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The Meaning of *Libasut Taqwa* in QS. Al-A'raf Verse 26 Perspective of Al-Qurthubi

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Abstract

The phenomenon of dressing among contemporary Muslim societies is no longer only understood to fulfill the guidance of the sharia, but has also evolved into a symbol of identity, lifestyle, and expression of religiosity. This situation creates a tendency for people to focus more on the physical aspect than the spiritual values that exist in the concept of *libasut taqwa*. The purpose of this study is to analyze the meaning of *libasut taqwa* in QS. Al-A'raf verse 26 from the perspective of Al-Qurthubi and examines its relevance to contemporary socio-religious phenomena. This research applies a qualitative method with the type of library research. Data is obtained from the book *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an* by Al-Qurthubi as the main source, and is supported by books of tafsir, books, scientific articles, and other literature. The data analysis process is carried out in a descriptive-analytical manner using an interpretation approach. The results of the study show that Al-Qurthubi interprets *libasut taqwa* as clothing that has a spiritual aspect that is reflected in faith, pious deeds, shame (*haya'*), noble morals, and obedience to Allah SWT. Al-Qurthubi argues that physical clothing only serves to beautify the appearance as well as a covering for the *aurat*. Meanwhile, *libasut taqwa* is the best clothing because it maintains inner honor and forms individual character. In the contemporary socio-religious context, the concept of *libasut taqwa* still has relevance as an ethical basis in responding to the phenomenon of modest fashion, symbols of piety, and the tendency to judge religiosity based on physical appearance. Therefore, the concept of *libasut taqwa* is a reference that balances the external and inner aspects, so as to be able to build moral integrity, social responsibility, and spiritual awareness in modern society.

Keywords: *libasut taqwa*, QS. Al-A'raf verse 26, Al-Qurthubi, a socio-religious phenomenon.

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Introduction

The importance of dressing in Islam has strong roots in religious teachings that touch on spiritual, social, and moral dimensions. In Islam, dressing is not just a physical necessity to cover the body and protect from the weather, but is also part of worship and reflects spiritual, social, and ethical values [1].

The values contained in the Qur'an will provide direction for life if the content of its meaning is well understood and embodied in the practice of daily life [2]. Therefore, it is very important to understand the verses in the Qur'an through the study of tafsir, including about QS. al-A'raf verse 26 explains the concept of *libasut taqwa*.

يَبْنِيَّ آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْءَ تِكُمْ وَرِيئًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَٰلِكَ مِّنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

It means: "O son of Adam, indeed, We have sent down to you clothes to cover your awrah and beautiful clothes for jewelry. And the clothes of piety are the best. Such are some of the signs of God's power, may they always remember."

The mention of *libasut taqwa* in this verse shows the spiritual aspect of the concept of clothing. This meaning is emphasized by the hadith of the Prophet PBUH which likens faith to something that requires clothing, while piety serves as a garment attached to it.

After explaining the function of clothing in a physical sense, this verse then directs attention to the concept of *libasut taqwa* as spiritual clothing. If the clothes of birth function to cover the awrah and physical shortcomings, then the clothes of piety play a role in protecting and covering various moral and spiritual deficiencies that can degrade a person's dignity if reflected in their behavior. The revelation of various moral and spiritual deficiencies does not only cause shame and regret, especially in relation to accountability before Allah SWT. Therefore, pious clothing is positioned as the best clothing because it is a symbol of protection of morality, faith, and self-glory.

In this verse, the term clothing or clothing is expressed using the words *libas* and *risy*. According to Qur'anic linguists, the word *libas* has a meaning that is commensurate with the word *tsaub* or *tsiyab*, as used in QS. al-Muddatstsir [74]: 4, i.e. everything that serves to cover part of the body. With this understanding, various types of clothing such as gamis (*qamish*), sarongs (*al-ditsar*), and turbans (*'imamah*) are included in the category of clothing.

In contrast to *libas* which refers to the function of clothing as a body covering, the term *risy* or *riyasy* etymologically means soft and beautiful bird feathers. In the context of verse, the word is understood as anything that is worn to beautify or beautify a person's appearance (*ma yatajammalu bihi al-insan*). After mentioning these two words (*libas* and *risy*), the Qur'an through the above verse introduces another form of clothing that has a more prominent position, namely pious clothing (*libas al-taqwa*).

Based on the content of QS. al-A'raf verse 26 and other verses that have similar meanings, the inner garment of the Qur'an has several main functions. These functions include covering the *awrah*, beautifying appearance, forming social identity, providing protection from various dangers, including in war situations, and strengthening the moral and spiritual dimensions. Among all these functions, the last aspect is manifested through the concept of *libasut taqwa*, which is clothing that symbolizes piety as a source of glory of birth and mind, both in this life and the hereafter.

In Islam, the way of dressing is regulated as a form of maintaining the *awrah*, honor, and identity of a Muslim. Some of the criteria or provisions for dressing in Islamic teachings include covering the *awrah* and covering the entire body other than those excluded by the sharia, not cultivating the nature of *riya*, women do not resemble men and vice versa, men are prohibited from wearing gold and silk, and are not translucent and not strict [1]. Some of these provisions do not stop at the outward aspect, but lead to the concept of the best clothes (*libasut taqwa*) as mentioned in QS. al-A'raf verse 26.

Islam emphasizes balance in life, including in dressing, eating, drinking, and daily actions, avoiding all forms of excess. So, this verse reminds us not only to pay attention to the external aspect of life, but also to prioritize a deeper inner aspect, namely piety to Allah SWT.

This study aims to analyze the meaning of *libasut taqwa* in QS. al-A'raf verse 26 based on the perspective of Al-Qurthubi, determine the theological and ethical values contained in it, and examine the relevance of the concept of *libasut taqwa* to contemporary socio-religious phenomena, especially in the face of *modest fashion* trends, the symbolization of piety, and the formation of social ethics in modern society. This research is expected to contribute to enriching the treasures of the study of Qur'anic interpretation as well as offering a deeper understanding of the balance between external and inner aspects in the concept of dressing according to Islam.

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a type of library research that focuses on the study of interpretation of QS. al-A'raf verse 26, especially regarding the meaning of *libasut taqwa* in the perspective of Al-Qurthubi. The research design was prepared to examine in depth the interpretation of the verse through the analysis of relevant literature sources, without involving the collection of field data. The subject of the research is in the form of texts that discuss QS. al-A'raf verse 26, with the primary data source being Al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān by Al-Qurthubi as the main focus of the analysis. Meanwhile, secondary data sources include books of tafsir, books, scientific articles, and various literature related to the concept of Islamic underwear, the function of *libas*, *risy*, and *libasut taqwa*, as used in the discussion of this research. The research instrument used is the researcher himself (human instrument) who plays a role in selecting data, identifying relevant information, classifying interpretive themes, and interpreting the content of the meaning of verses based on the perspective of Al-Qurthubi. The data collection procedure is carried out through a documentation study by inventorying all data related to QS. al-A'raf verse 26, then conducts an in-depth reading of the interpretation of Al-Qurthubi, identifies the explanation of the meaning of *libasut taqwa*, compares it with the explanations contained in the supporting literature that has been used in this study, and groups data based on themes such as the function of clothing, spiritual dimensions, the value of piety, morality, and its relevance to contemporary socio-religious phenomena. Furthermore, the data was analyzed using a descriptive-analytical method with a tafsir approach, namely describing the interpretation of Al-Qurthubi systematically, then analyzing the relationship between concepts that appeared in the interpretation so that a complete understanding of the meaning of *libasut taqwa* was obtained. The results of the analysis are then interpreted to identify the theological and ethical values contained in the concept of *libasut taqwa*, as well as relate them to today's socio-religious phenomena, especially regarding the tendency of society to view clothes as a symbol of identity, modest fashion trends, symbolization of piety, and the importance of maintaining a balance between the external and inner dimensions as the focus of this study. With these systematically arranged research stages, the research process can be replicated by other researchers who study similar themes using the same study objects, data collection procedures, and analysis techniques.

Results and Discussion

Brief Biography of Al-Qurthubi

Al-Qurthubi has the full name Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Abi Bakr bin Farh al-Anshari al-Khazraji al-Qurtubi al-Andulusi. There are differing views among historians regarding the time of Al-Qurthubi's birth. This difference is due to the limitation of historical evidence that can be used as a reliable reference. However, some opinions say that Al-Qurthubi is estimated to have been born around the 6th century AH, precisely during the reign of Caliph Ya'qub bin Yusuf bin 'Abd al-Mu'min (580-595 H) of the Muwahhidin Dynasty. In contrast to the disputed birth history, Islamic historians have agreement that Al-Qurthubi died on the night of Monday, 9 Shawwal 671 H, in the city of Many located in the eastern region of the Nile River [3].

Al-Qurthubi grew up to be a scholar with a tendency towards the life of *zuhud*. Historians affirm that he was not a scholar who was immersed in political madness, but chose the path of knowledge, worship, and writing. His simple attitude of life had a great influence on his consistency in writing great works that were later inherited for the Islamic world.

Al-Qurthubi's greatest work is *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an* which is also known as Tafsir Al-Qurthubi. This book of tafsir contains explanations of legal verses, discusses aspects of language, qira'at, theology, and even moral values [4]. However, the main feature of this tafsir is its particular attention to the legal dimension in the Qur'an, making it one of the most important references in the study of the interpretation of *ahkam*. Until now, this interpretation is still widely taught and researched in the Islamic world.

In interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, Al-Qurthubi consistently prioritizes the delivery of the results of *the legal istinbat*, then strengthens it with various sharia foundations, such as other verses that have attachment to meaning, the hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him), as well as the opinions of previous companions and scholars. Based on these characteristics, his interpretation pattern shows a combination of *the bi ra'yi approach* in the process of determining legal conclusions and *bil ma'tsur* in the use of postulates as the basis for argumentation against the results of *istinbat* that he put forward [5].

The Interpretation of the Scholars on the Importance of *Taqwa*

يَبْنِيَّ أَدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْءَتِكُمْ وَرِيثًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ
 آيَةِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

"O sons and descendants of Adam, indeed, We have sent down to you clothes to cover your awrah and feathers (as a material for self-adornment). (However,) the garment of piety is the best. These are some of the signs of Allah so that they may always remember." (QS. al-A'raf: 26)

This verse illustrates that Allah has given blessings to humans in the form of clothes where clothing itself is one of the basic needs of humans. This verse also not only discusses the function of clothes as a covering for the awrah and jewelry, but also introduces the concept of pious clothing (*libasut taqwa*) as the best clothing.

The global meaning of QS. al-A'raf verse 26 generally contains important messages that cover the external and inner aspects of human life, especially in the context of dress etiquette and spiritual awareness. Direct Orders from Allah SWT, Safeguarding Aurat and Honor, Symbols of Obedience and Islamic Identity, Influence on Social Psychology and Ethics, Protection from Views and Slander [6].

If a person has worn pious clothes, then "Ma'rifat will be his main capital, self-control characteristic of his activities, love of the principle of his association, longing for the divine of his mount, dhikr of his heart's consolation, concern for his companion, knowledge of his weapons, patience in his clothing, awareness of weakness before Allah his pride, *zuhud* (not being amazed by worldly splendor) his shield, his confidence in his wealth and strength, his mainstay truth, his obedience to love, his daily jihad, and prayer are the fruits of his beloved eyes."

If the clothes of piety have been attached to a person, his personal identity and glory will always be maintained and reflected in his behavior and appearance. He will maintain cleanliness even though he lives in limitations, be simple even though he has sufficiency, and have an open heart and hands to do good. In addition, he abstains from acts that can cause slander, does not waste time on things that are not beneficial, does not take something that does not belong to him, and does not obstruct the rights of others. When he received favors, he was grateful; When facing exams, he is patient; when he commits a sin, he immediately recites istighfar; when he makes a mistake, he regrets it; and when he receives a reproach, he repays it with an open heart while asking for forgiveness from Allah SWT, both for himself and for those who reproach him. These characteristics are a summary of various sources about the qualities that reflect a person who wears pious clothes [7].

In this verse, the concept of piety is not interpreted as limited to the meaning commonly used in Islamic teachings, namely obedience to Allah SWT through the implementation of all His commandments and staying away from

all His prohibitions. On the contrary, the term is understood based on its linguistic meaning, namely maintenance or protection. Thus, *libasut taqwa* can be interpreted as clothing that functions to maintain and protect the wearer, like a shield used to protect a person from injury or death.

It was narrated by Imam Hasan al-Bashri that Caliph Uthman (ra) once preached on the pulpit and delivered a hadith that he heard directly from the Prophet (peace be upon him). He said, "O people, none of you who do anything secretly except Allah SWT will appear on the Day of Resurrection through the scarf [clothing] that will be worn on him. If his deeds are good, then the scarf he wears is good, and if his deeds are bad, then the scarf he wears is bad."

Then, Caliph Uthman read to the audience this verse, "O son of Adam, verily We have sent down to you a garment to cover your *awrah* and a beautiful garment for ornaments and pious garments are the best. Such are some of the signs of God's power. Hopefully, they always remember." (QS al-A'raf [7]: 26).

A hadith states that the faith is naked (*al-iman 'uryanun*), the clothes are piety (*wa libasuhu al-taqwa*), and the ornaments are shame (*wa zinatuhu al-haya'*). Based on the hadith, questions arise about the meaning of pious clothing. Zaid bin Ali interpreted *libasut taqwa* as the religion of Islam itself. Meanwhile, Ibn Abbas ra. arguing that what is meant by pious clothing is faith and righteous deeds (*huwa al-iman wa al-'amal al-shalih*). The other opinion interprets pious clothing as a symbol of morality and moral nobility.

Based on this meaning, *libasut taqwa* is not only understood as a symbol, but reflects the essence of piety to Allah SWT. Piety is manifested through a commitment to obey all His provisions while avoiding everything that He forbids. On a deeper level, this concept shows the existence of a spiritual awareness that makes one believe that Allah SWT is always present and supervises all human activities [8]. This awareness encourages a person to feel afraid and ashamed of committing sinful acts. In contrast to clothes in the physical sense and various accessories worn daily, pious clothing is a symbol of glory that functions to protect a person from the wrath and punishment of Allah SWT.

In Islamic teachings, the manners of dressing are not only related to the form or way of wearing clothes, but also include the halalness of the materials used, how to obtain them, and the source of wealth used to obtain them. From Abu Hurairah (*may Allah be pleased with him*), the Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الرُّسُلِينَ، فَقَالَ: {يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا، إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ} وَقَالَ: {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ} ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ الرَّجُلَ يُطِيلُ السَّفَرَ أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ، يَمُدُّ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ، يَا رَبِّ، يَا رَبِّ، وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَشْرَبُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَلْبَسُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَغُذِيَ بِالْحَرَامِ، فَأَنَّى يُسْتَجَابَ لِذَلِكَ؟

"O people, Allah is good and does not accept anything but what is good. Indeed, what Allah commands the believers is the same as what was commanded to the Apostles. Allah Ta'ala said, 'O Messengers, eat good food and do righteous deeds' (QS. Al Mu'min: 51). Allah Ta'ala said, 'O you who have believed, eat the good food that We have given you' (QS. Al-Baqarah: 172). Then the Prophet mentioned the story of a man who had traveled a long way, until his hair was tangled and dusty. He raised his hands to the sky and said: 'O my Lord... O my Lord, when his food is unclean, his drink is unclean, his clothes are unclean, and he is fed from what is unclean. How could his prayer be granted?' (HR. Muslim no 1015).

Ibn Daqiq al-Id (may Allah have mercy on him) explained:

وفيه الحث على الإنفاق من الحلال، والنهي عن الإنفاق من غيره، وأن المأكول والمشروب والملبوس ونحوهما ينبغي أن يكون حلالاً خالصاً لا شبهة فيه

"In this hadith there is a motivation to invest with halal wealth. And there is a prohibition on investing with property that is not halal. And that food, drinks and clothing should be 100% halal and have no doubts in them" (This statement is in Syarah Al Arba'in An Nawawiyah).

In Tafsir Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah published by Markaz Ta'dzhim al-Qur'an under the supervision of Shaykh Prof. Dr. Imad Zuhair Hafidz (professor of the faculty of al-Qur'an Univ Islam Medina), it is explained that, Allah Swt. calls on all humans to take good care of the aurah, increase piety through obedience to Him, be aware of various temptations of Satan who always try to distance people from the noble morals and provisions of Allah SWT.

Allah SWT. affirms that He has sent down clothes to cover the awrah and clothes that function as jewelry. Both types of clothes are good favors to wear. However, clothes that are meaningful, that is, pious clothes that adorn the heart, have a more important and higher position. The clothes of piety are manifested through obedience to Allah SWT. who is able to improve the

condition of the heart, so that it becomes the best clothing for a believer because it is able to repair the heart while protecting his whole body.

The oneness of Allah SWT, the breadth of His mercy, and His arrangement over all human affairs are reflected in the various gifts He bestows. This gift is a reminder for humans to always be aware of His greatness and majesty [9].

Based on Ibn Kathir's interpretation, Allah SWT gives clothes to humans not only to meet external needs, but also as a form of beauty. The first function, which is to cover the *awrah*, is seen as a basic need that cannot be ignored. The second function, namely as jewelry (*risy*), is more complementary that gives aesthetic value to a person's appearance [10].

In his book of tafsir, Ath-Thabari applies the approach of tafsir *bi al-ma'tsur* by collecting various narrations from companions and *tabi'in* regarding the meaning of *libasut taqwa*. It does not necessarily establish a single meaning, but first presents the various views that emerged among the early generations of Muslims. Among the narrations conveyed, there is a view that interprets *libasut taqwa* as faith, shame that encourages a person to stay away from wickedness, righteous deeds, good facial expressions, fear of Allah SWT, and covering the *awrah* [11].

Through a collection of various narrations from the companions and *tabi'in*, the meaning of *libasut taqwa* according to Ath-Thabari basically leads to a conclusion that piety is the best clothing for humans. Just as physical clothing protects the body and covers the *awrah*, pious clothing protects the soul from deviation and leads humans to glory in this world and the hereafter.

Al-Qurthubi's Interpretation of *Libasut Taqwa*

In interpreting QS. al-A'raf verse 26, Al-Qurthubi explains that Allah SWT. has given blessings to humans in the form of clothes that function to cover the *awrah* and as jewelry. According to him, clothing is a form of grace from Allah that distinguishes humans from other creatures and is a means to maintain human honor and dignity. Thus, the meaning of clothing in this verse is not only related to physical needs, but also contains a profound moral and spiritual message [12].

When interpreting the phrase *wa libāsu al-taqwā dzālika khayr* (and that is the best piety clothing), Al-Qurthubi put forward a number of opinions of previous scholars. He mentioned that some scholars interpret *libās al-taqwā* as faith, because faith is the main foundation that gives birth to piety in a person. Another opinion interprets it as a pious deed that becomes a tangible manifestation of faith. In addition, there are also scholars who interpret *libās al-*

taqwā as a feeling of shame (*hayā'*) and fear of Allah that encourages a person to stay away from all forms of disobedience [12].

These various interpretations are not seen by Al-Qurthubi as contradictory. On the contrary, he believes that all these meanings are interrelated and lead to one common goal, which is the formation of a pious person. Faith, righteous deeds, shame, and fear of Allah are elements that unite in a believer and become a protector from various deeds that can damage man's relationship with Allah and fellow humans. Because Allah SWT has endowed humans with the ability to think between good and bad things [13].

Al-Qurthubi also emphasized that the mention of pious clothing after the discussion of physical clothing shows the difference between external beauty and inner beauty. Physical clothes can indeed cover the *awrah* and beautify a person's appearance, but the beauty is temporary. Meanwhile, pious clothing is a true form of beauty because it relates to the state of the heart and human behavior. Therefore, Allah SWT calls pious clothing as a better garment than outward clothing.

Based on the interpretation of Al-Qurthubi, it can be concluded that the concept of *libās al-taqwā* does not only include the aspect of clothing in the physical sense alone. This concept reflects a spiritual condition that is reflected in faith, righteous deeds, good morals, and the awareness to always obey Allah's commands and stay away from all His prohibitions. Thus, a man's degree is not judged by the splendor of the clothes he wears, but by the quality of piety that adorns him. In addition, the meaning of "*libasut taqwa*" in Al-A'raf:26 is spiritual clothing that comes from piety, which is better than physical clothing that covers the *awrah* and for jewelry. This spiritual garment reflects faith and righteous deeds, and is a sign of gratitude to God. According to Al-Qurtubi in his commentary, Surah Al-A'raf: 26 contains several important lessons related to clothing, piety, and manners in the life of a Muslim.

Clothing as a Favor and Responsibility

Al-Qurtubi explained that Allah SWT gives clothes to humans as a form of His grace. Clothes serve to cover the *aurat*, which is a basic obligation for every individual, as well as as jewelry to beautify the appearance. Therefore, dressing well and neatly is part of acknowledging God's favor.

However, Al-Qurtubi emphasizes that it is not only physical clothing in question, but also pious clothing (*libāsut-taqwā*), which is much more important. This pious garment is the garment of the heart and behavior that keeps away from sin and maintains self-honor. This kind of clothing, according

to Al-Qurtubi, is a better and nobler garment than clothes that are only physical.

Clothing of Piety: A Symbol of Spiritual Awareness

Al-Qurtubi gives a further explanation of the meaning of *libāsut-taqwā* (pious clothing). He stated that the garment of piety is not a garment made of a certain cloth or material, but a state of the heart full of the awareness of an obligation to Allah. This pious garment includes godly conduct, guarding oneself from bad deeds, and striving to live according to religious instruction.

The garment of piety also shows that a Muslim should have shame and fear of Allah, both in the visible state of others and in the state of invisibility. This includes the manners of dress and acting, as well as maintaining self-respect in all aspects of life.

Avoiding Excessive

Al-Qurtubi also associates this verse with excessive prohibitions in terms of eating, drinking, and daily behavior. In his commentary, he emphasized the importance of moderation in all things. Islam teaches balance, both in dressing, eating, and in other actions. Exaggeration or *isrāf* is something that Allah does not like.

Signs of Allah's Power

Al-Qurtubi mentioned that clothing, both physically and spiritually, is one of the signs of Allah's power. Allah who created clothes as a means to cover the *awrah* and also as jewelry, shows His greatness. In addition, the garment of piety that protects a person from the temptations and evils of the world is also part of God's grace and guidance.

Important points that can be highlighted from the interpretation of Al-Qurtubi include: Physical clothing serves as a means of maintaining honor and covering the *aurah*, which is a basic obligation for humanity. The clothes of piety are more important and better than physical clothes. This garment is a manifestation of spiritual awareness that includes faith, righteous deeds, and purity of heart.

The Relevance of the Meaning of *Libasut Taqwa* in Contemporary Socio-Religious Phenomena

The development of modern society has brought significant changes in the way Muslims perceive and express their religious identity. One form of this change can be seen in the phenomenon of dressing which is no longer only seen as a form of obedience to religion or sharia obligations, but also as a means of expressing oneself, a symbol of identity, and even a symbol of religiosity [14]. In

recent years, various new phenomena have emerged such as the development of *modest fashion*, the increasing use of religious symbols in public spaces, and the creation of religious images through social media platforms. These phenomena show that clothing has an increasingly complex social meaning and is inseparable from the dynamics of modern society's life.

In the midst of these developments, the concept of *libasut taqwa* explained by Al-Qurthubi provides a deeper perspective. According to Al-Qurthubi, the best clothes are not only clothes that cover the body, but also those that adorn the heart with piety. This interpretation confirms that Islam not only pays attention to the physical aspect of human beings, but also places the spiritual side as the main focus in dressing. Thus, the function of Islamic underwear is not limited to aesthetic aspects or social identity, but also serves to maintain honor, encourage shame, and shape the morals of a Muslim.

The Rise of Taqwa and the Phenomenon of Modest Fashion

The development of *modest fashion* is one of the phenomena that is increasingly prominent in today's Muslim society. The existence of Muslim clothing is no longer understood as a form of compliance with the provisions of sharia sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah, but also develops as part of the dynamics of culture, creative economy, and modern societal life trends. In this context, the concept of *libasut taqwa* is the main foundation that directs the principles of dress for a Muslim. Ideal clothing not only reflects piety to Allah SWT, but also fulfills the provisions of sharia, such as covering the *awrah* perfectly, distinguishing the characteristics of men's and women's clothing, coming from halal sources, and reflecting the modesty and honor of the wearer. Various fashion brands, Muslim fashion shows, and promotions on social media show that Islamic clothing has entered the realm of the economy as well as popular culture. The goal of Muslim companies based on existing practices is to meet the desires and satisfaction of consumers with regard to current trends, fashion, and design [15].

This development is a positive thing, by showing that consumers can choose modest clothes that are in accordance with Islamic teachings. However, Al-Qurthubi reminded that the value of a garment is not judged by the design, cost, or how famous the garment is, but by the extent to which the garment reflects piety to Allah SWT. Thus, the concept of *libasut taqwa* plays a role as a principle that ensures that the development of Muslim fashion does not shift only to become an economic object or a sign of social status.

Symbolization of piety in social life

Another phenomenon that is quite prominent in society is the tendency to judge a person's religious level through outward symbols, especially in the way of dressing. Often, a person who wears sharia clothes is immediately considered a more pious person, while those who have a different appearance receive a negative assessment. As a result, clothing serves as the main benchmark in assessing a person's level of religious diversity [16].

When viewed from the point of view of the interpretation of al-Qurthubi, this needs to be addressed critically. His interpretation of QS. Al-A'raf verse 26 emphasizes that the most beautiful clothing is *libasut taqwa*, which is piety that is embedded in the heart and reflected through actions. This indicates that outward symbols have value, but they cannot be the only benchmark by which to measure the quality of one's faith. Therefore, the concept of *libasut taqwa* teaches the importance of balance between the external and inner dimensions.

Libasut taqwa as the foundation of social ethics

Beyond the matter of how to dress, *libasut taqwa* has a deeper meaning in the social context. The piety that serves as one's "inner garment" will be seen through the attitude of respecting others, guarding one's speech, avoiding arrogance, and upholding honesty and responsibility. Thus, *libasut taqwa* becomes the basis for the formation of social ethics that are oriented towards the common good.

In the life of contemporary society influenced by consumptive culture, many people, especially young people, make clothes only as a means of image, not as a reflection of moral consciousness. The concept of *libasut taqwa* provides a different point of view. The meaning of dressing in Islam goes beyond its outward function as a support for appearance or a marker of social identity. For a Muslim, clothing also reflects obedience to Allah SWT. Therefore, the concept of *libasut taqwa* emphasizes the importance of awareness of the values of piety and shame as the basis for determining how to dress [17].

Al-Qurthubi places piety as the main benchmark for human honor, so that a person is judged not by what attributes he wears, but by moral values reflected in his behavior. Thus, the meaning of *libasut taqwa* conveyed by Al-Qurthubi remains very relevant in overcoming contemporary socio-religious phenomena. The concept not only encourages Muslims to dress according to the guidance of the Shari'ah, but also develops the understanding that the best clothes are piety that is evident from moral integrity, sincerity, and social responsibility. Therefore, *libasut taqwa* is a principle that is able to bridge the

normative guidance of the Quran with the needs of modern society which is constantly changing.

Furthermore, in the context of contemporary literature that emphasizes the social aspects and collective identity of Muslims, the findings of this study show that the concept of *libasut taqwa* remains relevant as an ethical foundation in building a religious identity that does not stop at outward symbols, but is manifested through piety and social behavior [18].

Conclusion

Based on research on QS. Al-A'raf verse 26 through the perspective of Al-Qurthubi, the author can conclude that the concept of *libasut taqwa* is not only interpreted as clothing in the physical sense, but emphasizes more on spiritual aspects that are reflected in faith, pious deeds, shame, praiseworthy morals, and obedience to Allah SWT. Al-Qurthubi explained that physical clothing has a function to beautify the appearance as well as a cover for the aurat. Meanwhile, *libasut taqwa* is the best clothing because it is able to maintain inner honor, form character, and protect a person from immoral deeds. Al-Qurthubi argues that various interpretations of the scholars about *libasut taqwa* such as faith, righteous deeds, shame, and fear of Allah as complementary meanings to form a pious person.

In the midst of contemporary socio-religious phenomena, the concept of *libasut taqwa* still has strong relevance. The growth of *modest fashion* trends, the increasing use of religious symbols, and the tendency of society to judge piety through physical appearance show that the function of clothing as a social and cultural identity has expanded. In this context, al-Qurthubi's interpretation gives the view that the main value in clothing does not lie in its design, cost, or popularity, but in the extent to which the garment reflects piety and encourages behavior in accordance with Islamic principles. Therefore, *libasut taqwa* is an ethical guideline that can balance the external and inner aspects of a Muslim's life.

Thus, this study shows that the understanding of *libasut taqwa* based on the views of Al-Qurthubi is not only important as a theological concept, but also serves as the basis of social ethics in dealing with the dynamics of modern society. The piety shown through moral integrity, social responsibility, honesty, and spiritual awareness becomes the main indicator of human honor, far more than just his physical appearance. This concept shows that the teachings of the Qur'an contain values that are universal and contextual, so that they can be a

guide for Muslims in dealing with various social and religious changes without losing the essence of piety values.

Author's Contributions

The author is responsible for the conceptualization and methodology of the research, as well as overseeing the entire project. Writers manage all aspects of project administration, conduct investigations, and lead the writing, review, and editing of manuscripts.

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Conflict of Interest

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