attempt to intervene and correct the situation. However, these individual or institutional efforts to convey religious and cultural values to family members often lack an effective style and method. It must be emphasized that secular approaches alone are insufficient to resolve communication issues within families. In addition to pedagogical, psychological, and sociological solutions, religion as a vital component of cultural identity should be made functional. In this regard, the foundational principles offered by the Qur'an can play a highly effective role in addressing the issue.⁴

The Qur'anic parables are not narrated for entertainment purposes. On the contrary, they are directly or indirectly related to the events occurring within the context of their revelation. Moreover, these stories serve as miraculous warnings, highlighting major problems that humanity may encounter in the future, and they offer potential solutions. Although they may initially appear to be narratives of the distant past, in reality, they shed light on the social and moral circumstances of every era. Through such contextualized readings, modern interpretations of the parables can solve today's problems from a Qur'anic perspective. The prophetic narratives in the Qur'an offer valuable insights into modes of communication and principles of societal leadership. As both members and leaders of their communities, the prophets endeavored to rectify social shortcomings according to the divine commands, modeling exemplary behaviors for humanity through their conduct and speech.

In our study, we will focus on a specific episode from the story of Prophet Noah. The story of Noah is among the prominent Qur'anic accounts that highlight the challenges experienced within a family context. In particular, his dialogue with his son during the flood presents significant insights into the appropriate style and method to adopt in family communication. Both a prophet and a father, Noah faced difficulties within his own household. The behavior and attitude he exhibited while fulfilling his paternal role offer an important model for contemporary families.

There are studies in literature addressing the solution of domestic issues. Some of these include: "*Günümüz Aile Problemleri Çerçevesinde Kur'an'da Ebeveyn-Çocuk İlişkisi*"⁵, "*Hz. Nûh Kıssası Bağlamında Ailevî İlişkiler*"⁶, "*Aile İçi Problemler ve Çözüm Önerileri*"⁷, "*Hz. Nuh'un Hayatı Ekseninde*

⁴ İbrahim Turan, "Günümüz Aile Problemleri Çerçevesinde Kur'an'da Ebeveyn-Çocuk İlişkisi", *Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 35 (2013), 73.

⁵ Turan, "Günümüz Aile Problemleri Çerçevesinde Kur'an'da Ebeveyn-Çocuk İlişkisi", 71-104.

⁶ Ramazan Şahan, "Hz. Nuh Kıssası Bağlamında Ailevî İlişkiler", *Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 2/33 (2014), 215-248.

⁷ Arif Durğun, "Aile İçi Problemler ve Çözüm Önerileri", *Mehir Aile Dergisi* 1 (2016), 83-95.

"Aile Olmak"⁸, *Nûh ve İbrahim Kıssaları Bağlamında İslam'da Aile Mefhumu*"⁹, "Tefsirlerde Nuh Kıssası Rivayetlerinin Gelişimi"¹⁰. However, these studies do not examine the dialogue between Prophet Noah and his son in depth, nor do they highlight the key aspects to be considered in family communication. In this respect, our study stands apart from the others.

In this article, we will first provide general information on pedagogical tafsîr, as it is closely related to our research topic. Following this, several aspects concerning the son of Prophet Noah will be examined. These include his name, his youth, his choice of erroneous belief, and the question of whether he was Prophet Noah's biological son. Such details will contribute to a more accurate and in-depth analysis of the dialogue between Prophet Noah and his son, which constitutes the main focus of our study. In the final section, the lessons that can be drawn from this dialogue in the context of intra-family communication will be discussed. These lessons include the importance of adopting a gentle tone in family interactions, being patient and hopeful, employing persuasive methods, and recognizing that guidance ultimately comes only from Allah.

1. Pedagogical Method in Tafsîr

Our research topic is related to the pedagogical/educational/training method of tafsîr. It is useful to briefly mention this method. In the modern period, Muslims faced many problems and started to fall behind their rivals. This has led to the questioning of the goal of tafsîr. The idea that the goal of tafsîr was the guidance and reform of society became prominent. This idea led to many new methods of tafsîr in the contemporary period. One of them is the approach called pedagogical/educational/training tafsîr. In the pedagogical tafsîr approach, it is emphasized that the goal of the Qur'an is to educate people and guide them¹¹ verses are explained with their educational content and explained in accordance with educational goals in the pedagogical tafsîr method.¹² Pedagogical tafsîr is an approach that analyzes the verses with pedagogical concepts by focusing on the educational nature of the Qur'an. It treats the Qur'an as a kind of educational text. Pedagogical tafsîr is an interdisciplinary approach in which verses are explained with the

⁸ Huriye Martı-Abdurrahman Han, "Hz. Nuh'un Hayatı Ekseninde "Aile Olmak" Üzerine Yeniden Düşünmek", *Gümüşhane Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 5/9 (2016), 97-105.

⁹ Maşallah Turan, "Nûh ve İbrahim Kıssaları Bağlamında İslam'da Aile Mefhumu", *Journal of Humanities and Administrative Sciences* 5/20 (2019), 964-980.

¹⁰ Sema Çelem, *Tefsirlerde Nuh Kıssası Rivayetlerinin Gelişimi* (Ankara: Fecr Yayınları, 2020).

¹¹ Bayraktar Bayraklı, *Yeni Bir Anlayışın Işığında Kur'an Tefsiri* (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 2001), 1/18.

¹² Enver al-Bâz, *al-Tafsîr al-Tarbawî li'l-Qur'ân al-Karîm* (Misr: Dâr al-Nashr li'l-Jâmi'ât, 2007), 1/2-3.

knowledge and logic of religious education.¹³ In this method, the Qur'an is interpreted in terms of education and value transmission. It focuses on shaping the moral behavior of individuals. It capitalizes on the Qur'an's function both as a source of divine knowledge and as a spiritual teaching. This approach has gained considerable traction in the Muslim world, especially in Egypt, Turkey, and Indonesia. One of the earliest and most comprehensive examples of this method in the Arab world is Enver al-Bāz's three-volume *al-Tafsīr al-Tarbaʿwī li'l-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. This work analyzes the entire Qur'an from a pedagogical perspective. In Turkey, Bayraktar Bayraklı's 22-volume *Yeni Bir Anlayışın Işığında Kur'an Tefsiri* is a tafsīr written from a pedagogical perspective. Pedagogical tafsīr studies are perhaps most dynamic in Indonesia. This method of Tafsīr gained momentum in Indonesia in the early 2000s with the contributions of scholars such as Abdul Mukti Bisri and Abuddin Nata. Nata's 2002 *Tafsīr Ayat-ayat Pendidikan (Tafsīr al-Ayāt al-Tarbaʿiyya)* is considered the first significant attempt to systematize Qur'anic education from an exegetical perspective.¹⁴

Pedagogical tafsīr is important because it actively uses value transfer. It serves as a bridge, transforming the Qur'anic message into behavior and carrying the educational models of the prophets into the present day. The pedagogical tafsīr method aims to emphasize the educational function of the Qur'an, to develop pedagogical principles inspired by the Qur'an, and to strengthen the relationship between modern education and the Qur'an. The pedagogical tafsīr method emphasizes a number of basic topics in the Qur'an. Some of these can be listed as follows: Education through exemplary personalities, education through example and admonition, education through parables, education through encouragement and warning, education through punishment and deterrence, education through worship, and education through gradualism.¹⁵ Scholars advocating pedagogical Qur'anic tafsīr argue that the Qur'an should be reconsidered as a divine guide for developing human potential. Pedagogical tafsīr should be recognized as a distinct form of

¹³ Cemal Tosun, "Pedagogjik Meal-Tefsir Ya Da Kur'an'ın Pedagogjik Okunması Üzerine Bir Teklif Denemesi", *Kur'an-ı Kerim'in Maddi Varlığı*, ed. Mustafa Baş (İstanbul: Kitap Dünyası, 2024), 375.

¹⁴ Eyyüp Tuncer, *Endonezya'da Tefsir Çalışmaları* (İstanbul: Kitap Dünyası, 2023), 372-377.

¹⁵ Adnan al-Hamwi, "al-Asālīb al-Tarbaʿiyya fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm", *AKEV Akademi Dergisi* 73 (2018), 28.

tafsīr that provides a novel perspective on how the Qur'an influences minds and societies in contemporary times.¹⁶

Qur'anic parables are among the most stressed verses in the pedagogical tafsīr approach. The commentators who adopt this method analyze the Qur'anic parables in detail with pedagogical methods. In this way, they aim to reach the basic principles and methods to be used in the education and construction of society from the Qur'anic parables. Noah's dialogue with his son is also very suitable to be analyzed with a pedagogical tafsīr approach. This study aims to examine the principles that should be considered in family communication based on Noah's dialogue with his son with the pedagogical tafsīr method.

2. About Noah's Son

Before analyzing the dialogue between Prophet Noah and his son, it is helpful to briefly examine several aspects, such as the son's name, his age, his religious choice, and whether he was indeed Noah's biological child based on the implications of Qur'anic verses and classical exegetical sources. While these may appear to be minor details, they are crucial for understanding the relevance of this narrative to contemporary familial challenges. This episode, illustrates that even prophets may experience faith-based conflicts with their children, and such tensions are particularly likely to arise with younger members of the family.

2.1. The Name of Noah's Son

According to the Torah, Noah had three sons: *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japheth*.¹⁷ While the Qur'an does not mention the names of Noah's sons, Islamic sources indicate that he had a fourth son named *Ken'ān* (or *Yām*) in addition to the three sons mentioned in the Torah.¹⁸ In the Qur'an, the son who was invited by Noah to board the ark during the flood but rejected the invitation and ultimately drowned is referred to only as "Noah's son" without being named.¹⁹ Nevertheless, a considerable number of commentators have speculated on the

¹⁶ Tuncer, *Endonezya'da Tefsir Çalışmaları*, 374-375.

¹⁷ *Kitabı Mukaddes* (İstanbul: Kitabı Mukaddes Şirketi, 2003), Yar. 5:32.

¹⁸ Abū Ja'far Muhammad b. Jarīr et-Tabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*. ed. Ahmad Muhammad Shākir, (Beirut: Mū'assasat al-Risālah, 420/2000), 15/331; Şaban Kuzgun, "Hām", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 1997), 15/396.

¹⁹ *The Message of the Qur'an*, trans. Asad, Muhammad, (Gibraltar: Dār al-Andalus, 1993), Hüd 11/42.

name of this son. Some have stated that his name was *Ken'ān*,²⁰ while others have identified him as *Yām*. When comparing these opinions, it is evident that the majority of exegetes favor *Ken'ān*.²¹

While the exact identity of the individual who drowned in the Flood is of little relevance to the focus of this study, such details, despite lacking strong evidence, have long attracted interest, particularly within narrative tafsīr (*tafsīr al-riwāyah*). Classical sources suggest that Noah had multiple sons, yet the specific son referenced in this dialogue remains unidentified. This ambiguity highlights the reality that individuals raised in the same family environment may still pursue separate paths, even in matters of faith.

Qur'anic parables have some characteristics. One of these is that the Qur'anic parables do not include time, place, date, and person information. It is noteworthy that the name of Noah's son who drowned in the flood is not mentioned here. The Qur'an's omission of the name of Noah's son has significance not only at the level of storytelling but also in terms of the thematic and universal message of the text. The purpose of this deliberate ambiguity in the Qur'an is to present the message in the most impressive way without occupying the human mind with details. There is no practical benefit in mentioning the name of the son in this parable. On the contrary, by not mentioning the name, the universal message of the Qur'an is conveyed more clearly to its interlocutors. The time, place, date, and personal information about the parables would overshadow the main message.

2.2. Being Young

There is no explicit information in the Qur'an regarding the age of Noah's son, who drowned in the flood. However, it can be inferred from the verses related to the event that he was an adult. The flood is described with vivid and terrifying imagery: "Till, when Our judgment came to pass, and waters gushed forth in torrents over the face of the earth...",²² "And so We caused the gates of heaven to open with water pouring down in torrents."²³ "And it

²⁰ Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr Muqātil b. Sulaymān*, ed. 'Abdullāh Mahmūd Shāhhāt, (Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Turāth, 1423/2002), 2/281.

²¹ Abū al-Kāsim Mahmūd al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf an haqā'iq' et-tanzīl* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al- 'Arabī, 1407/1987), 2/396.

²² Hūd 11/40.

²³ al-Qamar 54/11.

moved on with them into waves that were like mountains..."²⁴ These descriptions convey the terror of the flood clearly. In particular, the likening of the waves to mountains suggests the presence of powerful storms or the pouring down of incredible amounts of water from great heights.

Even under normal circumstances, climbing mountains requires great effort. More so, in an extraordinary situation marked by multiple simultaneous natural disasters, the statement, "*I shall betake myself to a mountain that will protect me from the waters,*" reflects the determination of a physically strong and ambitious young man. Muhammad Asad (1900–1992) explains that the Arabic expression (*yā bunayya*) is used regardless of the actual age of the child, and that in this verse. Noah's son appears as an adult, whereas the same term is used for Joseph to refer to a child or, at most, a young man.²⁵

Youth represent a critical stage characterized by emotional sensitivity, a strong desire for independence, and a tendency to challenge authority, all of which can lead to conflict with parental figures. These traits often create communication difficulties within families. In the brief dialogue examined in this study, Noah's approach reflects an awareness of youth psychology, while his son's responses reveal the typical mentality of a young person.

2.3. Choosing the Wrong Faith

Another point that can be inferred from Noah's dialogue with his son is that the son did not accept his father's message and made an independent choice of belief. When Noah invited his son to board the ark, the expression *kāna fī ma'zilin* "he had kept himself aloof" describes his state of separation not merely in a physical sense but also spiritually remarking he was not among the believers. This indicates that he neither believed in Noah nor accepted the reality of the impending flood.²⁶ It is also crucial to recognize that Noah's call to his son to board the ark was, in essence, an invitation to faith. The son's refusal of this invitation, his decision to side with the majority of the community,²⁷ and the reason behind his choice may also be that he was afraid of the condemnation of his circle of

²⁴ Hūd 11/42.

²⁵ Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an* (Gibraltar: Dār al-Andalus, 1980), 440-441.

²⁶ Ibn Atiyyah al-Andalusī al-Muharibi, *al-Muharrar al-wajīz fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-azīz*, ed. Abd al-Salam Abd al-Shafi (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1422/2002), 3/174.

²⁷ Hūd 11/40.

friends.²⁸ Some exegetical sources also mention that Noah's unbelieving wife played a significant role in influencing their son, tempting him with lies and slander. Thus, Noah was put to a severe test by the disbelief of both his wife and his son.

Noah, as a prophet, could not have neglected guiding his immediate family in matters of faith. The Qur'an emphasizes the individual's primary responsibility to invite their family to belief, making the disbelief of his wife and son a profound trial for him. The attitude of Noah's son illustrates that faith and values are not inherited but instead individually chosen. The Qur'an underscores that belief arises from personal will, not from lineage. This parable highlights the enduring nature of generational conflict and identity struggle within families, reminding us that such tensions are not exclusive to the modern era.

2.4. Debate on Whether Noah's Son Was Biologically His Own

Some *mufasssirūn* have argued that the drowned son of Noah was not his biological son, basing this view on a particular *qirā'ah* attributed to 'Alī, in which the pronoun *ibnuh* (his son) is rendered as the feminine *ibnuhā* (her son). This *qirā'ah* suggests that the child belonged to Noah's previous wife, Valī'a.²⁹ In *al-Kashshāf*, a debate is reported between al-Hasan al-Basrī (d. 110/728) and al-Qatāda (d. 117/735) on this matter. In the debate, al-Hasan al-Basrī argued that the drowned child was in fact Noah's stepson, based on 'Alī's alternative *qirā'ah*. Al-Qatāda, however, responded by citing Noah's own words, "He was of my family,"³⁰ and referencing the opinion of the *Ahl al-Bayt* that the boy was indeed Noah's biological son. In response, al-Hasan al-Basrī is reported to have retorted, "Who takes his religion from the *Ahl al-Bayt*?"³¹ Despite his disbelief, Noah's son should be regarded as his biological child, as affirmed by the literal meaning of the verses and supported by the majority of exegetes.³² Rejecting this based on his lack of faith reflects subjective social reasoning rather than clear textual evidence.

It should not be considered unusual for the child of a prophet not to believe in his father, nor is it fair to hold the father accountable for such a choice. Parents who fulfil their

²⁸ Ahmet Kamil Hazarî, "Hz. Nuh (a.s)'un Ođlu", trans. Mehmet Çiftçi, *Diyanet Dergisi* 16/3 (1977), 190.

²⁹ Abū'l-Barakāt 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Umar al-Nasafî, *Madārik al-Tanzil wa Haqā'iq al-Ta'wil*, ed. Yūsuf 'Alī Budaywî (Beirut: Dār al-Tayyibî, 1419/1998), 2/60.

³⁰ Hūd 11/45.

³¹ Zamakhsharî, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/396.

³² Nasafî, *Madārik al-Tanzil*, 2/60; Şahan, "Hz. Nuh Kısası Bağlamında Ailevî İlişkiler", 226.

religious and moral responsibilities until their children reach maturity are not responsible for the decisions their children make thereafter. There is no guarantee that faith and moral education will necessarily influence a child's choices. Indeed, a righteous parent may have a disbelieving child, just as a misguided parent may have a righteous one. This parable underscores that once parents have fulfilled their duties, they are not to be blamed for the misguided choices of their children.

3. Lessons from Noah's Dialogue with His Son

The brief dialogue between Prophet Noah and his son, which took place under extraordinary circumstances, will be examined to highlight key insights regarding the appropriate tone and methods to use in family communication. Additionally, how certain points discussed in the previous section illuminate this communication challenges will also be evaluated.

3.1. The Role of Gentleness and Mercy in Family Communication

Communication is a multilayered process that involves not only the transmission of information but also the sharing of emotions, intentions, and values. The tone and style of expression play a decisive role in shaping the message's impact on the recipient. Contemporary communication theories and psychological research demonstrate that a gentle, nonjudgmental tone can lower individuals' defence mechanisms, thereby enhancing the likelihood of acceptance of a message. Indeed, it is widely emphasized that in effective communication, body language and vocal tone can be just as influential, if not more so, than the words themselves.³³ By employing a soft tone and demonstrating compassion, parents can establish emotional bonds more easily with family members experiencing a range of emotions, such as love, hatred, pain, or fear.³⁴ Such emotional proximity allows them to guide their children more effectively toward constructive behavior.

The Qur'an emphatically emphasizes the importance of a gentle tone in religious preaching; even when addressing disbelievers, the language should remain constructive and hopeful. Harsh and reproachful tones are explicitly criticized. Prophet Moses and

³³ A. Mehrabian - M. Wiener, "Decoding of inconsistent communication", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 6/1967), 109-110; Albert Mehrabian, *Silent Messages* (California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1971), 38-55.

³⁴ Hayati Hökelekli, *Psikoloji, Din ve Eğitim Yönüyle İnsanî Değerler* (İstanbul: DEM Yayınları, 2013), 199.

Aaron were commanded to speak softly to Pharaoh,³⁵ demonstrating that gentleness in communication is a necessary strategy rather than merely a matter of courtesy.

In the dialogue between Prophet Noah and his son, one of the most notable aspects is the way in which Prophet Noah addresses him. He uses the expression *yā bunayya* "O my son!" / "My dear son!" while inviting him to board the Ark and to embrace faith, speaking with heartfelt paternal affection. This term is the diminutive form of *ibn* "son" and, in Arabic, such expressions are commonly used to convey endearment, encouragement, compassion, love, and mercy regardless of the child's age. It serves as a sincere and tender call, powerfully reflecting Prophet Noah's deep love and compassion for his son.³⁶ Despite his son's disbelief and the extraordinarily challenging circumstances, Prophet Noah consistently maintains a tone of gentleness and grace. This form of address is likewise employed by Prophet Jacob³⁷ and Prophet Luqmān when speaking to their sons, indicating a consistent emotional and spiritual bond.³⁸ Such usage illustrates a stream of enduring paternal love and mercy.

Prophet Noah's words to his son reflect not only compassion but also a deep sense of mercy. This moment is one of the clearest examples in prophetic narratives where moral values are passed on through personal interaction. In this case, the ethical value emphasized is mercy. Mercy is more than a feeling of pity; it also involves concrete acts of kindness and benevolence. It is worth noting that the concept of mercy is often linked to compassion, tenderness, love, and care.³⁹

A gentle tone and a compassionate approach are essential attitudes that Muslims should adopt, especially toward young people who are drifting away from religious values. Establishing healthy communication with today's youth, accustomed to spending much of their time in virtual environments, requires making them feel loved and valued. It should be remembered that the tone used in family interactions directly affects children's emotional well-being. Therefore, instead of responding with anger, parents should speak

³⁵ Tā Hā 20/44.

³⁶ Muhammad al-Tāhir b. Āshūr, *al-Tahrīr wa al-tanwīr* (Tunis: al-Dār al-Tunisiyyah lil-Nashr, 1984), 12/76; Şahan, "Hz. Nuh Kıssası Bağlamında Ailevî İlişkiler", 241.

³⁷ Yūsuf 12/5.

³⁸ Luqmān 31/13, 16, 17.

³⁹ Mustafa Çağrı, "Merhamet", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2004), 184.

with kindness and mercy. This approach represents one of the core principles of Qur'anic pedagogy.

3.2. Patience and Hope: Foundational Pillars of Family Communication

Patience refers to maintaining inner strength in the face of hardship, adversity, and calamity, as well as demonstrating perseverance and resilience in the effort to transform negative circumstances into positive outcomes. Fundamentally, patience involves first acknowledging the existence of a problem and then engaging in proactive efforts toward its solution.⁴⁰ The Qur'an consistently emphasizes patience as a central principle when confronting life's trials and difficulties. Patience empowers individuals with the endurance to withstand challenges and guides them in discovering effective means of overcoming them.

Contemporary pedagogical approaches acknowledge that each individual possesses a unique learning trajectory and that personal development unfolds through distinct stages. According to some educators, individuals acquire moral values gradually, often with the aid of social support mechanisms. In this context, impatience may hinder rather than accelerate progress. Within the sphere of family communication, one of the most essential virtues for achieving constructive outcomes is the sustained practice of patience.

The narrative of Prophet Noah in the Qur'an consistently emphasizes the values of patience and perseverance from beginning to end. Indeed, it is appropriate to regard him as one of the symbolic figures representing patience and steadfastness in Islamic tradition. Despite the persistent obstinacy and resistance of his people, Prophet Noah continued his mission of delivering the divine message for 950 years with unwavering patience, determination, and commitment.⁴¹

Similarly, losing hope and giving up due to negative behavior is a significant mistake in family relationships. A parent's or educator's hopeful attitude can have a strong influence on how a person thinks and acts. This shows how positive expectations can shape behavior over time. Keeping hope alive means accepting imperfections and believing that

⁴⁰ Mustafa Çağrıncı, "Sabır", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 2008), 35/337.

⁴¹ al-'Ankabüt 29/14.

growth is still possible, even later on. In family life, staying hopeful sends an important message: we support our loved ones and believe they can change for the better.

Younger family members often act stubbornly and follow their emotions, which shows how critical patience and hope are in communicating with them. In this short exchange, Prophet Noah's son comes across as especially defiant. Even when the floodwaters were clearly rising, he refused his father's warning and said, "I'll take shelter on a mountain; it'll save me from the flood."⁴² His words reveal a self-assured attitude, confident in his own judgment and unwilling to accept help.⁴³ It is therefore of great significance that adults, in particular, maintain a patient and hopeful approach when interacting with such strong-willed and defiant family members.

3.3. Persuasion as a Method in Family Communication

Persuasion is a conscious and intentional process of communication aimed at voluntarily changing the attitudes, behaviors, or beliefs of the interlocutor. In this process, the individual is expected to undergo an internal transformation without any interference with their free will. It is an effective method that facilitates emotional and cognitive transformation in a rapid and enduring manner. In this respect, persuasion constitutes a fundamental component of pedagogical communication.⁴⁴ Within the family context, behaviors such as giving orders, passing judgment, or assigning blame should be avoided, as these undermine healthy communication. When such attitudes are justified on religious grounds, they may become even more detrimental. This can result in the obstinate rejection of values and norms and may foster rebellious behavior. In strong and healthy families, the emphasis should be placed on presenting convincing reasoning rather than exerting parental pressure or enforcing punitive measures. Such an approach contributes to the development of internal moral regulation and conscience in children. This is referred to as *insight-oriented communication*.⁴⁵

⁴² Hūd 11/43.

⁴³ Fahr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mefātīhu'l-gayb* (Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1420/1999), 17/352.

⁴⁴ Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), 51-60; Lev S. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 86.

⁴⁵ Hökeleklı, "Aile Psikolojisi ve Aile İçi İletişim", 59.

Noah's son responded to his father's invitation by saying, *"I shall take refuge on a mountain to protect me from the flood,"* thereby refusing his father's call. In other words, he is rejecting God's protection and instead relying on nature as a means of salvation. From a rational standpoint, his solution appears logically consistent under normal circumstances in terms of cause-and-effect relationships. This suggested solution to the calamity closely resembles the attitudes of today's youth who have wholly submitted to dominant modern ideologies such as determinism and positivism. However, what he failed to realize was that the *ṭūfān* (deluge) was not an ordinary natural disaster. At this critical moment, Prophet Noah tried to persuade his son by saying, *"Today there is no protector from the decree of Allah except for whom He gives mercy."* Through this declaration, he aimed to explain that the catastrophe they were facing was not a typical meteorological event, but a divine punishment sent by God's command. Given that contemporary youth often lean heavily on rational deductions under the influence of modern thinking, it becomes all the more necessary to engage with them through logical reasoning. Therefore, employing carefully constructed rational arguments in communication with young people is an essential approach for achieving effective persuasion.

It is noteworthy that Prophet Noah, while attempting to persuade his son to board the ark, refrained from coercion and allowed him to make his own decisions. In doing so, he ensured that full responsibility rested with his son.⁴⁶ Truly, a fundamental principle of persuasion is that the interlocutor should not be coerced; instead, voluntary behavioral change is expected.

Indeed, one of the family's functions is to guide children who misuse their will negatively toward positive behaviors. However, achieving this through coercion causes more harm than benefit. Some families impose certain behaviors on their children under the pretence of caring for their well-being. Family members subjected to such treatment are likely to develop highly problematic personalities. Therefore, families should foster desired behaviors in their children through persuasion and affection rather than coercion. After all, behaviors not originating from within cannot be sustained. Prophet Noah's attempt to persuade his son without coercion exemplifies that authoritarian and oppressive

⁴⁶ Martı - Han, "Hz. Nuh'un Hayatı Ekseninde "Aile Olmak" Üzerine Yeniden Düşünmek", 101.

approaches are inappropriate, even amid intra-family differences in belief. Clearly, the Qur'anic approach in these matters prioritizes understanding and persuasion.

3.4. Guidance Is from Allah Alone

The story of Noah and his son has a dramatic ending. Noah invites his son to faith. His son rejects the invitation. Then he drowns in the flood. Finally, Noah says, "*O my Lord! Surely my son is from my family. Surely Your promise is true...*"⁴⁷ His sorrow and plea are followed by a divine rebuke: "*O Noah! He is not from your family, for he has committed an evil deed; so do not ask Me for what you do not know...*"⁴⁸ These scenes not only complement the dramatic flow of the narrative but also contain profound lessons about divine guidance, prophetic responsibility, and the limits of human action.

It is inconceivable that Noah, who patiently called his people to the truth for many years, neglected his own family and son. Indeed, as seen in the parable, Noah fulfilled his prophetic mission to the fullest extent of his human capability and power. Even if the ideal communication and pedagogical principles mentioned above are implemented perfectly, the desired result may not be achieved. This is what happened in this parable. Noah's wife and son did not believe it. This incident underlines that guidance is in the hands of Allah alone. No matter how much a person wants it, no matter how much he or she does everything he or she is supposed to do, in the end, it is Allah who guides. No one, including the prophets, has been given any privilege in guidance.

It is said that this part of the story of Noah was a consolation to the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet wanted very much for his uncle Abū Tālib to become a believer, but when he refused, the following verse was revealed:⁴⁹ "*You cannot guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He wills, and He knows best those who will be guided.*"⁵⁰ Likewise, the verse "*Even if you are very fond of their guidance, know that Allah does not guide those whom He leads astray...*"⁵¹ also expresses this truth. "*O Prophet! You will almost destroy yourself because they do not believe.*"⁵² This verse emphasizes that guidance is entirely in the power of Allah. In

⁴⁷ Hūd 11/45.

⁴⁸ Hūd 11/46.

⁴⁹ Ibn Āshūr, *al-Tahrīr wa al-tanwīr*, 12/85.

⁵⁰ al-Qasas 28/56.

⁵¹ al-Nahl 16/37.

⁵² al-Shu'arā' 26/3.

the vision of guidance constructed by the Qur'an, Allah grants faith to whomever He wills, regardless of family or tribe.⁵³

Allah responds to Noah's request by saying, "O Noah! He is not from your family, for he has committed an evil deed; so do not ask Me for what you do not know..."⁵⁴ This is a harsh, reprimanding, and warning response.⁵⁵ This response underscores the Qur'anic principle that insisting beyond a certain point may risk overstepping the divine will. Believers must recognize their own limits and submit to divine judgment in matters of faith.

Conclusion

This study aims to reveal how Qur'anic parables can be interpreted in the context of family communication through pedagogical tafsīr, focusing on Noah's short but intense dialogue with his son. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the Qur'anic parables not only provide historical narratives but also contain principles that can shed light on contemporary communication problems.

One of the main findings of the study is that Noah's compassionate, soft, and persuasive address to his son is a divinely inspired example of a communication model centred on love and compassion within the family. This approach is considered to be an effective method in reaching the emotional world of today's youth. In addition, Noah's non-oppressive style and his emphasis on process-orientation instead of result-orientation are guiding parents in their pedagogical approaches towards their children.

Another important output is the function of the concept of "hope" in the pedagogical process. The patience and hope-based approach seen in Noah's attitude towards his son reveals an important psychological basis that enables the transformation of the individual in a pedagogical sense. This hopeful stance, grounded in persistence and emotional resilience, not only underscores the educator's belief in the potential for change but also fosters an environment in which the learner can gradually evolve. In this context, hope functions as both a motivational force and a stabilizing element, allowing the pedagogical relationship to endure setbacks without losing its transformative capacity. Thus, Noah's example reflects a deeper educational philosophy where

⁵³ Seyyid Ebu'l Alâ Mevdûdî, *Tefhîmü'l-Kur'ân*, trans. Muhammed Han Kayanî et al. (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 1996), 4/199.

⁵⁴ Hüd 11/46.

⁵⁵ Seyyid Kutub, *fî Zilâl'il-Kur'ân*, trans. İ. Hakkı Şengüler et al. (İstanbul: Hikmet Yayınları, ts.), 8/167; Ibn Āshūr, *al-Tahrîr wa al-tanwîr*, 12/87.

growth is nurtured not through immediate results but through steadfast belief in the possibility of inner change over time.

In conclusion, this study shows that the interpretation of Qur'anic parables through pedagogical tafsir contributes to the development of Qur'anic-based solutions to many social problems experienced by modern society, especially family communication. In this context, Noah's dialogue with his son offers a solid ground of values that parents can hold on to in the face of the ideological and moral challenges of the modern age. Future studies can contribute to the Qur'an-based modelling in family communication by analysing other prophet parables from similar pedagogical perspectives and using a comparative method.

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