



Qur`anic Evidences for the Application of Pragmatic Language

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Abstract

The demonstration of the cognitive value of religious beliefs has been an important concern for religious scholars. This issue in the field of Quranic studies is also among the concerns of Muslim scholars and Quranic scholars. The school of pragmatism tries to assess the cognitive value of religious beliefs by relying on action and practices. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the validity of pragmatist criteria for religious beliefs based on the Quranic teachings. In this regard, pragmatism as a criterion in the determination and evaluation of the epistemological value of religious beliefs is not incompatible with the Qur'anic teachings, but there are several verses from the Holy Qur'an that include pragmatist songs in such a way that, regardless of the rejection or acceptance of the necessity of reasoning, the cognitive value of beliefs is considered to be the result of practical beliefs. This research was conducted as a critical analysis and the results of the analysis show that the Holy Qur'an approves them in two positive ways in assessing beliefs rather than providing rational reasoning with a tangible result.

Keywords: *Qur`aan; Pragmatism; Belief; Religious Knowledge*

Introduction and Question

Different philosophical movements each sought the truth and developed and promoted the epistemological boundaries of different periods in order to obtain the epistemological criterion in the explanation of beliefs. In this regard, the two intellectual schools of rationalism and empiricism each focused on reason and experience. In its intellectual system, Kant emphasized both the factors of reason and experience. The epistemic system he set up was a turning point in philosophy. In the Kant's philosophy of intellect, the highest authority of the soul and rational knowledge is the highest level of cognition. It accepts the division of reason into theoretical and practical, and believes that theoretical reason does not lead to its limits due to its limitations, and in its philosophy reason derives from all the prior principles and function it describes it in the realm of action. (Deleuze, 85: 1386)

Efforts to examine the epistemological validity of beliefs and religious beliefs in the modern age in the intellectual culture of the West have been affected by the above-mentioned thoughts - Descartes' rationalism and Johnny Lock's empiricism as well as the epistemological system of Kant - and, of course, other schools of thought have been appeared among which the pragmatism school can be mentioned. Thus, the efforts of some thinkers in the field of knowledge in the late nineteenth century created a philosophy called pragmatism in the United States. In the nineteenth century, signs of the emergence of a new philosophy in the United States were revealed that targeted the practical benefits. Consequently, the use of practical solutions in this new culture was given a special place and emerged as a common belief and a general tendency for every thinker in American thought that theories were evaluated pragmatically and its significance was determined by virtue of its use in practices. This school began its journey from the old issues of philosophy, such as epistemology and ontology, and quickly moved away from this area and moved on to practical fields such as psychology and education. This philosophy emerged in the late nineteenth century with thinkers such as William James and John Dewey. In their view, pragmatism is considered as a revolution against idealism and purely rational exploration, which has no benefit to humans. At the same time pragmatism appeared in various fields of science, including in religion. This school evaluates and accepts, with the admission that it is impossible to demonstrate the rationale of beliefs, especially their religious beliefs, according to their application. The truth of any proposition is measured only by its practical results, not in comparison with the external reality. In the school of pragmatism, thoughts and beliefs are like tools to solve human problems; they are correct as long as they have a beneficial effect, and then they become false and wrong.

The abandonment of a priori criteria in assessing religious beliefs and beliefs and bringing them to a pragmatic basis can be partly the solution to many epistemological and religious epistemological problems. But in this regard, various issues can engage the epistemologist. Considering the fact that, any religions including Islam, through its teachings offer the general structure of its epistemic system, can accept a pragmatic criterion. In other words, whether the pragmatic basis can be reconciled with the epistemological system of Islam and in the design of the epistemological system of Islam, pragmatic criteria can be considered an important part in determining and evaluating the validity of religious beliefs.

The present study tries to show that the criterion of pragmatism can be an opportunity to explain the truths of their faith in showing the value and credibility of religious beliefs, and it will not be a threat to the religious epistemological system from the perspective of Islam. In this regard, the result of reflection in some verses of the Holy Qur'an indicates that the pragmatist's criteria have been used in two ways in divine word. However, the scholars in this study, by engaging in a method of critical analysis, will defend the theory of consistency between the Qur'an and the pragmatist standard.

Pragmatism

Pragmatism is a theory first presented by William James as a way out from the challenge about the nature of truth and knowledge. In order to present any model to understand Quranic verses in the light of pragmatic method and in order to attempt to display any Quranic references about the usage of pragmatic, the theory of pragmatism itself is expressed in the present section in short.

The value of knowledge is not neglected in any culture. It is a human natural tendency to seek knowledge. Such a desire, however, is somewhat dependent on the practical benefits of knowing in human life, but in spite of this, in many cases, there is a deep interest in knowing things that seem to be practical and tangible in his life directly. (goldman, 1999, p. 3) Aristotle's statement that the desire to know is the character of all human beings (Aristotle, 1924, Book, I) confirms this fact in human life. The human being has not only the inherent desire for knowledge, but also the attainment true knowledge has always been the inherent tendency of mankind. Searching for certainty is an important part of the history of philosophy. The basic idea of the certainty of knowledge was that without claiming certainty, all allegations of knowledge are unfounded. Epistemology discusses the concepts of human knowledge and

the value of all kinds of beliefs and determines the criterion of their accuracy and error. (Pappas, 1998, p. 317)

Others have also said in the epistemological definition that it is a branch of philosophy that evaluates human knowledge, the limits, foundations and tools, its near and past principles, and the extent to which it is trusted ... (Pastin, 1979, p.151) In one word, it examines the ability of reason and the perceptual system of man to achieve reality. However, epistemology in several ways addresses the problem of cognition. One of these issues is the expression of the sources of knowledge. Throughout history, two important sources of sense and wisdom created philosophers of empiricism such as Hume and rationalism, such as Descartes. Epistemological methods changed in the nineteenth century. In this period a new school called pragmatism or pragmatism was created. The pragmatists themselves considered their philosophy to be in conflict between the two flows of rationalism and empiricism (Scopfer, 138 p. 20). Since Descartes, epistemology has become an integral part of epistemology as a branch of philosophical sciences.

In any case, knowledge is a general concept that becomes a specific concept by means of constraints. Religious knowledge is one of these concepts which, by adding the concept of religion to the general, are extracted and specialized, as can the notion of knowledge by adding the concept of science (scientific knowledge) to another concept. In religious epistemology, the epistemologist tries to answer questions about religious knowledge, that is, beliefs within the realm of religion. The most important of these beliefs are beliefs that are related to God, especially the belief that "God exists".

In traditional thinking, truth is one of the main elements about knowledge. To have knowledge, belief is necessary but it is not sufficient. We are all sometimes mistaken in what we believe; in other words, while some of our beliefs are true, others are false. That is, knowledge does not come about if a person believes in p and even believes that it is justified but not true. The main epistemological issues related to the nature of truth, which has been posed since Aristotle, and in the context of the nature of the truth, various views including the theory of conformity, the theory of coherence, has been raised. The conformance (or conformity) of the proposition to reality on the basis of this theory, the criterion of truth and false is an existential aspect, that is, for every proposition, there is a fact that the proposition corresponds to them, and if there is no reality, then the proposition is false. The theory of coherence as the most important rival of the theory of adaptation is based on the truth. The truth is the attribute that can be identified on the basis of belief order.

According to this theory the rationality of any belief can be determined on the basis of the relation between beliefs and judgments. Beliefs will be considered as a set of coherent beliefs in the absence of incompatibility between them. The theory of pragmatism was put forward in such context while epistemological views fail to solve the problem of knowledge and its nature and rationality. Copleston calls for the movement of pragmatism to be largely the result of the efforts of three well-known thinkers, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839), William James (1842) and John Dewey (1859), who believes that Peirce was the founder of this movement, and even James himself and Dewey himself are indebted to Peirce's efforts were known (Copleston, 1382, p. 334).

Pierce, as the father of pragmatism, states that if the concept does not have an objective result then it is meaningless. Based on this viewpoint, a concept or term is defined by relying on its potential or actual effects.

James formulates the theory of pragmatism in the following form: to obtain the meaning of an idea, it is merely enough to show the type of action and behavior that the thought implies that is appropriate to it (Barry, 1998, p. 64). Thus, in the case of James, pragmatism is also a theory of meaning, as well as a theory of truth.

In this way, the truth is conceived as contradicting what the conventional philosophers thought about. From James's point of view, pragmatism is the best means to solve the dominant challenges in philosophy. (Ayer, 1982, p.71)

According to the theory of pragmatism, the purpose of our rational activities is an attempt to solve the problems that occur during our attempts to examine the experience. Many conventional philosophical theories failed to solve the problems of life and to solve the problems that humans experience in life.

First, pragmatism is a method, and then a theory about the meaning of truth. From James's point of view, one belief is only true when it comes to satisfying and tangible results. The truth is evident in the experience. According to the principle of pragmatism for the development of a mental concept, we only need to determine what this concept is used to create behavior, and that behavior is the meaning of that concept of mind. So, for greater clarity in our thoughts on a subject, we need to look at it and consider what the implicit result is, what effects it can be expected. From the point of view of the pragmatism school, it is rational to open up a set of empirical and practical problems; in other words, this school places human intellect wherever it leads to human desire and purpose and the value of knowledge to a unique practical aspect. Therefore, the truth of a proposition must be defined with practical utility. Since our beliefs have a very close relationship with action, we must put ourselves under the control of our beliefs and become aware of the truth.

Pragmatism in Quranic Verses

It is the aim in this paper to demonstrate that we can understand Quranic verses in the light of Criterion presented by William James. He himself used the pragmatist criterion in an age when philosophical efforts apparently failed to solve the dissent of intellectuals regarding religious beliefs and, in his view, the result of applying a pragmatic criterion reveals the validity of religious beliefs. Just as Freud was showing the natural origin of religion and religious beliefs, he defended the legitimacy of religious beliefs on the basis of that criterion. It is clear, of course, that for a pragmatist, the validity of beliefs differs from what is common in the intellectual system of the modern age. James explains explicitly: "The fruits and consequences of spiritual life are the best sign and value of its value." James, 1367, p. 149)

The history of compromise between pragmatism and Islam goes back to some of the thinkers. In this regard, a group of scholars believe there is a consensus between Islam and pragmatism, especially in the area of democracy and social issues, and there is no such incompatibility between them. In their view, the notion that modernity and the common epistemology in it are more likely to determine the fate and credibility of religious beliefs is a false idea. In their view, the evaluation of religious beliefs, with an emphasis on the criterion offered by pragmatism is a proper and true way. (Nasr, 2008, p. 56) In the field of political thought, Bazargan believed in the consistency of Islam and democracy as one of the areas in which the use of pragmatism was successful. (Bazargan, 1328, p. 16). According to the writers of this paper, the criteria that pragmatists offer to assess beliefs is not only a threat to religious beliefs, but also can provide an appropriate means to defend the legitimacy of religious beliefs. In this paper, the epistemological heritage of the new age in the West is not discussed. A measure based on which it is necessary to assess beliefs in general and religious beliefs in particular based on predetermined criteria - whether they are rational models or experiential models. Regardless of this, the authors address the claims made in this article to defend and explain it. The authors believe that some of the Qur'an's verses are clearly in line with pragmatism in two positive and negative ways, and they address their audience according to the pragmatist's criteria, in accordance with the concrete objective consequences.

A Positive Model of Consistency between Pragmatism and the Quran

According to the materials mentioned in the previous section, the consistency between pragmatism and Quranic teachings is that the tendency to the objective result of a belief as the basis for evaluating it is a fundamental solution to the philosophical challenges. Now, the meaning of the claim in this article is that the difference regarding religious beliefs and their validity in the mentioned manner is considered as a criterion and form of thought approved by the Holy Qur'an.

As mentioned in the introduction section, in this research the pragmatist standard used in Quranic verses is expressed in two positive and negative ways. The meaning of the positive way is that the Holy Quran, in many cases, seeks to encourage its audience to commit and adhere to some of the principles of value or belief in their concrete and objective results in the life of this universal human being. The most important verses in this field are:

What is revealed to you from the book and set up the prayer? The prayer forbids indecency and evil, and remembrance of Allah is greater. Allah knows what you do.

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ (45 /)

In this verse, the Holy Quran expressly encourages people toward praying on the basis or results and impacts inherited in praying. In the other example, the Holy Qur'an works in the same way regarding remembrance and remembrance of the Lord:

Those who believe and rest their hearts in the remembrance of God, but in the remembrance of God, hearts are assured.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ (رعد 28)

The calm, which is nowadays considered as one of the most basic human needs in psychological discussions, has been considered in the Quranic verses centuries ago, and the way of achieving it has been expressed. Relaxation as an objective and concrete result of the Lord's remembrance and belief in him, in fact, does not harbor doubts about its validity. The gradual experience of the concrete and tangible effects of a religious belief such as prayer or divine mention, which manifests itself peacefully in the presence of a person, convinces him of the value and credibility of the supposed belief. Of course, in the field of pragmatist thinking, when the truth of a belief is spoken, one should not suppose that the meaning of truth is correspondence theory in the sense of conformation between concept and reality. Essentially, in the pragmatist idea, the concept of truth in the sense of correspondence with reality actually loses its position because, according to the thinkers of this theory, given the critique regarding the notion of truth and the challenges that epistemological theories arisen about the concept of justification, the pragmatism school, as a way out of these challenges, is trying to provide a basis for determining the credibility and value of beliefs. In fact, pragmatism is a kind of effort to save on the challenges and limitations created by epistemological theories about the justification and truth of the trap of skepticism and the death of beliefs, and this searches for this purpose, which, in contrast to existing epistemological schools instead of pre-setting a criterion of the value of beliefs, it suggests that the value of beliefs should be tested at the operational stage. In this regard, the difference between pragmatism and profitability as a moral theory is that profit-making concern is the behavior of Reflecting on these verses indicates that these verses contain two different themes, one that refers to the form of evaluation of beliefs, and the other based on such a criterion, an example of beliefs is measured and evaluated. These two themes can be expressed as follows:

- A) Attention to the results and the concrete effects of beliefs and affairs (cognitive content) in their assessment

- (B) Examining the value and credibility of an example of beliefs or behaviors based on the criteria presented. (Exemplary content)

According to the first issue, although the appearance of such verses implies encouragement for a particular belief or behavior, it provides a paradigm of measurement and assessment as well. Invitation to prayer, relying on its deterrent effect of corruption and prostitution, as well as the invitation to mention divine on the basis of its tranquilizing nature, does not merely state that prayer and divine mention are among the beliefs or affairs that are valid in the Qur'an. Rather, these verses are a priori representing a standard in the assessment of beliefs, and it is generally accepted that beliefs can be assessed by relying on the works that they carry out.

Negative Model for Consistency between Pragmatism and Quranic Verses

The meaning of the negative way is that in the Qur'an, along with the approval and encouragement of some beliefs, relying on their practical effects, some beliefs are warned by negative effects. Of course, in many Quranic verses, the Qur'an may pay attention to the heavenly results and effects of beliefs and behaviors, and this is a factor in encouraging or preventing human beings. But in a positive or negative way, the worldly concrete and tangible effects of beliefs and behaviors are the basis for evaluation. The most important verses in this field are:

And who is worse than those who pray without God, who does not respond to him until the Day of Resurrection, and they are unaware of their prayers?

وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ يَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَهُمْ عَنِ دُعَائِهِمْ غَافِلُونَ (احقاف/ 5

As it is clear in the verse above, it is a misguided to put anything as Deity that cannot answered. This verse explicitly promotes a form of calculation and assessment of affairs and beliefs in its essence. It is implicitly implied that the Qur'an accepts the principle of acceptance or rejection of beliefs and affairs by relying on their practical results as a criterion for belief evaluation.

As mention about the positive case, in this case, these verses also contain two different themes, one that refers to the form of the assessment of beliefs, and the other, based on such a criterion, examines an example of beliefs, and Evaluates. These two themes can be expressed as follows:

- A) Attention to the results and the concrete and concrete effects of beliefs and affairs (cognitive content)
- (B) Examining the value and credibility of a sample of beliefs or behaviors based on the criteria provided. (Exemplary content)

As an example, the following verse can be noted:

Those who claim without God do not create anything and they are created:

وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ (نحل/ 20)

Based on the first theme (a), this verse establishes the power of creation as the basis of evaluation and calculation, and according to the second (b) the worship of an inventory or prayer of an item that does not meet this criterion (the power of creation) is considered to be false, and the case is blamed. In other verses, the terms used are not only functional but also the words themselves. Words of benefit and disadvantage are considered among such words and are used in the following verse:

Calling without God what does not harm him and what does not benefit it is a long astray:

يَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُ وَمَا لَا نَفْعَ لَهُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ (حج/12)

According to this verse, praying or worshiping a source that does not generate profit and loss for humankind is a distraction (misleading). Regardless of the subject matter of this verse (prayer or worship), the form used in the evaluation of prayer and worship is to be found in relation to a source. As can be seen, both themes A and B are also used in this verse. Of course, since the society in which the Qur'an was revealed, they have a kind of parochial beliefs and behaviors such as idol worship, the Qur'anic examples also relate to worship. Otherwise, in previous verses, such as Sura عنكبوت, verse 45, regarding prayer as something that is at the forefront of the worship system, it is a practical consequence of its legitimacy and validity, which is based on encouragement. Hence, in the other two verses below, as the Holy Qur'an addresses the issue of worship and prayer and places the words on invalidity and the lack of its value based on the word of benefit and loss:

And worship without God what does not benefit them and does not harm them and the infidel was on his back:

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَكَانَ الْكَافِرُ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِ ظَهِيرًا (فرقان/ 55)

He calls for those who harm him more than his benefit to the misery of the Lord and to the worst of the intimates:

يَدْعُو لِمَنْ ضَرُّهُ أَقْرَبُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِ لِيُنْسَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَلِيُنْسَ الْعَشِيرُ (حج/ 13)

Thinking in the above verses both in a positive and negative cases demonstrates the fact that in the intellectual literature of the Holy Quran, the soul of the calculus is presented with respect to beliefs and behaviors. The first theme (a) is the main factor in this, perhaps it is the fact that most people have such a feature, and if the majority of human beings are created in a way that in the assessment of affairs and beliefs depends on the character of the calculation based on the objective result and it is natural and obvious that the Creator of His Being should also pay attention to such a general criterion in addressing humans and in designing a set of beliefs and behaviors. This privilege of this method is that it saves itself from the most important criticism often expressed by the fideism against the thinking of rationalism in the realm of faith. For according to fideism such as Kierkegaard, reason cannot be considered as a proper basis in the assessment of faith, because the property of calculation set in the nature of reason and the conditions under which it works, make it impossible for everybody to use it in their own lives. In fact, to think Rationalism in the realm of faith leads to a standard that everyone cannot use, because livelihoods and daily life concerns do not provide the necessary time for this. But in pragmatism, it seems that there is not only such a challenge, but it is basically a pragmatic accounting fit for everyone, and the concerns of day-to-day life are not a barrier to using it.

Concluding Remarks

Throughout history, the efforts of philosophers to demonstrate human access to knowledge and to distinguish between true and false propositions emphasized the determination of a predetermined criterion and, despite the differences between them, shared this point. The lack of consensus among philosophers to demonstrate the way and means of human access to knowledge and the rise of epistemological differences led to the emergence of a new theory called pragmatism in the history of philosophy that includes a new and different standard of assessment and assessment of belief. This criterion does not search the meaning of concepts or propositions by providing a general or a priori criterion and matching them to the criterion, but the practical result of them is considered as the basis of truth and meaning of concepts and propositions. In this research, it was attempted to state that if pragmatic thinking is used as the measure of beliefs in the field of religion and religious beliefs, does a victorious pragmatic test come out? In this research, the author sought to answer this question according to the Qur'anic verses and attempts to show this answer that many verses in the Holy Qur'an have pragmatist tracks in assessing beliefs. According to the research hypothesis, the present study concluded that pragmatist thinking, by

ignoring existing epistemological criteria, in assessing and evaluating beliefs and planning pragmatism as a criterion is not only a threat to the epistemic concern of the Quran, but in the Holy Qur'an there are many verses in which two positive and negative models of pragmatism are presented. This kind of measure and measure are used in the assessment and evaluation of beliefs. Examples of such a criterion clearly used in the Qur'an relate to worship and praying, which are among the central points of religion. Also, in assessing the validity of the prayer, and denial of Shirk are sought by the pragmatist standard, and their value and credibility have been raised through the works and results that they make.

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