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THE SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE IN THE BOOK "INTERPRETATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN, ITS EXPLANATION AND GRAMMAR" BY SHEIKH AL-DURRAH

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the rhetorical device of shifting perspective (iltifat) in the Holy Quran, as presented by Sheikh Muhammad Ali Taha al-Durrah in his book, "Tafsir al-Quran wa Bayanuhu wa I'rab" (Interpretation, Explanation, and Grammatical Analysis of the Quran). The research aims to demonstrate the rhetorical value of this device and Sheikh al-Durrah's role in linking grammatical analysis with rhetorical significance and Quranic meaning. The research begins by defining shifting perspective linguistically and technically, explaining that it is the speaker's transition from one style to another, such as shifting between first-person, second-person, and third-person pronouns, to achieve various rhetorical purposes. The research also reviews the most prominent types of shifting perspective in the Holy Quran, such as the transition from the third person to the second person or vice versa, with Quranic examples illustrating its effect on stimulating the reader's mind, capturing attention, amplifying meanings, and strengthening the psychological and emotional impact of the text. It emphasizes that shifting perspective is not merely a verbal embellishment, but rather an artistic tool that serves the meaning and context. The research then focuses on Sheikh al-Durrah's approach to interpreting this stylistic device, where he connects grammar and rhetoric, arguing that the shift in pronouns and grammatical forms is linked to Quranic purposes such as honoring, rebuking, encouraging, and warning. It also presents practical examples from his interpretation demonstrating how to employ this shift and revealing its rhetorical secrets. The research concludes that Sheikh al-Durrah presented a distinctive interpretive vision that made grammatical rules a means of understanding the eloquent miracle of the Holy Quran, and that the shift in perspective represents one of the most prominent manifestations of artistic beauty and expressive flexibility in the Quranic text.

KEYWORDS: *Shift, perspective, Interpretation, Holy Qur'an.*

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INTRODUCTION

Praise be to God, who revealed the Book to His servant, making it free from any crookedness, and made it an enduring miracle throughout the ages, from which flow the secrets of eloquence and in which the magnificence of the Arabic language is manifested. Peace and blessings be upon the most eloquent of those who spoke the letter ẓāʾ, our master Muhammad, and upon his family and companions and those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

To proceed: The Holy Quran is the eternal linguistic miracle that the most eloquent speakers have been unable to match, and which has dazzled the minds of the most eloquent with its styles. Among these refined rhetorical styles that highlight the richness of the Arabic language and the depth of its meanings is the technique of shifting perspective. This is the art of transitioning and changing the focus of discourse from one direction to another for precise purposes and objectives that stimulate the listener's mind and capture their attention. Since understanding the miraculous nature of the Holy Quran can only be achieved by studying the interpretations of the eminent scholars who dedicated their lives to serving the Book of God, this research aims to shed light on a contemporary work that combines precise grammatical analysis with beautiful expression: the book "The Interpretation of the Quran: Its Explanation and Grammatical Analysis" (by Sheikh Ali Taha al-Durra). The importance of this research lies in its attempt to uncover the rhetorical and applied methodology of Sheikh al-Durrah in his interpretation of the rhetorical device of shifting perspective (iltifat). His exegesis is distinguished by its departure from a purely grammatical approach, connecting grammatical analysis to meaning and rhetorical context. The reasons for choosing this topic are to highlight the aesthetic value of the shifting perspective in the Quranic text through the lens of a contemporary and accomplished commentator, and to demonstrate the extent to which grammar and rhetoric are intertwined in al-Durrah's work, as well as how he employs this device to reveal its miraculous meanings.

This research adopts a descriptive-analytical approach by examining the instances of the shifting perspective in al-Durrah's exegesis, then describing, classifying, and analyzing its rhetorical implications.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FIRST SECTION: THE CONCEPT OF ATTENTION LINGUISTICALLY AND TERMINOLOGICALLY

1. Turning linguistically, derived from the verb (turned), it is said to turn away from it, meaning to turn it away, and to turn right and left if it turns one way to the right and the other to the left.[1] The word “turning” in its linguistic origin revolves around the meaning of transformation, shifting, and turning from one side to another.
2. - The shift in rhetorical terminology: Rhetoricians have used various expressions to define the shift in terminology, depending on the development of the terminology. They can be summarized historically as follows: Ibn al-Mu’tazz (d. 297 AH) was the first to establish this term in his book Al-Badi’ and defined it as: the speaker’s shift from informing to addressing, and from addressing to informing, and so on.[2] As for Al-Zamakhshari (d. 538 AH), he dealt with it as a tool to serve the meaning and the system, and he called it in his explanation of some verses (deviation), and he considered it a method that brings down the obedience of the listener and renews his activity.[3] With al-Sakkaki (d. 626 AH), the concept was settled in his book "Miftah al-'Ulum" (Key to the Sciences), and he defined it with the well-known condition, which is expressing a meaning in three ways: speaking, addressing, and being absent, after expressing it in another of these ways, provided that the second expression is directed towards the same meaning as the first expression.[4] Accordingly, shifting in terminology is the speaker’s turning away from a specific stylistic path (speaking, addressing, absent) to another path while the event remains about the same person or thing for a rhetorical purpose limited by the context.

SECTION TWO

TYPES AND MANIFESTATIONS OF SHIFTING PERSPECTIVE

The most common form of shifting perspective is the shift between pronouns, which has six distinct mental manifestations used in the Arabic language and the Holy Quran.

1. Shifting from the third person to the second person: This is the transition from speaking about someone absent to addressing them directly. An example of this in Surah Al-Fatihah is the Almighty's saying:(All praise is for Allah—Lord of all worlds, the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgment)[5]. absent pronoun, Then God Almighty said(You ˹alone˺ we worship and You ˹alone˺ we ask for help) The style has transformed into a discourse [6].

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[1] - See: Lisan al-Arab, p. 83 / vol. 2 / entry for "laft".
[2] - See: Al-Badi’ Book, p. 119.
[3] - See: Al-Kashshaf 'an Haqa'iq Ghawamid al-Tanzil, p. 1
[4] - See: Key to the Sciences, p. 189
[5] - The Holy Quran, Surah Al-Fatihah, verses (2-5).
[6] - See: The Book of Interpretation, Explanation and Grammar of the Qur'an, Vol. 1, p. 17, under the section on shifts in perspective in Surah Al-Fatihah.

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2. Shifting from direct address to the third person, an example of which is in the Almighty's saying:(And it so happens that you are on ships, sailing with a favourable wind)[1]. The speech was first directed to the strangers, and this is evident in God's saying (you were), then He changed to the third person when addressing them, saying (them) and not (you).
3. Shifting from the first-person pronoun to the second-person pronoun: This is mentioned in the words of the believer of the family of Yasin: "And why should I not worship the One Who has originated me, and to Whom you will be returned?" Here, the statement is about himself in the first-person form, then he shifts to the second-person pronoun and says, "And to Him you will be returned."
4. Shifting from the first-person pronoun to the third-person pronoun: This is found in the Almighty's saying:(Indeed, We have granted you ˹O Prophet˺ abundant goodness)[2], The speech came in the form of the first-person pronoun glorifying himself, then God Almighty said:(So pray and sacrifice to your Lord ˹alone˺) He turned to the absence and did not say, "Explain to us."
5. Shifting from the second-person pronoun to the first-person pronoun, an example of which is in the Almighty's saying:(And we are commanded to submit to the Lord of all worlds)[3], This shift to the first-person pronoun ("and We commanded") came after a long period of addressing and arguing with the polytheists.
6. Shifting from the third-person pronoun to the first-person pronoun: This is found in the Almighty's saying:(So He formed the heaven into seven heavens in two Days, assigning to each its mandate)[4]. The discussion here is about the absent one, then God Almighty turned to the first-person form and said: ((And We adorned the lowest heaven with ˹stars like˺ lamps ˹for beauty˺ and for protection)). Some rhetoricians (like Ibn Atheer) broadened the concept of turning to include the shift in forms from the past to the present tense (or the shift from the singular to the plural), but turning to pronouns is the origin and backbone of this art.

THIRD TOPIC
THE RHETORICAL BENEFITS AND AESTHETIC VALUE OF SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES

- Switching perspectives are not merely verbal embellishment, but rather a stylistic device necessitated by subtle meanings. Its most prominent benefits include: The Theory of Listener Activity: People tire of a monotonous discourse. Therefore, when the speaker shifts from one style to another, the listener regains their attention and is refreshed. We find this in the verse: ((He frowned and turned ˹his attention˺ away,˹simply˺ because the blind man came to him ˹interrupting˺,You never know ˹O Prophet˺, perhaps he may be purified.))[5] The surah began with the third person, then the context suddenly shifted to direct address in the Almighty's words: "And what will make you know?" We find the aesthetic effect in this verse and the one after it, as it came to convey gentle reproach. It began with the third person to protect the noble status of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) from being confronted with reproach at the outset. When the listener became familiar with the talk, it turned to him with the sudden letter to shake his conscience and sharpen his attention to the greatness of the matter.
- Suspense and showing closeness, and magnifying the status of worship: The sudden shift in the pronoun gives the scene a vitality that makes it present in the mind of the recipient and moves him from the space of "information" to the space of observation and confrontation. The shift came in His Almighty's saying: ((All praise is for Allah—Lord of all worlds,the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful))[6] The context in the first verses proceeded in the style of absence and praise, then in His Almighty's words: ((You alone we worship)), it turned to direct address, and we find the aesthetic effect of the servant praising his Lord with attributes of greatness, mercy, and sovereignty, and attaining closeness, which raises his status from reporting about the absent to facing the present, so he turns to his Lord with the address "You alone" to feel closeness and the honorable confrontation in the station of worship.
- Demonstrating power and magnifying the manifestations of grace and greatness: The shift in attention comes to show that the mentioned action is issued from a direct plan and an inherent greatness that requires the servants to pay attention and give thanks. We find it in the Almighty's words: ((And God sends down water from the sky and gives life thereby to the earth after its death))[7] as the context began by talking about the divine essence in the style of kindness ((God sends down)) then the Almighty, when mentioning the watering, shifted to the first-person pronoun (the greatness of God) ((We give you to drink)) and did not say ((He gives you to drink)) as we find the aesthetic effect in alerting the listener to the fact that the coming out of the pure, palatable milk from the house of Fart and Dam is an action issued from a direct plan and supreme divine care. So He shifted to the greatness of God's pronoun to magnify the grace and bring down the obedience of the servants.

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[1] - Surah Yunus / Verse / 22.
[2] - Surah Al-Kawthar: Verse: 1
[3] - Surah Al-An'am: Verse: 71
[4] - Surah Fussilat: Verse: 12
[5] - Surah Abasa: Verses (1-3).
[6] - Surah Al-Fatihah: Verses (1-4)
[7] - Surah An-Nahl: Verse 10

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- Enhancing the impact of the statement and reinforcing the reward: The shift from the first-person narrator to the third-person narrator highlights the independence of the reward and the greatness of the ruler's judgment, as if it were a divine decree. We find this in the Almighty's words: ((And what is the matter with us that you do not believe in God and what has come to us of the truth?))[1] The narrative of the believers began with the first-person narrators (And what is the matter with us?), then the text suddenly shifted to the third person when explaining the reward, saying ((So God rewarded them)) and not ((So We rewarded them)). We find the aesthetic effect of the shift to the third person with the name (God). The pen came to reinforce that this reward is a decree, which adds majesty and awe to the scene.

CHAPTER TWO
((SHEIKH AL-DURRAH'S METHODOLOGY IN OBSERVING AND DIRECTING SHIFTS IN PERSPECTIVE))
SECTION ONE
TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH SHIFTS IN PERSPECTIVE ACCORDING TO AL-DURRAH

Sheikh Muhammad Ali Taha al-Durrah distinguished himself in his exegesis by combining grammatical and rhetorical analysis. Therefore, he did not overlook instances of stylistic deviation without pointing them out, and his expressions varied. When observing this art, he explicitly used the term "shift in perspective," which was his primary use when the transition occurred between the three pronouns (first, second, and third person), following the classical school of rhetoric. Sheikh al-Durrah also used the term "deviation"[2] when the shift extended to include morphological forms, such as shifting from the past tense to the present tense, or from declarative statements to supplications and requests, to convey a rhetorical nuance necessitated by the context.

The semantic shift: referring to the shift through its effect on the meaning and the context of the verses with it, as it links the movement of the conscience with the psychological state or situation depicted by the noble verse.[3]

THE SECOND TOPIC
THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES, GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS, AND SEMANTIC GUIDANCE

Sheikh al-Durrah's genius is evident in his approach of making grammatical analysis a servant to the rhetorical aid, rather than merely a set of rigid rules. His methodology in this aspect can be observed in the following points:

1. Determining the Grammatical Positions of the Pronouns to Which Shifts: The Sheikh is meticulous in accurately analyzing the new pronoun (whether it is in the nominative, accusative, or genitive case) to demonstrate to the student that this shift does not alter the grammatical coherence of the verse.
2. Interpreting Grammatical Factors: He explains how the shift in pronouns necessitates a specific grammatical interpretation, such as the assumption of an implied verb appropriate to the shift to direct address, as in the phrases "I tell you" or "Remember."
3. Context and Occasion: Sheikh al-Durrah believes that shifts in perspective are not arbitrary but always link grammatical analysis to the rhetorical reason, considering the movement of pronouns as a reflection of the major Quranic purposes, such as honoring, rebuking, or seeking refuge.

CHAPTER THREE
APPLIED STUDY: ANALYTICAL MODELS FROM AL-DURRAH'S INTERPRETATION

In his book, *Tafsir al-Qur'an wa Bayanuhu wa 'Ir'rab* (Interpretation, Explanation, and Grammatical Analysis of the Qur'an), Sheikh al-Durrah was not merely an explainer of rigid grammatical rules. Rather, he viewed grammar as a means of revealing the rhetorical structure and the miraculous nature of the Qur'an. In this chapter, we have chosen to review selected and representative models of the rhetorical device of shifting perspective in his interpretation, clarifying the classification of scholars regarding the forms of this shift, highlighting Sheikh al-Durrah's methodology and semantic guidance, without attempting an exhaustive analysis that would exceed the scope of this research.

FIRST SECTION
SPEECH SHIFT IN THIRD-PERSON AND SECOND-PERSON PRONOUNS

1. Shift from Third-Person to Second-Person: We find this in his statement: "Indeed, those who disbelieve - it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them - they will not believe. Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing." Then the context shifts in the second verse, saying: "And of the people are some who say, 'We believe in Allah and the Last Day,' but they are not believers," until it reaches the statement

[1] - Surah Al-Ma'idah: Verse 84
[2] - See: Interpretation of the Qur'an, its Explanation and Grammar, Vol. 1, p. 5
[3] - See: The same source, p. 404/210

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of God Almighty: "O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous."[1]

Sheikh Al-Durrah's guidance on the verses: Sheikh Al-Durrah notes in his analysis and guidance that the context began at the beginning of the surah by talking about the categories of creation (the righteous, the disbelievers, and the hypocrites) in the style of the third person, which was to explain their conditions and attributes. Then the Almighty suddenly turned to the style of direct address in his saying: ((O mankind, worship)).

The rhetorical point: The Sheikh directs this shift by stating that the initial approach to the hadith, using the method of the absent, was to explain the effects of the obligation and the consequences of acceptance and rejection scientifically. When the brilliant arguments were established in people's minds, he moved from the absent to the address and confrontation, shaking people's minds to bring to mind the greatness of the matter, may He be blessed and exalted.[2]

2. Shifting from direct address to the third person: This occurs in the verse: "It is He who has made you successors on the earth and raised some of you above others in degrees, that He may test you in what He has given you. Indeed, your Lord is swift in punishment, and indeed, He is Forgiving and Merciful."[3]

Sheikh al-Durrah's explanation: Sheikh al-Durrah stated that the address at the beginning of the verse is directed to the general public, those present and addressed using the plural pronoun: "He has made you," "some of you," "that He may test you." Then, at the end, the verse shifts to the third person, addressing the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) specifically with the singular pronoun, "Indeed, your Lord," implicitly shifting the discourse from them to the third person.

As for the rhetorical point: Sheikh Al-Durrah believes that this shift aims to strengthen the heart of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and honor him. After God Almighty explained the general rule of testing to cultivate character with the pronoun of address, He shifted to mentioning punishment and forgiveness, adding to the Lord of the Prophet (your Lord), to comfort him (peace and blessings be upon him) and to indicate that managing the affairs of the nation is due to God Almighty's Lordship over His Messenger through advocacy and support.[4]

THE SECOND TOPIC
THE SHIFT BETWEEN FIRST AND THIRD PERSON PRONOUNS

1. The Shift from First to Third Person: We find this in the Almighty's words: "And We decreed to the Children of Israel in the Scripture, 'You will surely cause corruption on the earth twice, and you will surely reach [a degree of] great arrogance.' So when the first of the two promises came to pass, We sent against you servants of Ours, possessing great might, and they sat in the midst of the homes. And it was a promise fulfilled." Then He said: "If you do good, you do good for yourselves; and if you do evil, it is against yourselves. So when the second promise ... Perhaps your Lord will have mercy upon you."[5]

Sheikh Al-Durrah's commentary: The commentator observes that the verses begin with a non-speaking, self-aggrandizing tone: "And We decreed," "And We sent forth," "servants of Ours." This context highlights the magnificence of divine decree. Then, at the conclusion of the promise, the context shifts to the third person, using the explicit name: "Perhaps your Lord will have mercy on you," and not "Perhaps We will have mercy on you." We find the rhetorical subtlety in Al-Durrah's commentary on this shift in expression: the use of the word "Lord" with the attached pronoun "your" (your Lord) in the context of mercy, following the threat, carries a subtle educational implication. The Lord is the one who rectifies and nurtures, and this opens the door of hope and expectation after hardship, reminding us that the essence of Lordship is bestowal and benevolence.[6]

2. Shifting from the third person to the first person: We find this in the verse: "And Allah had already taken a covenant from the Children of Israel, and We raised up from among them twelve leaders."

Sheikh al-Durrah's explanation: In his work on grammatical analysis, Sheikh al-Durrah clarifies that the verse begins with the explicit name of God and the third person, saying, "Allah took," not "We took." Then the context shifts directly to the most exalted and virtuous act of raising up, "and We raised up."

The rhetorical point: Al-Durrah analyzes this passage, explaining that the shift to the first person pronoun in the raising up of the leaders ("and We raised up") serves to highlight the magnificence of this raising up and God's direct care in managing their affairs and supporting them. Attributing the raising up to the first person pronoun conveys honor and the utmost importance placed on fulfilling this covenant.[7]

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[1] - Surah Al-Baqarah: Verse: (6-21).
[2] - View: Interpretation of the Qur'an, its Explanation and Explanation, Part 1 / pp. 52-55.
[3] - Surah Al-An'am: Verse 165.
[4] - See: The Book of Interpretation of the Qur'an, its Explanation and Grammar, Vol. 13 / pp. 438-439
[5] - Surah Al-Isra, verses (4-8).
[6] - Surah Al-Ma'idah: Verse 1.
[7] - See: The Book of Interpretation of the Qur'an, its Explanation and Grammar, Vol. 3 / pp. 46-47.

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THIRD TOPIC
A SHIFT IN FORMS AND TEMPORAL CHANGE

Sheikh al-Durrah expanded the application of shift in form, following the example of prominent rhetoricians like Ibn al-Athir, to include shifts in morphological forms. Among these are:

1. Shifting from the past to the present tense: This is found in the verse: “And have they not seen how many generations We destroyed before them? Indeed, they will not return to them. And indeed, all of them will be brought before Us. And a sign for them is the dead earth. We have brought it to life and brought forth from it grain, from which they eat.” (Quran 3:125-126). The Sheikh's interpretation of this verse is insightful, as he correctly identified the morphological factors of the verse. He shifted the Quranic structure in the context of gratitude from the past tense verb “We have brought it to life” (Quran 3:125) to the present tense verb in the verse “they eat” (Quran 3:125). The rhetorical point emphasized by Sheikh al-Durrah is that the preference for the present tense here aims to evoke a vivid and ever-renewing image of the blessing in the minds of the servants. The bringing to life and the bringing forth of grain have occurred and are finished, but their eating and benefiting from the sustenance is renewed and continuous. Every moment is a continuous obligation to thank God for His blessings and to appreciate the permanence of His favor.
2. Shifting from the present tense to the past tense: We find it in the Almighty’s words: “And it is God who sends the winds, and they stir up clouds, and We drive them to a dead land and give life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness. Thus is the resurrection.”[1]

Sheikh Al-Durrah's commentary: Sheikh Al-Durrah points out the morphological structure of the verse, noting two consecutive shifts in tense. The verse begins with the past tense verb "sent," then shifts to the present tense in the phrase "so it stirs," and then the structure returns to the past tense, shifting back to the first-person plural in the phrases "so we drove it" and "so we revived it," rather than saying "so we drive it and revive it."

The rhetorical point: Sheikh al-Durrah analyzes this astonishing shift in tenses and forms, explaining that the shift to the present tense in "fa-tashir" (it points) evokes a vivid and vivid image in people's minds, depicting the movement of the wind as it stirs and disperses the clouds. This is because the present tense conveys renewal and continuity (narrating the present moment). As for the subsequent shift to the past tense in "fa-saqnahu, fa-ahyayna" (We drove it, then We revived it), the point lies in indicating the certainty and conviction of the action's realization and execution. The act of driving and reviving are great matters that only God is capable of, so the past tense is used to suggest that it is a certainty of occurrence and an inevitable outcome, by our power and ability, not to allude to the logical analogy of resurrection after death at the end of the verse.[2]

In conclusion, what has been presented in this applied chapter demonstrates that Sheikh al-Durrah's approach to the rhetorical device of shifting was not merely an observation of stylistic shifts, but rather a connection between the grammatical tool and its psychological, semantic, and educational dimensions. This was evident in his ability to highlight the rhetorical nuances of the shift in perspective through innovative applied examples that demonstrate his uniqueness in guiding the Qur’anic system, which confirmed that studying grammar with him is the key to appreciating the Qur’anic miracle in the Holy Text.

CONCLUSION

At the conclusion of this research, focusing on the book Interpretation of the Qur’an, its explanation, and its parsing, the most prominent results that have been reached can be summarized:

The research proved that Sheikh Muhammad Ali Taha Al-Durrah was not just an expresser of words, but rather had an insightful rhetorical vision that employed grammatical rules to serve the miracle of graphic structures. Al-Durrah’s approach was characterized by clarity and accuracy in monitoring the style of attention, relying on the rhetorical heritage of the predecessors and adding to it analytical touches that linked the verses to their purposes and their psychological and semantic significance. The applied study showed that attention in the Holy Qur’an represents the pinnacle of graphic flexibility, as it varies. Maqasid between honoring and astonishing and infusing vitality and activity into the soul of the reader and listener.

Being a teacher of the Arabic language for the secondary stage can draw the students’ minds to the aesthetics of the language of the Holy Qur’an in a simplified way that shows the beauty of the stylistic shift (or turning around) when they pass through a verse such as Surat Al-Fatihah, which develops in them the faculty of rhetorical flair without burdening them with extracurricular rules. In my turn, for next year, I will do extracurricular activities, a cultural competition, and the work of a mural in which I show the style of turning around.

[1] - Surah Fatir: Verse 9.
[2] - See the book "Tafsir al-Qur'an wa Bayanuhu wa I'ra'iyah", Volume 8, page 175.

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