



Human in the Qur'an, Tafsir Maudu'i

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Abstract: Humans have a special position in Islam as explained in the Qur'an. As creatures of God, humans are given reason, soul, and freedom to live their lives, so they have moral and spiritual responsibilities. The Qur'an uses various terms to describe humans, such as *basyar*, *insan*, *bani Adam*, and *abd*, which respectively indicate the biological, psychological, and theological aspects of humans. In addition, humans in Islam also have two main roles, namely as caliphs (*khalifatullah fil ard*) who are tasked with managing the earth with justice, and as servants of God (*abdullah*) who are obliged to submit and obey His commands. This study uses a library research method, by tracing and analyzing various literary sources, both from interpretations of the Qur'an, books, and scientific journals that discuss the concept of humans in Islam. The results of this study show that humans in the Qur'an are not merely biological creatures, but also entities that have moral, intellectual, and spiritual responsibilities. By understanding the concept of human in the Qur'an, deeper insight can be gained regarding the nature of human existence as well as their roles and responsibilities in this world and the afterlife.

Keywords: Al-Qur'an; Human; Tafsir Maudu'i

Introduction

If we look at the history of philosophical thought, the study of humans began with the thought of the Sophists, who emphasized the human ability to produce truth (Amin, 1983). As thought developed, philosophical attention then shifted to the aspect of the human soul, which was considered the center of the ability to think. In the view of Greek philosophers such as Plato (427-347 BC), the soul is a stand-alone entity and has a primary role in giving life to the body. He likened the soul to a horseman who determines the direction of the horse's steps, meaning that the soul is responsible for all human activities (Aulaziy, 1961). In Plato's conception, the soul consists of three powers: lust, anger, and thinking. Of these three powers, the power of thinking plays a central role in controlling lust and anger, so that humans can achieve the main virtues in their lives (Damis, 2014).

إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا خُلُوءٌ خَصِرَةٌ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مُسْتَخْلِفُكُمْ فِيهَا، فَيَنْظُرُ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ

"Indeed, the world is sweet and green (beautiful), and indeed Allah has made you caliphs in it, then He will see how you do good deeds." (HR. Muslim No. 2742).

Later, Aristotle (384-322 BC), who was Plato's student, developed a different perspective on the soul. Unlike Plato who considered the soul as a separate substance, Aristotle emphasized that the soul cannot be separated from the body because it is the "form" that gives life to matter. In his theory of *hylomorphism*, the soul and body are a unity, where the soul functions as the principle of life, directing the body in all its activities. According to Aristotle, the soul also has three levels: the vegetative soul (growth and reproduction), the sensitive soul (sensation and movement), and the rational soul (thinking) (Damis, 2014). Among these, the rational soul is considered the highest, making humans different from other living beings.

The development of this philosophical tradition influenced subsequent religious and intellectual discourses, including in Islamic thought. Muslim philosophers such as Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina adopted and modified Greek philosophical concepts about the soul, integrating them with Islamic teachings.

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Ibn Sina, for instance, argued that the soul is immaterial and immortal, while also emphasizing its close connection with the body in worldly life. Through this synthesis, Islamic philosophy not only preserved the heritage of Greek philosophy but also provided a new framework that positioned the human soul as central in understanding morality, spirituality, and the purpose of life.

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

"Each of you is a leader and each of you will be asked to account for his leadership." (HR. Bukhari No. 893 and Muslim No. 1829).

Thus, the study of human beings, the soul, and their inherent potential was not only a concern of classical Greek philosophers but also received significant attention within the Islamic intellectual tradition. This indicates that understanding humanity is not merely limited to its biological aspects, but also encompasses moral, spiritual, and social dimensions. At this point, the relevance of philosophical and Islamic studies converges, namely in positioning humans as rational beings as well as creatures who bear spiritual and social responsibilities before their Lord (Amin, 1983).

Method

Each of you is a leader and each of you will be asked to account for his leadership." (HR. Bukhari No. 893 and Muslim No. 1829). This research employed a literature review method, a method conducted by examining various sources of literature relevant to the topic. The literature review aimed to explore and analyze the concept of humans from a Qur'anic perspective by referring to commentaries, books, scientific journals, and previous research on similar themes (Haryono et al., 2024).

The research process began with identifying credible sources of literature appropriate to the context of the study. Next, an analysis was conducted of the terminology used in the Qur'an to describe humans, such as *insan*, *basyar*, *bani Adam*, and *abd*. Furthermore, this study also explored Qur'anic verses discussing the status and potential of humans, as well as their role as *khalifah* on earth and servant of Allah. Data obtained from various sources were then analyzed descriptively and thematically to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of humans in Islam.

With this approach, the research is expected to provide a more comprehensive insight into the nature and role of humans according to the Qur'an. In addition, the literature review method also allows researchers to examine various Islamic perspectives that have been developed by scholars and academics in understanding the concept of humans more broadly and deeply.

Result and Discussion

Explaining Human Terms in the Qur'an

Explains the various terms used in the Qur'an to refer to humans, such as:

Al-Insān (الإنسان) → Humans in general (QS. Attin).

The word *al-Insan*, derived from the word *al-uns*, is mentioned 73 times in the Qur'an and is spread across 43 chapters. Etymologically, *al-Insan* can be interpreted as harmonious, gentle, visible, or forgetful. It also comes from the root word *Naus*, which means "movement or dynamism." Referring to the origin of the word *al-Insan*, we can understand that humans fundamentally possess positive potential for growth and development, both physically and mentally and spiritually. Furthermore, humans are also equipped with a number of other potentials, which have the potential to push them towards detrimental actions, attitudes, and behaviors (Jalaludin, 2001).

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ {4}

Indeed, We have created humans in the best form,

Surah At-Tin is the 95th chapter of the Quran and has 8 verses. It contains 34 words and 162 letters, each with a rich, positive message. It is classified as a Meccan chapter because it was revealed in Mecca after Surah Al-Buruj. It is named At-Tin because its first verse begins with the word "At-Tin," which means "fruit of the tree."

Al-Basyar (البشر) → Humans in a biological/physical context (QS. Yusuf 31)

Basyar (البشر) is mentioned 27 times in the Qur'an, providing references to humans as biological creatures. This is evident in Surah Ali Imran (3): 7, where Maryam says to Allah: "My Lord, how can I have a child when Basyar has not touched me?"; Surah al-Kahf (18): 110; Surah Fushshilat (41): 6; Surah al-Furqan (25): 7 and 20; and Surah Yusuf (12): 31. (Afrida, 2018).

According to al-Ashfahani, the word *bas* is the plural of the word *bas* (basyarah), which means skin. Humans are called *basyar* because their skin is clearly visible and distinct from the skin of other animals (Shihab, 2007). Simply put, Quraish Shihab states that the word *basyar* is derived from a root word that originally meant the appearance of something good and beautiful. Then came the word *basyarah*, which means skin. Humans are named *basyar* because their skin is clearly visible, different from the skin of other animals. 11 And the word *basyar* always refers to humans from their external aspects, having the same body shape, eating and drinking from the same materials found in this world. And with increasing age, their physical condition will decline, they will become old, and eventually, death will come to them (Idris & Engharitano, 2020).

فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ بِمَكْرِهِنَّ أَرْسَلَتْ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَعْتَدَتْ لَهُنَّ مَتَكًّا وَآتَتْ
كُلَّ وَاحِدَةٍ مِّنْهُنَّ سِكِّينًا وَقَالَتْ أَخْرِجْ عَلَيْنَ فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُ أَكْبَرْنَهُ
وَقَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ وَقُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَذَا بَشَرًا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ
{31}

"So when the woman (Zulaikha) heard their taunts, she invited them and prepared a seat for them, then gave each of them a knife. Then she said (to Yusuf), 'Come out (show yourself) to them!'"

Surah Yusuf is included in the Makkiyah surah category, because it was revealed in Mecca before the migration of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to Medina. This surah is the 12th surah in the Qur'an and consists of 111 verses.

An-Nass (الناس) QS. Al-Baqarah [02] : 185

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ
الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ
مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرٍ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا
يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَذَا كُمْ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

"The month of Ramadan is (the month) in which the Qur'an was revealed as a guide for mankind and explanations regarding that guidance and the distinction (between right and wrong). Therefore, whoever among you is present (in the country where he lives) in that month, then fast. But, whoever is sick or on a journey (and then he breaks the fast), then (must make up for it), as much as the missed day, on other days. Allah wants ease for you and does not want difficulties for you, so that you complete the number and so that you glorify Allah for the guidance He has given you, so that you may be grateful."

Surah Al-Baqarah is a Madaniyah surah, because it was revealed in Medina after the migration of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Al-Khalifah (الخلافة) → (QS. Al-Baqarah [02] : 30)

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا
مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ
قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ {30}

"And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels, 'I am going to place a vicegerent on earth.' They said, 'Do You intend to place on earth one who will cause corruption and shed blood, while we glorify You and sanctify Your name?' He said, 'Indeed, I know what you do not know.'"

Surah Al-Baqarah is a Madaniyah surah, because it was revealed in Medina after the migration of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Al-Abdu (العبد)

Reality says that humans as creatures of God consist of two main elements, namely the body and the spirit. The task of the caliphate that has been stated above refers more to the task of humans as bodies or in the context of this paper as basyar. The implementation of human duties as caliphs is apparently not enough, so that humans are still required to carry out other functions as a consequence of their humanity, namely humans as 'abdullah (servants of Allah) (Nuridin, 2013). The concept of 'abdullah refers more to the individual duties of humans as servants of Allah. This task is realized in the form of ritual devotion to Allah. The Qur'an has clearly stated in:

قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاصْبِرُوا إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَن
يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ {128}

"Moses said to his people, 'Ask for help from Allah and be patient. Indeed, this earth belongs to Allah, He bequeaths it to whom He wishes among His servants. And the (good) end is for those who fear Allah.'"

Surah Al-A'raf is included in the Makkiyah surah category, because it was revealed in Mecca before the migration of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to Medina. This surah is the 7th surah in the Qur'an and consists of 206 verses.

Conclusion

Thus, the concept of humanity in the Quran emphasizes that humans were created with a great purpose and responsibility. As caliphs, humans are required to maintain balance and justice on earth, while as servants of God, humans must always submit and obey Him. This understanding is expected to serve as a foundation for humans to live their lives with full awareness of their duties and roles, both in this world and the hereafter.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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