

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In the holy Qur'an, there is only one country that qualified to a very special description as the prosperous land with a forgiving God (*Baldatun tayyibatun wa rabbun ghafur*). This country named Saba', or in English called Sheba. Saba', based on the explanation of al-Qur'an, blessed with abundant grace; a very fertile land, two gardens on the right and left side.

Saba' was originally just an area that has a lot of valleys and barren region, but do not have a source of water to irrigate agricultural areas. Through the hard effort, they finally managed to drain the water by built the dam that distributes the canal irrigation to the fields. The biggest dam used is located in *Ma'rib*. From this dam, Saba' turned from a barren land into tranquil, rich, prosperous abundance income.

As a country, that living in the past 600 years BC, Saba' belonged to the superpower country with a very advanced civilization. In terms of not only food, agriculture, and technology, in the Surah an-Naml, al-Qur'an also records the triumph of Saba' in the military field.¹ Fair rules this country in the era of their triumph and advisable Queen named Bilqis. By the invitation of Sulaiman, Queen Bilqis finally surrender to

¹ . In the Surah an-Naml, narrated that after Prophet Sulaiman got the information about saba' from Hud-hud bird, He delegates Hudhud to sent a letter to the Queen of Saba' in that time, Queen Bilqis. The letter contents the invitation from Prophet Sulaiman for the society to surrender to Islam. After read down the letter, Bilqis asked for the opinion from her servant about the letter. This letter begun with *basmallah*, begged the society to be not arrogance and asked them to surrender to Islam. After knowing this, the servant that consist of the minister and high official of the kingdom, answered that they are ready to do anything that the Queen decided to take action about the letter. Their readiness including to wage a war because they are have the power and the great bravery. It noted in the verse 33 of Surah an-Naml.

Islām as captured in Sūrat an-Naml verse 44. Before, the society of Saba' worshiped the sun.

But unfortunately, after the death of Prophet Sulaimān or after the era of Sulaimān, the society being disbelieve, unthankful, greedy, and ingratitude to the gift of God to their land. al-Qur'an explained it :

لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكِنِهِمْ آيَةٌ جَنَّاتٍ عَن يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ كُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَشْكُرُوا لَهُ ۗ بَلَدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبُّ غَفُورٌ ﴿١٥﴾ فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنَاهُم بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتِ أُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَأَثَلٍ وَشَيْءٍ مِّن سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ذَلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُم بِمَا كَفَرُوا ۗ وَهَلْ يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا الْكُفُورَ ﴿١٧﴾

Meaning : That is the truth, the people of Saba' there are signs (power of God) in their homes Namely two gardens on the right and on the left. (they were told): "Eat ye of the sustenance (given) Lord and thank you to Him. (Your country) is a good country and (Lord) is the Forgiving Lord. but they turn away, then we bring them flooding large and We converted their two garden with two overgrown garden (trees) bitter fruit, trees and a bit of tree 'atsl Sidr. that is how We reply to them because of their disbelief. and we do not impose the punishment of (such) , but only to those who are unbelievers (Q. S Saba': 15-17)

In interpreting this story, the previous commentators are stuck in the elaboration of a long-winded and sometimes excessively on domestic phenomenon of Saba'. Ibn Kathir explains lafaz *jannatani* or gardens that flank Saba' with hyperbolic narrative. It said that according to Qotadah-a-Salafi, if a woman wants to gather the fruits, so she did not have to walk far. Simply run the moment in the garden with a basket on her head then the cart will filled with fruits that fall by itself.²

² . Abū Fida' Ibnu Kathir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'azim*. (Maktabah Shamilah) p.507 juz 6

There is nothing wrong with this interpretation. However, interpreting the story of Saba' by describe the things that surrounded historically like this, make the commentators are stuck in a long-winded discussion and away from the desired substance of Qur'an through this story. The model interpretation of the story done by Ibnu Kathir well imitated and quoted by commentators thereafter.

From some books of tafsir had read down by the writer such as Mafatih al-Ghaib by al-Razi, Al-kashshaf by Zamakhshari and Al-wasit by Sayyid Tanawi, its only tells about the elements of the story such as the location of Saba', the condition of the two garden and others. It didn't explain about what's around the narratives such as the condition of sociology of Mecca society in that time and the relation toward the model of narrative, individual psychology of Prophet Muhammad PBUH and others external aspect of story.

In Indonesia, precisely in 2010, the interpretation of the verses of Saba' story was very horrendous. Because, KH Fahmi Basha, A mathematics lecturer of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, with referring to the verses of Saba' story, concluded that the State is actually located in Indonesia. It is based on historical evidence such as the discovery of the existence of Hoopoe bird reliefs at Borobudur temple which he said is a relic of Sulaiman's palace, the presence of the statue of the queen boko is associated to bulqo queen or queen Bilqis, Sulaiman names beginning with "su" as Javanese descent in general, the presence of Wanagiri and Wanasaba in the right and left side of the area Borobudur temple assumed an interpretation of the word "*jannatani*" in Surat saba' that can be interpreted in the Java language as wana (garden or forest)-jannatani means: Wanasaba and Wanagiri-, and some other evidence.³

Khalafullah had done a new innovation in the model of the study of Qur'anic narratives (*Qasas al-Qur'an*). The interpretation model of *Qasas*

³ . <http://sejarah.kompasiana.com/2013/06/03/negeri-saba-benar-berada-di-indonesia-561828.html> accessed on March-24-2014, 10.28 WIB

al-Qur'an which has previously developed makes him unsatisfied. His intellectual queasiness encourages him to do a comprehensive study towards narrative verses. His study finally covered in his doctoral dissertation in the literature department of Cairo University under the title “*al-fann alqashaṣi fī al-qur'an al-karīm*”.

Khalafullāh's first perception about *qashaṣ al-Qur'an* is that actually history is not the prime agenda in the narratives of al-Qur'an. It was seen from the narratives model of al-Qur'an that sometimes intentionally hiding some historical elements of narrative such as time, place or actors.⁴ But it was unhappily didn't get the good attention from the old interpreter. They prefer to regard al-Qur'an as the historical text, its makes their interpretation far away from the substance and trapped in the longwinded thought that inappropriate with the aims at all. They unconsciously forget the sociological and religious side of the narrative of al-Qur'an.

According to Khalafullāh's theory, when al-Qur'an shows the events or phenomenon had been around by the narrative's actors, al-Qur'an tends to prioritize the events or phenomenon that dealing with the situation around Prophet Muhammad PBUH. This meant for some aims such as strengthen Prophet's soul and entertain him from all suffering. The private psychology of Prophet Muhammad PBUH had been the determining factor of narrative structure in al-Qur'an.⁵ And private psychology of prophet immediately influenced by the condition of Mecca society in that time.

In the theory of genetic structuralism by Goldmann, the conditions intended by Khalafullāh are getting into the frame of humanity facts. The fact of humanity that includes individual facts and social facts, according to Goldmann is two things that being the first consideration in

⁴. Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh, *Al-fann Al-Qashaṣi fī Al-Qur'an*, translated by Zuhairi Misrawy and Anis Maftukhin, (Jakarta : Paramadina, 2002), page.36

⁵. Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh, *Al-fann Al-Qashaṣi fī Al-qur'an*. Page. 346

the formation of narrative structure. The fact of humanity is part of a very meaningful narrative structure; therefore an understanding of the facts of humanity in narrative must consider the structure and meaning. This is due to the fact of humanity behind a tale so bound by a sense of purpose into a story.⁶

This is the weak point in the classical commentators reading toward the narrative verses. Their Interpretation often spins on historical elements that are within a story without regarding the facts of humanity, especially personal psychological factors as determinants of the Prophet Muhammad in a story structure. And often because it uses a historical approach, most interpreters erred in addressing the material actual story. Finally, they often encounter difficulties when interpreting, for most material events recounted the story or not in accordance with what they know of history.

For example, when interpreting the story of Nūh's Ark in the Sūrat Nūh, al-Rāzī didn't get into final conclusion about the names of the idols. In the Islamic sense, the names *Wad*, *Suwā*, *yaghūt*, *Yauq* and *Naṣr* are the names of the idols that were worshiped in the Arabian Peninsula before and after the coming of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. al-Rāzī writes in his commentary *" to the fourth issue: the five biggest idols are idols of their day, then the idol was moved from the Ark to the Arab. Wad is the god of Bani Kalb , Suwā god Bani Hamdhan , Yaghūt for Madhhaj sons , Murad Bani Ya'uq idols , and the idols Bani Naṣr Humair . Then some time later in the Arabian Peninsula appellation appears that the Arabs ' abd wad , Suwā , yaghūt and so forth . It is frequently mentioned in the book, but this is a problem because when the study of history impossible idols that still survive, because the world has ever destroyed buffeted by hurricanes. And how the idols came into the Arab people? We cannot possibly answer that the idols survived*

⁶ . Faruk, *Pengantar sosiologi sastra* (Yogyakarta; Pustaka pelajar. Cct.III.2013) Page.57

from the flood because inserted into Nuh's Ark, while in fact he was sent by God to destroy the idols.”⁷

Seeing the phenomenon of such interpretation, Khalafullāh emphasize that the stories in the Qur'ān should not be read as historical texts, but rather as a literary text by the Qur'ān are used as mediators delivery of messages. From here, Khalafullāh insists that the stories narrated in Qur'ān are not entirely reality that really happens in the real world. Besides the historical narrative model, the Qur'ān also uses the analogical and myths model in presenting the stories.

The thesis submitted by Khalafullāh was received much opposition. Previous scholars tend to view the story as the historical reality and a part of the study of 'Ulūmul Qur'ān. But according to Khalafullāh, the stories in the Qur'ān are not entirely historical reality and should have become part of practical literary studies, not theoretical study of 'Ulūmul Qur'ān. Sayyid Quṭb in his book *taṣwīr al-Fanni fī al-Qur'ān*, actually has the same view with Khalafullāh in looking at the aim of story, but he still hold the belief of previous scholars that the whole story in the Qur'ān is a historical reality.

Sayyid Quṭb said that the story of al-Qur'ān either the theme, narrative method or the systematizatin case were bowed into the demand of religion's aims. The art of literary narrative is only a tool to catch the deep impression to the reader's soul. ⁸ this is contrary to Khalafullāh view that the stories of al-Qur'ān although it was agreed with the aims of religion but it was also bowed into the literary frame.

In the introduction to his book *"al-fann al-Qaṣaṣ fī al-Qur'ān"* Khalafullāh tells his curiosity of the reasons why the story has a

⁷ . Fakhruddīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātih al-ghaib*, (Beirut: Dar Ihya' At-turath al-'arb,1996) Juz 16 page. 63

⁸. Sayyid Quthb, *At-taṣwīr Al-fanni fī Al-Qur'ān*, (Beirut: Dar as-shuruq, Cet.VIII.1983) translated into Indonesian language by Bahrun Abu Bakar, *Kecindahan Al-Qur'ān yang Menakjubkan*, (Jakarta: Robbani Pers, 2004) page. 276

significant role in the Qur'an. The story has an important influence and role in civilization of Arabia. In the days of the apostles, the stories were used as a tool of deception by the pagans to drop against the Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an. Even Naẓir bin Hārith one pagan Quraysh, able to align himself with the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his speech may attract the attention of the people of Quraysh to the extent that they fled from the Prophet Muhammad when Naẓir tells the story of the Persian and the stories of kings and King Ekspendaria Rustum.⁹

If we understand thoroughly, al-Qur'an more often features a story as a literary narrative. This makes sense because it revealed during the Arab nation has reached the height of glory in the field of literature. Al-Qur'an is the greatest miracle that derived by using a language that is very high literary value.¹⁰ The Qur'an sent down to match the Arabic literary of ignorance era when it proud. This event has recorded in the Qur'an itself that tells the challenge of creating such verse of the Qur'an. This challenge has given gradually, ranging from making ten verses, then three verses until finally one verse similar to the Qur'an in terms of style and rhetoric but they cannot afford. It's narrated in al-Qur'an Sūrat Al-Isra' verses 88, Sūrat Hūd verses 13 and Sūrat Al-Baqarah verses 23.

The narration style of the stories is the highest literary value of al-Qur'an. According to Manna' Khalīl al-Qaṭṭān, stories in al-Qur'an is a type of advices that delivered in a literary narrative style to catch the attention from the reader. Through narrative style, the reader will interested to read and know more about the stories and get deeply impressed to the messages within. The stories educating reader to

⁹ . Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh, *Al-fann al-qaṣaṣi fī al-Qur'an*, page. 35

¹⁰ . Moh. Chadziq Charisma, *Tiga Aspek kemukjizatan Al-Qur'an*. (Surabaya; PT. Bina Ilmu, 1991) hal. 15

follow the good things of the figures and takes wisdom toward the substance.¹¹

The stories contained in the Qur'an are very special. In addition to the pedagogical value, it also has a role in changing morals; beautify behavior, and spreading the light of wisdom. The style of the narrative is also varied and enthralling. Not only beautiful lyrical narrative style, many stories are presented in the form of dialogues, geographic exposure about the virtues of a variety of characters and other imagery that accompanied and I'tibar.

With a distinctive style of narrative, the Qur'an describes how the lands were destroyed, while its inhabitants were destroyed in punishment overwritten. In some parts, the Qur'an also tells a group of believers who live quietly and happily and grace that God has given to them in the world. There is also a story that tells of a group of people who misguided and barbaric, and how God avenge their error with a painful chastisement.¹² Exposure stories like this are nothing to be guidelines and instructions to mankind.

However, amid the roar of modern civilization, the study of the stories of the Qur'an received less attention among Muslims themselves. While the method of reading the verses relating to the fundamental themes such as legal texts, metaphysics and eschatology were continues to grow, the verses of the story it is methodologically excluded. In a sense, reading the verses of the story is often likened to a model reading of the verses of a non story.

This resulted in many barrage of orientalist who criticized al-Qur'an from historical aspects. One was John Wansbrough. He analyzes the history of the Qur'an, which in turn puts the Qur'an as something

¹¹ . Manna' Khalil al-Qatṭān, *Mabāhith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*. (Riyāḍ: Mansurat al-'aṣr al-hadīth, 1973), translated in indonesia by Mudhakhir As, *Studi ilmu-ilmu al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Litera Antar Nusa. Cet. IV. 2001) p. 435

- ¹² . Jadūl Aula-Faḍl, Ibrāhīm, *Qaṣaṣul Qur'ān*, Maktabah attijariyah al-kubrā ,Mesir, 1969 page.muqaddimah

historically because it is the fabric of the interconnectedness of God's revelation earlier in the presence of adjustment time and place. In analyzing the verses of the Qur'an he uses historical analysis. Wansbrough concluded that there influence of Jewish Christians, the integration of traditions and the Qur'an as a prophetic post.¹³

The seeds of the attacks on the Qur'an in terms of the actual story of this history have emerged since the time of the Prophet. This tells in the Qur'an in Sūrat An-Naml verse 24. In this verse Allāh tells distrust of the polytheists against Muhammad treatise by saying that what Muhammad delivered nothing but a fairy tale of ancient people (Asāṭirul Awwalīn), in addition to the attitude of the polytheists, pagan's attitude toward the Qur'an is not less hard. They are seeking to undermine the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad booted by using their knowledge of history. They made history as a tool to look for weaknesses stories of the Qur'an. In the modern world, the attitude of the polytheists and infidels followed by the orientalist, missionaries, Jews, Christians and factions seeking to undermine Islām.¹⁴

Seeing this fact, the emergence of literary theory in the reading of the story that triggered by Khalafullāh presumably deserves to be appreciated and developed to fend off the attacks as well as an Orientalist way in dig the instructions conveyed through the story of al-Qur'an. Based on this, the author encouraged to apply literary theory of Khalafullāh as a method of reading the story in the Qur'an.

In this thesis, the story that the writer should be studied in depth is the story of Saba land. This story rarely gets the attention of both classical and contemporary Qur'anic study, but it does not mean nothing

¹³ . Muhammad al-fatih suryadilaga, *Pendekatan historis john wansbrough dalam studi al-qur'an*, an article on Abdul mustaqim and sahiron syamsudin's book, *Studi al-qur'an kontemporer. Wacana baru berbagai metodologi tafsir*, (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana.2002) p. 213

¹⁴ . Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh, *Al-fann al-qāṣaṣi fī al-Qur'an*. Page. 28

can be studied. For the writer, this story is very interesting and need more in-depth study to understand.

Rests of the things mentioned above, it feels interesting for the writer to explore further about the story of Saba' by applying literary theory of Khalafullāh contained in the book "*Al-fann al-qaṣaṣi fī al-Qur'ān*". Writer noted this study as the application of the theory, because Khalafullāh not reviews this story in his book. Application of literary theory in the book so much more about the story of the long and repetitive as the story of Prophet Yūsuf as, Nuh's ark, the Prophet Mūsā and the story of Companions of the Cave.

B. Research Question

Regarding the study, the problems that may comes around are :

1. How is the interpretation of Saba' verses according to previous commentators?
2. How is the application of Khalafullāh's theory toward the verses about story of Saba'?

C. Aim and Significance of Research

Aims

1. To get the understanding toward the story of Saba' through literary analysis approach.
2. To search for Khalafullāh's genealogy of thought so that ascertainable of the different between Khalafullāh and other commentator in interpreting narrative verses.

Significance

Academically, this research is intended to be a simple contribution for the treasure of Qura'nic studies, especially in the field study of Qaṣaṣ

al-Qur'an. For the next researcher, this research expected to be a reference for the same research studies.

D. Prior Research

There are few of writings discuss more about Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullah theory in reading the stories of the Qur'an. From the author's observation, there are at least three academic works that discuss it.

The first is the thesis of Ade Alimah, student of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (2003) with the title ***“Kisah dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Komparatif pandangan sayyid Quṭb dan Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullah”***. This thesis describes the conception of the two figures in looking at the stories of the Qur'an. There are similarities and differences in thinking between the two figures. However, because it is comparative, it focusing on the study methodology and its application Khalafullah is less comprehensive.

The second academic work that examines about Khalafullah is the thesis from Arina Manasikana, student of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (2005) with the title ***“Pendekatan kesastraan terhadap kisah-kisah Al-Qur'an: Kajian atas al-fann al-qaṣaṣi fī al-qur'an karya Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullah”***. The Studies conducted by Arina Manasikana is indeed more focused on the methodology of literary studies initiated by Khalafullah, but this study is limited to describe the methodology used in his work *Al-fann al-qaṣaṣi fī al-Qur'an*.

The third is the academic work of Fathul Hadi, a student of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (2010), entitled ***“Kisah Aṣḥābul Kahfi dalam Al-Qur'an Prespektif Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullah dalam al-fann al-qaṣaṣi fī al-Qur'an”*** This thesis describes the interpretation of Khalafullah on the story of Companions of the Cave. Remembering that

Khalafullāh been discussed at length on the interpretation of the verses about the Companions of the Cave, this thesis only limited to the analysis of Khalafullāh thought and didn't do the application yet.

While the study of the story taken by writer in this paper that is the story of Saba', write only found two academic works:

The first is the work of Siti Fatimah, Arabic literature student of UIN Sunan Kalidjaga Yogyakarta (2013) with the title *"Baro'atul Istihlāl li Sūrat saba' waṣilatuhā bimaḍmuniha: Dirāsah tahliliyah al-balāghiyah"* This thesis is studying about *baro'atul istihlāl* or study of relationship between the expression of early phrase letter in the beginning of Sūrat with the next story of Saba'. This study concludes that there is interconnectedness between words of praise to God at the beginning of the letter with the story of Saba' are described in subsequent verses. This thesis focused on the study balāghah, not literary tale.

The second academic work is a thesis written by Siti Fatimah, a student of UIN Syarif Hidayatullāh Jakarta (2003) with the title *"Fenomena alam dalam al-Qur'an: Studi analisis atas Sūrat saba' ayat 15-17"* This study focused on the analysis of natural phenomena that occurred during the Saba' land as lush gardens and fruitful area of saba' that originally a barren land, then the sailul arim or breakdown caused by flash flooding due to dam in Ma'rib because of the rats, and changes in post-flood vegetation gardens.

Based on the results of this literature review, the writer interested to explore the story of Saba' comprehensively by applying the method of literature initiated by Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh.

E. Research Methodology

This study is library research with the focus is applying Khalafullāh's literary theory on the narrative of Saba'. The research method used by writer in this study includes :

a. Source of Data

There are two things that need to be highlighted in this study is; the story of the land of Saba and the theory of literary reading of the narrative of the Qur'an by Khalafullāh. The data sources of this study are of two kinds: Sources of primary and secondary sources. State primary sources related to the story of Saba' is al-Qur'an al-karīm. Meanwhile, the secondary source is the hadīth, tafsīr and other literature that discusses the story of saba'.

The primary sources related to the literary theory by Khalafullāh is the book "*al-fann al-Qaṣaṣi fī al-Qur'an*" by Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh. While the secondary sources are scholarly works related and can help clarify the discussion in this study such as the works of commentary, books, journals, research, magazines, newspapers and other media such as the Internet.

The method of analysis will be used by writer to analyze the data that has been collected here is descriptive-analytical method. Here the authors will describe the story of the country systematically saba' in the Qur'an and its interpretation of previous commentators about it, then the author will analyze these descriptions using Khalafullāh's theory.

b. Method of Collecting Data

Method of collecting data used in this research is documentation. As the object will be examined in this research is application Khalafullāh's theory toward the narrative of Saba', the research will be done in the form of qualitative research with the research literature by documenting the data, both primary and secondary data, and data complements in the

form of articles, magazines, and journals related to the object of the problem will be examined as well.

c. Data Display

In displaying data, the writer will try to explain the data in narrative text as the most frequent form of data display for qualitative research. Nevertheless, table and chart will also used to explain the data. Through those data display, the data is organized, arranged in relational pattern, and thus, it will be easily understood.

d. Analysis

Method of analysis that will be use is descriptive-analysis which is not only limited in collecting and arranging the data, but also classifying, analyzing and interpreting data.¹⁵ The approaches used in this research are: *First*, the content analysis approach which is a systematic technique to analyze data objectively which then is classified and interpreted to make the data of the story of saba' in map. In this step, writer classifying the data from hadith, books of tafsīr, books of Qaṣaṣ al-Qur'ān and other source narrated or explained about saba'. *Second*, applying Khalafullāh's theory on saba' story. This step will use Khalafullāh's methodology on narrative verses. *Third*, after knowing the aplication of Khalafullāh's theory, writer will compare the method of previous scholar in reading narrative verses and thus, it will finding what is the different thing of Khalafullāh's theory. It's important to know wheather Khalafullāh's theory has significance or not.

F. Structure of Writing

This study consists of five chapters with the system of writing as follows:

The first chapter is an introductory chapter that contains the

¹⁵ . Prof.Dr. Winarno Surakhmad, Pengantar Penelitian Ilmiah;Dasar Metoda Teknik (Bandung:Tarsito,1998) p: 139.

background of the problem, formulation of the problem, objectives and benefits of the research, literature review, research methodology and writing systematic.

The second chapter is a discussion about Saba' and the concept of Qur'anic narrative discusses or *Qaṣaṣ al-Qur'ān*. This chapter is divided into three sub-chapters. First understands the story of Saba' based on description in Qur'anic verses, second concept of Qur'anic narrative including definition, models, element of the story, aims, method of delivery and characterization. The art of Qur'anic narrative in general also discussed as the effort of seeking the novelty of Khalafullāh's concept in the art of narrative in al-Qur'ān. The interpretation of Saba' story also discuss briefly in this sub chapter to sketch the way of reading Qur'anic narrative in the view of art and literature. The third is explaining the views of Western scholar in viewing the Qur'anic narrative. It is important to be discussed to find the importance of this thesis to answer the accusation of them toward Qur'anic narrative.

The third chapter will discuss about Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh as the originator of the theory of literary readings narrative which the methods used by writer in this study. In this chapter will describe the life biography of Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh, educational background, mindset development, preparation and background work as well as socio-political setting and its influence on the book "*Al-fann al-qaṣaṣi fī al-Qur'ān*". Furthermore, also will be discussed about the methods of interpretation, examples and characteristics of interpretation and the critique of Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullāh to the interpretation model of the story that made by other scholars.

The fourth chapter discusses the application of Khalafullāh's theory in the reading of the narrative of Saba'. This chapter will be divided into four sub-chapters. The first section describes the narration of Saba' in Al-Qur'ān, to know The second is discuss about the material Source of

Saba' Story, in this sub, the socio cultural of Arab and the element of story will deeply explored to find the historical prove of Saba' story through the texts. The next discussion is about the dimension of literature in the story; it helped to know the hidden miracle of Qur'anic text in art and literature. The last discussion is about Saba' in contemporary era, this sub will explored the social messages of Saba' that applicable in modern era.

The fifth chapter is the concluding chapter will provide conclusions and suggestions for further academic studies in the same field.