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Eschatology in the Quran: Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotic Study of Surah Al-Waqi'ah

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Abstract: This research aims to examine eschatological verses in Surah Al-Waqiah using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, focusing on the relationship between the representamen (sign) and the object it represents. Peirce classified signs into three distinct categories: icon, index, and symbol. The study, conducted as library research using descriptive qualitative methods, employs content analysis for data interpretation. Upon analysis, it identifies eight verses featuring icons where the sign closely resembles the object it represents, such as depicting the universe's destruction as akin to the end of the world. It also identifies nine verses containing indices that clarify cause-and-effect relationships on the Day of Judgement, including the elevation or debasement of groups based on their worldly status and the consequences of indulgence and major sins leading to hellfire. Furthermore, 17 verses use symbols with conventional relationships, such as the "right" and "left" groups to represent categories of individuals in the afterlife and fruit-bearing trees representing perpetual pleasure in heaven. Peirce's semiotics offers a new perspective for understanding the Quran's message concerning eschatological events that will occur on the Day of Judgement.

Keywords: Eschatology; Peirce's semiotics; Icon; Indeks; Symbol.

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis ayat-ayat eskatologi dalam surah Al-Waqiah. Ayat ini dibaca dengan menggunakan teori semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce dan berfokus pada analisis hubungan antara representamen dan objek yang diwakilinya. Semiotik Peirce membagi tanda dalam hubungan representamen (tanda) dengan objeknya (petanda) menjadi: Ikon, Indeks, dan Simbol. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan (library research) dengan metode penelitian kualitatif yang bersifat deskriptif. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan adalah analisis isi (content analysis). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya delapan ayat yang mengandung ikon, di mana representasi dalam ayat memiliki kemiripan langsung dengan objeknya, seperti tanda-tanda kehancuran alam semesta yang mencerminkan terjadinya hari kiamat. Selain itu, terdapat sembilan ayat yang mengandung indeks, yang menjelaskan hubungan sebab-akibat dari peristiwa-peristiwa di hari kiamat, seperti merendahkan dan meninggikan golongan karena status sosial di dunia, bermewah-mewahan dan dosa besar yang menyebabkan siksa neraka, serta tidak merasakan pusing saat minum di surga karena kenikmatan yang kekal. Sedangkan, 17 ayat mengandung simbol, di mana hubungan antara representamen dan objeknya bersifat konvensional, seperti golongan kanan dan kiri yang melambangkan kategori manusia di akhirat, serta pohon berbuah tanpa henti yang menjadi simbol keabadian kenikmatan surga. Semiotika Pierce ini memberikan nuansa baru dalam memahami pesan al-Qur'an tentang informasi eskatologi yang akan terjadi di hari kiamat.*

Kata Kunci: *Eskatologi; Semiotika Peirce; Ikon; Indeks; Simbol.*

INTRODUCTION

Natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic, often evoke associations with the end of the world and the ageing and vulnerability of our planet. Some interpret these phenomena as signs of an impending apocalypse (Yulaeliah, 2023). The study of the end times, known as eschatology, falls within the realm of religious metaphysics or the science of the supernatural (Muchofifah et al., 2023). The Koran highlights the concept of life after death through eschatological verses, which serve both as spiritual guidance and as stern reminders of the reality of Judgement Day. These passages held great emotional significance for Arab society during the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW. During that period, Arab society primarily focused on material existence and frequently neglected or dismissed the concept of an afterlife (Al-Muthairi, 2012).

Surah Al-Waqiah is one of the chapters in the Koran that delves into eschatology, discussing events of the apocalypse and life after resurrection. Interpreting its eschatological concepts goes beyond a literal reading, requiring in-depth analysis to uncover deeper meanings. Effective interpretation starts with recognising the text's nuances and the messages it aims to convey (Lubis et al., 2023). A semiotic approach, particularly the framework developed by Charles Sanders Peirce, can be highly effective in decoding the symbolic systems within the Koranic verses (Suherdiana, 2008).

Peirce (1982)) introduced the triangle theory of meaning, which includes three interconnected elements: the representamen (sign), the object, and the interpretant. For something to be considered a sign, it must meet two conditions: it must be perceivable by the senses or thoughts or feelings, and it must function as a representation of something else. An object is the thing or concept that the sign refers to, which can be either actual items or mental concepts. An interpretant is the understanding or interpretation of the sign. It is the meaning that the sign generates in the interpreter's mind (Poizat et al., 2023). Fatimah (2020) refers to this interaction as the semiosis process. Peirce classifies the relationship between signs and objects into three categories: icon, index, and symbol (Peirce, 1982).

Eschatology in the Koran and semiotic theory have been extensively studied. Andy Hadiyanto (2018) examined the symbolic meanings of selected verses about the Apocalypse and the Resurrection using textual and contextual analysis, as well as a literary approach and structural analysis. Ahmad Arjun (2023) investigated the significance of the apocalypse in Surah al-Qiyamah using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. The study began with a linguistic analysis to determine denotative meanings before progressing to connotative readings to uncover mythological meanings. Nur Kholid Syaifullah (2016) analysed the doomsday events in Surah Al-Waqiah using Riffaterre's semiotics. The analysis focused on the relationships among signs within the text and employed various analytical methods, including displacing, distorting, heuristic, and retroactive reading, as well as identifying matrices, models, variants, and hypograms.

After reviewing several previous studies related to the topic, a common theme emerges: the analysis of doomsday events using semiotic theory. Past research, however, has focused solely on the end of the world without considering events in the afterlife. This study aims to explore the eschatological verses in Surah Al-Waqiah, covering both Judgement Day and the afterlife, through the lens of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory. The research focuses on the relationship between representamen and the objects they signify. The goal is to identify and analyse the eschatological verses in Surah Al-Waqiah using Peirce's semiotic framework, specifically examining the connections between signs and their objects. By

interpreting the semiotic elements in these verses, this study aims to provide insights into the occurrences of doomsday and the afterlife, including life in heaven and hell. Further research that applies semiotic theory to religious texts is necessary to offer broader lessons for humanity, encouraging people to do good and avoid evil.

METHOD

This research is a library study that uses descriptive and qualitative methods. It applies Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory (1982),), focusing on the relationships between representamen (signs) and the objects they represent—icons, indexes, and symbols within Surah Al-Waqiah. The primary data source is Surah Al-Waqiah, with additional sources including books of Quranic interpretation, articles, and other relevant materials. The interpretive texts referenced include *Zubdatul tafsir min fathil qodir, Tafsir Al-Karim Ar-Rahman fi Tafsiri Kalami Al-Manar, Tafsir At-tahrir wa At-tanwir, At-tafsir Al-Muyassar, Tafsir Li-yaddabbarū āyātih,* dan kitab *At-tafsir Al-wasith li Al-quran Al-Karim.*

The data collection process involves selecting eschatological verses related to doomsday and the period following doomsday in Surah Al-Waqiah and classifying them according to semiotic signs (icons, indexes, and symbols). Content analysis is the main way that data is analysed. It examines eschatological passages in terms of objects, representations, and connections, and then classifies these connections as icons, indexes, or symbols. The systematic analysis of the data is guided by Peirce's theory of the relationship between representamen and semiotic objects. The analysis proceeds through the following steps: Description, identifying and describing the signs (representamen) in the eschatological verses and their relationships to the objects they represent; Interpretation, interpreting the meaning of the eschatological signs based on their relationships to objects and categorising them as icons, indexes, or symbols according to Peirce's theory; and Internal Coherence involves examining the relationships and coherence among the signs in the eschatological verses to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content in Surah Al-Waqiah.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic eschatology covers discussions on events preceding the apocalypse, the occurrence of the apocalypse, and life after death and resurrection. The Quran and hadith provide extensive details about the significant events that will unfold on the Day of Judgement (Khassim & Hassan, 2019). This eschatology can be categorised into two primary elements: doomsday (*yaumul qiyamah*) and the afterlife, which is seen as the ultimate destination for humanity. This framework portrays heaven (*Jannah*) as a place of happiness for the righteous, and hell (*Nar*) as a place of punishment for sinners (Nurtawab, 2014).

Fundamentally, the Quran's eschatological teachings outline the concepts of a pleasurable paradise and a punishing inferno. The core of these teachings suggests that individuals will eventually become fully aware of their actions' consequences. (Fazlurrahman, 1996). This awareness motivates Muslims to maximise their potential for success in the afterlife (M. R. Hidayat & Muttaqin, 2023). Hassan Hanafi (as cited in Nurhidayanti, 2020) views eschatology as a vision for humanity's future, highlighting the need to prepare for a better future and improve the world. These eschatological ideas can be connected to Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory to interpret the signs that signify the end times.

Charles Sanders Peirce, along with Ferdinand de Saussure, is a key figure in semiotics (Habibi, 2019). Peirce, a modern semiotician, focused on philosophy and logic, asserting

that everything can be viewed as a sign. He believed communication occurs through the use of signs and that human thought processes are sign-based. According to Peirce, everything that exists can be interpreted as a sign (Rizal & Maula Sari, 2022). In Surah Al-Waqiah, various icons, symbols, and indices are used to depict the Day of Judgement and related events in the afterlife. This research analyses 37 eschatological verses out of the 92 in Surah Al-Waqiah. The analysis examines the relationship between the representamen and the object being represented based on Peirce's semiotic framework, which includes icons, indexes, and symbols.

Icon in Surah Al-Waqiah

According to Peirce (in Berger, 2010), an icon is a sign that relates to an object through resemblance. An icon can be a visual or verbal representation that directly resembles its object, such as a picture of a car resembling an actual car (Wulandari & Siregar, 2020). Kris Budiman (in Vardani, 2016) notes that icons include not only images but also graphs, diagrams, maps, equations, and metaphors, as long as they show a recognisable similarity to their objects. In Surah Al-Waqiah, eight eschatological verses contain icons, analysed using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach. These verses illustrate how icons are employed to convey eschatological concepts.

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ ٱلۡوَاقِعَةُ ۝١ لَيۡسَ لِوَقۡعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ۝٢

When the Inevitable Event takes place (1) then no one can deny it has come (2).

The word "الواقعة" (doomsday)) in this verse is a sign representing the doomsday event, directly describing the Day of Judgment. The Quran uses words as iconic signs to describe objects (Hidayat, 2009). "Al-waqiah" (الواقعة) is another term for the Day of Judgment (يوم القيامة). The Quran uses various terms for the Day of Judgment, such as *Al-haqqah* (الحاقة) and *Al-Qori'ah* (القارعة) (Tantawi, 1996). The word "الواقعة" can describe the signs of the impending destruction of the universe, which no creature can avoid. This serves as a call for humans to perform good deeds in preparation for that inevitable day.

إِذَا رُجَّتِ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ رَجّٗا ۝٤ وَبُسَّتِ ٱلۡجِبَالُ بَسّٗا ۝٥ فَكَانَتۡ هَبَآءٗ مُّنۢبَثّٗا ۝٦

When the earth will be violently shaken (4) and the mountains will be crushed to pieces (5) becoming scattered particles of dust (6).

The three verses preceding the sentence "When the earth will be violently shaken (4) and the mountains will be crushed to pieces (5) becoming scattered particles of dust (6)" serve as a representamen, depicting the destruction of the Day of Judgment. This imagery—earthquakes and mountains turning to dust—serves as an icon, directly resembling the catastrophic events it represents. These verses vividly depict the Day of Judgement, marked by the earth's violent shaking, the collapse of mountains, and the reduction of everything to dust, leaving no trace (Ashour, 1984). The catastrophic earthquakes and mountain collapses that annihilate everything serve as vivid and tangible icons that closely resemble the Day of Judgement.

فِي جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ۝١٢

In the Gardens of Bliss (12).

In the verse above, the word "جَنَّاتِ" (heavens) acts as a representament to symbolise a shady garden. This term evokes the image of a lush, shaded garden because it stems from a root word meaning to cover or shade. Thus, the relationship between the representament and its object can be categorised as iconic. The word "jannah" (جنة) is derived from "janna"

(جن), which signifies the act of covering or hiding (Syamsiyah, 2022). In the Koran, "jannah" is used to refer to heaven, drawing a parallel to the image of a dense, shady garden. Heaven is portrayed as a refreshing and shaded environment, full of pleasure, akin to a garden teeming with trees and greenery. This imagery provides readers with a vivid and tangible depiction of the beauty and delight of heaven as promised to believers.

This verse clarifies the reward mentioned in the previous verse, which is for those who strive for goodness in the world and are subsequently chosen by Allah SWT. Allah SWT brings these individuals closer and rewards them with a heaven filled with pleasure (Majma', 2009). By using "jannah" as an icon, the Koran effectively conveys the concept of heaven in a relatable way, illustrating the pleasure, abundance, and eternity that await there.

فَلَوْلَآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلْحُلْقُومَ ﴿٨٣﴾

Why then ˹are you helpless˺ when the soul ˹of a dying person˺ reaches ˹their˺ oesophagus (83).

In this verse, the phrase "the soul reaches the oesophagus" is used as a representamen, drawing an analogy to the phenomenon of death. This expression powerfully illustrates a near-death situation, where a person hovers between life and death. Thus, the relationship between the representamen and the object it signifies is iconic. Allah's use of the term "oesophagus" rather than "throat" adds depth to the depiction of death. The term "oesophagus" provides not only a physical description but also conveys a profound spiritual meaning about the transition towards death and the afterlife. It signifies the initial indication of a person's departure from this world (Muqbil, 2009). The phrase "the soul reaches the oesophagus" iconically represents death, marked by the final stage of life (*sakaratul maut*), where a person struggles to breathe, as if something is obstructing his/her oesophagus.

فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتُ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾

Then ˹such a person will have˺ serenity, fragrance,[1] and a Garden of Bliss (89).

In this verse, the term "jannah" symbolises heaven as a lush and beautiful garden. It is paired with the word "na'iim," meaning pleasure, to represent heaven as a place of eternal joy, unlike anything experienced on earth. This verse highlights the reward for those who eagerly pursue noble deeds, as mentioned in the preceding verse. These individuals are blessed with sustenance and a paradise filled with unimaginable pleasures, sights unseen, sounds unheard, and thoughts beyond human comprehension. They also receive divine blessings and closeness to The Creator (As-Sa'di, 2000). Thus, heaven (*Jannah*) is depicted as a reward for those who dedicate their earthly lives to doing good, offering pleasures beyond earthly experiences.

Index in Surah Al-Waqiah

According to Peirce (in Berger, 2010) an index is a sign that appears due to a permanent relationship with its object. The index illustrates the cause-and-effect relationship between the sign and the signified, as the index cannot exist without the presence of the signified (Wulandari & Siregar, 2020). Footprints on the ground, for example, indicate that pedestrians are present. In Surah Al-Waqiah, there are nine verses that contain indices, which can be analysed using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic concept:

خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ﴿٣﴾

It will debase ˹some˺ and elevate ˹others˺ (3).

The words (خَافِضَةٌ) and (رَّافِعَةٌ) illustrate a cause-and-effect relationship with the fate of humans, who will be either humbled or exalted on the Day of Judgement as a result of their worldly actions. These words serve as indices describing the conditions of people who will be degraded due to their disbelief in Allah SWT and those who will be elevated or honoured due to their faith and righteous deeds. This passage explains that on the Day of Resurrection, some groups will look down on others, and vice versa. Al-Ashqor (1985) interprets this as the ascent of those deemed lowly, such as devout believers, and the fall of those respected and considered important during their worldly lives, such as influential disbelievers and wealthy wrongdoers.

لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنۡهَا وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ ١٩

That will cause them neither headache nor intoxication (19).

The words لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ (meaning "not dizzy") and وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ (meaning "not becoming intoxicated") in this verse, serve as indices with a causal relationship to the eternal and unlimited pleasure in heaven. While drinking in large quantities on earth can lead to dizziness and intoxication, such symptoms do not manifest in heaven due to the perpetual and limitless nature of joy. Thus, the index in this passage highlights the causal relationship between the absence of dizziness and drunkenness when drinking in heaven, signifying eternal and boundless pleasure.

لَا يَسۡمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغۡوٗا وَلَا تَأۡثِيمًا ٢٥

There they will never hear any idle or sinful talk (25).

In this verse, the phrase "لَا يَسۡمَعُونَ" (not hearing) indicates that the residents of heaven will not hear idle or sinful words. The phrase serves as an index reflecting the pure and blissful environment of paradise, where they are fully engaged in enjoying Allah's rewards for their righteous deeds on earth.

إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ قَبۡلَ ذَٰلِكَ مُتۡرَفِينَ ٤٥ وَكَانُواْ يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى ٱلۡحِنثِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٤٦

Indeed, before this ˹torment˺ they were spoiled by luxury (45), and persisted in the worst of sin (46).

The terms "مُتۡرَفِينَ" (indulging in luxury) and "يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى ٱلۡحِنثِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ" (persisting in the worst of sin) indicate why they are condemned to hell. Their luxurious lifestyle and continuous commission of major sins on earth are the reasons for their placement and punishment in hell.

وَكَانُواْ يَقُولُونَ أَئِذَا مِتۡنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَٰمًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبۡعُوثُونَ ٤٧

They used to ask ˹mockingly˺, "When we are dead and reduced to dust and bones, will we really be resurrected? (47).

The phrase مِتۡنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا serves as an index that describes humans' condition after their deaths. It implies a causal link to the resurrection, which some doubt, potentially leading to punishment in hell. The terms "dead," "earth," and "bones" in this verse depict the post-mortem state of the human body, fostering scepticism about life after death. The verse vividly describes that after death, human bodies will decay into dust and bones

نَحۡنُ قَدَّرۡنَا بَيۡنَكُمُ ٱلۡمَوۡتَ وَمَا نَحۡنُ بِمَسۡبُوقِينَ ٦٠

We have ordained death for ˹all of˺ you, and We cannot be prevented (60).

The phrase نَحۡنُ قَدَّرۡنَا بَيۡنَكُمُ ٱلۡمَوۡتَ (We have ordained death for all of you) serves as an index, indicating God's absolute power and decree over the death of living beings. This expression signifies that death is a direct result of God's will, demonstrating His control over the timing of every creature's demise. The verse highlights that Allah alone determines death, and no one can escape it. This causal relationship shows that death is a direct outcome of God's decree, emphasising His supreme and inescapable power. Thus, death functions as an index of God's power and an inevitable decree.

وَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُكَذِّبِينَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٩٢﴾ فَنُزُلٞ مِّنۡ حَمِيمٖ ﴿٩٣﴾

But if such person is one of the misguided deniers (92) then their accommodation will be boiling water to drink (93).

Receiving a dish of boiling water, as described in the passage, serves as an index linked to lying and following the wrong path. These actions lead to the consequence of being served boiling water in hell, illustrating the torment there. The verse warns that those who deny the truth and choose a misguided path will face the painful punishment of drinking boiling water, highlighting the severe consequences of deceit and deviation.

Symbols in Surah Al-Waqiah

According to Peirce (in Berger, 2010)), a symbol is a sign that illustrates the inherent relationship between the signifier and the signified. Symbols are characterised by their arbitrariness and reliance on social convention. They often manifest as writing, print, letters, or abbreviations representing specific objects, processes, or concepts (Wirta, 2022). In relation to the objective of this study, Surah Al-Waqiah contains 17 verses that can be analysed through Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework. These verses are listed below:

فَأَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡمَيۡمَنَةِ مَآ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡمَيۡمَنَةِ ﴿٨﴾ وَأَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡمَشۡـَٔمَةِ مَآ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡمَشۡـَٔمَةِ ﴿٩﴾

the people of the right, how ˹blessed˺ will they be (8), the people of the left, how ˹miserable˺ will they be (9).

The terms "people of the right " and " people of the left " in this passage serve as symbols to represent two distinct groups of people with different destinies in the afterlife. The "right group" symbolizes individuals who perform good deeds in this world, thereby receiving good fortune in the afterlife. On the other hand, the "left group" represents those who commit evil deeds and, as a result, face misfortune in the afterlife. This symbolic use of "right group" and "left group" is a conventional agreement in the Quran to illustrate the outcomes of human actions in this life, determining their fate in the afterlife. The right group comprises individuals blessed by Allah for their good deeds, worship, love, and obedience, and they are promised great rewards and a glorious place in heaven. In contrast, the left group represents those who engage in sin and wrongdoing, neglecting moral values and harming others, resulting in punishment and suffering in hell.

عَلَىٰ سُرُرٖ مَّوۡضُونَةٖ ﴿١٥﴾

˹All will be˺ on jewelled thrones (15).

This verse uses the phrase "jewelled thrones" as a symbol to symbolise the grandeur, luxury, and enjoyment one will experience in heaven. This metaphor conventionally depicts a life of unparalleled luxury and divine favours in the afterlife, far surpassing any worldly pleasures. The portrayal of heaven featuring "jewelled thrones" conveys the prosperity and majesty awaiting those who are faithful. This symbolises Allah's promise to

those who believe and perform good deeds in this world, ensuring they receive heavenly rewards and pleasures as a testament to their obedience and faith.

بِأَكۡوَابٖ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأۡسٖ مِّن مَّعِينٖ ١٨

With cups, pitchers, and a drink ˹of pure wine˺ from a flowing stream (18)

The "flowing stream" in the above verse serves as a symbol for Arab communities living in arid regions. The presence of a flowing stream represents the abundance and satisfaction that the inhabitants of heaven will experience. A "flowing stream" is extremely valuable and a source of life, making this symbol a well-understood representation of the plentiful and satisfying life in heaven. At the time the verse was revealed, the Arabs lived in dry, water-scarce areas, making water a highly prized symbol of luxury, contentment, and abundance. The text assures that the inhabitants of heaven will drink from glasses and cups filled with drinks from water sources that will never run dry. This imagery is particularly relevant to the Arabs of that era, for whom flowing water symbolised ultimate abundance and satisfaction.

وَحُورٌ عِينٞ ٢٢ كَأَمۡثَٰلِ ٱللُّؤۡلُوِ ٱلۡمَكۡنُونِ ٢٣

And ˹they will have˺ maidens with gorgeous eyes (22), like pristine pearls (23)

In this verse, the phrase "gorgeous eyes like pristine pearls" symbolizes the beauty of the companions who will join the inhabitants of heaven. This metaphor corresponds with the Arab standards of female beauty during the revelation of the verse. The Quran uses this familiar and easily understood imagery to describe the beauty of the angels who will be partners in heaven. The relationship between the representamen and the object it represents can be categorised as symbolic. The verse indicates that believers will be rewarded with a charming angel to accompany them in heaven. This aligns with the preferences of the people of Mecca at that time, who valued youth, fair skin, dark hair, and large eyes in women (Malia & Atmi, 2023).

لَّا مَقۡطُوعَةٖ وَلَا مَمۡنُوعَةٖ ٣٣

Never out of season nor forbidden (33)

In the verse, the phrase "never out of season nor forbidden" symbolizes a tree that perpetually bears fruit with no restrictions on its enjoyment. This imagery represents the endless and unlimited pleasure that the inhabitants of heaven will experience. The idea of unceasing and unrestricted enjoyment in the verse conveys the continuous and boundless delights of heaven. By illustrating the gifts and rewards awaiting the inhabitants of heaven, the verse promises them everlasting enjoyment, akin to a tree that always yields fresh fruit. Thus, those who obey Allah will enjoy eternal and uninterrupted abundance and luxury in the afterlife.

فَجَعَلۡنَٰهُنَّ أَبۡكَارًا ٣٦ عُرُبًا أَتۡرَابًا ٣٧

Making them virgins (36) loving and of equal age (37)

In the two verses above, the phrase "making them virgins, loving and of equal age" serves as a symbol of the eternal purity and beauty that the inhabitants of heaven will enjoy. The portrayal of virgins as eternal partners represents purity and beauty that will never fade or change over time. Additionally, the phrases "full of love" and "equal age" emphasise that this beauty and purity will be everlasting and will not succumb to aging. Therefore, the relationship between the representation and the object it represents can be categorised as symbolic. These verses suggest that women who enter heaven will experience a

restoration to their youthful state, embodying their peak beauty and physical attractiveness. For those who believe in and are devoted to Allah, this is a gift and privilege, ensuring that their beauty is maintained and renewed forever in the eternal afterlife.

فِي سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَظِلٍّ مِّن يَحْمُومٍ ﴿٤٣﴾ لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

˹They will be˺ in scorching heat and boiling water (42) in the shade of black smoke (43) neither cool nor refreshing (44).

This verse employs the symbolism of "scorching heat, boiling water, and black smoke" to graphically depict the severe and oppressive conditions of hell, vividly portraying its dreadful torment. These elements symbolize the intense heat, suffocation, and tension one will encounter in hell.The depiction of hell as a place with hot wind and black smoke underscores its atmosphere of relentless heat. This serves as a stark reminder for humans to faithfully obey Allah SWT and steer clear of His prohibitions.

لَآكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن زَقُّومٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَمَالِـُٔونَ مِنْهَا ٱلْبُطُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَشَٰرِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَشَٰرِبُونَ شُرْبَ ٱلْهِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾

Will certainly eat from ˹the fruit of˺ the trees of Zaqqûm (52) filling up ˹your˺ bellies with it (53) Then on top of that you will drink boiling water (54) and you will drink ˹it˺ like thirsty camels do (55).

This verse depicts "the trees of Zaqqûm" and "boiling water" as symbols for the suffering endured by the inhabitants of hell regarding their sustenance. The Zaqqûm tree is described as bearing extremely bitter and agonising fruit, while the boiling water represents a drink that causes intense suffering. These symbols metaphorically illustrate the severe agony that those in hell will endure concerning their food and drink.

The verse describes the plight of the inhabitants of hell who will consume the fruit of the Zaqqûm tree, renowned for its extreme bitterness and reserved for the dwellers of hell. Additionally, they will drink scalding hot water, similar to the way camels drink copious amounts of water.

لَوْ نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلْنَٰهُ حُطَٰمًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

If We willed, We could simply reduce this ˹harvest˺ to chaff, leaving you to lament (65).

This verse uses the phrase "We could simply reduce this harvest to chaff, leaving you to lament" to symbolise God's absolute omnipotence. It illustrates His ability to dismantle and dry up everything as He decrees. On the other hand, the expressions of astonishment and dismay underscore creatures' inability to challenge or evade God's will.

This verse affirms that Allah SWT is Omnipotent, capable of causing disintegration and withering. The depiction of astonishment and awe symbolises creatures' incapacity to escape His ordainments, as all authority belongs solely to Him, without rival. No one can circumvent Almighty Allah's decrees. The verse emphasises the necessity for every creature to submit to God's undeniable will and power

CONCLUSION

Upon analysing the 37 verses of Surah Al-Waqiah, it is observed that 8 verses feature vivid imagery that closely resembles the objects they represent, such as the earth shaking and the mountains becoming like scattered dust, symbolising the cataclysm of Doomsday. Additionally, there are nine verses that outline causal relationships pertaining to events on

the Day of Judgment. These verses explore the elevation or humiliation of various groups of people based on their worldly conduct, the consequences of extravagance and major sins leading to hellfire, and the eternal satisfaction in heaven without any negative effects. Moreover, 17 verses employ symbols to convey deeper meanings, such as the "right" and "left" groups symbolising different destinies in the afterlife and fruit-bearing trees symbolising eternal bliss in paradise. This study underscores the significance of approaching Quranic verses through semiotics to comprehend their profound messages, motivating humanity to pursue righteousness and avoid wrongdoing for ultimate happiness in the hereafter.

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