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Tafsir Bi al-Ma'tsur: Concepts and Methodology

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Abstract.

Islam as a *samawi* religion provides 2 sources for its followers, namely the Qur'an and hadith, understanding the Qur'an as a source in Islam requires a process of interpretation of one of the sciences that develops in the process of interpretation. al-Qur'an is the interpretation of *bi al-ma'tsur*, how the concept of understanding, development, and method of interpretation are, these three things are the focus of research in this study. This research is a literature review with a qualitative descriptive approach. The results of the discussion provide an overview, first, etymologically the word *bi al-ma'tsur* is taken from one of the words in Arabic, with the definition of understanding as a pattern of interpretation that uses *riwayah*, second, the development of *bi al-ma'tsur* interpretation begins with the process of narration of the Qur'an and hadith up to the accounting period, third, the method of interpretation of the *bi al-ma'tsur* elements *riwayah* in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an.

Keywords: interpretation, *bi al-Ma'tsur*, concepts, methodology

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1. INTRODUCTION

Muhammad SAW before he died left the Qur'an and hadith as a guide for his people. With the guidance of the Qur'an and the hadith, Muhammad SAW convinced his people that humans will never go astray while living the life of the world, which is only temporary [1] [2].

The meaning of the Qur'an in terms is the word *al-khaliq*, which was revealed to Muhammad as miracle written in various pages [3], through the intermediary of Gabriel using the Arabic language, which has the value of worship for anyone who reads it, and reaches people in a gradual way [4].

The revelation of the Qur'an as a miracle for Muhammad and is God's guidance for mankind [5]. There are verses in the Qur'an that are *muhkamat* in nature and some that are *mutasyabihat*. In understanding the verses of the Qur'an, knowledge is born

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in understanding God's guidance [6] which is called the science of interpretation. The science of interpretation is the effort and effort of the people of Muhammad SAW in understanding the guidance of Allah SWT [7], [8]. The process of understanding the Qur'an by interpreting the verses in the Qur'an has begun long since the time of Muhammad SAW [9].

Dynamics in the science of *tafsir* are known as two methods namely the *riwayah* method and *dirayah* method [9]. Stream *riwayah* is a stream that tries to understand the verses of the Qur'an by using the Qur'an, the Prophet's hadith, and the words of the companions, while the *dirayah* is the process of understanding the Qur'an by using other elements in the *riwayah* [10] in some literature this flow is known as the *bi al-ra'yi* [11].

interpretation pattern *bi al-ma'tsur* [12]. Ibn Abbas in a narration illustrates that in the process of interpreting the Qur'an the main thing is to return the process to the environment where the Qur'an was revealed [13], meaning that in the process of interpretation it is closely related to the process of narration.

Related to the words of Ibn Abbas, then in this case there appears a pattern of interpretation which is further referred to as *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur*. In this case, it is interesting to study the meaning of *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur*, the period of development, and the method used in *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur*.

The study of *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* has been carried out by several researchers including, Eko Zulfikar in an article entitled "clarifying the epistemology of *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* (application of examples of interpretation in *jami' al-bayan* by al-Tabari)", the result of the research explains that the epistemology in al-Tabari's interpretation uses a combination of two streams, namely the *riwayah* stream and the *dirayah* [14], the difference between Eko Zulfikar's study and the author lies in the study conducted where the author tries to study the *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* from the perspective of the reader, the period development, and methods used in the science of *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur*.

2. METHODOLOGY/ MATERIALS

The writing of this article is a literature study with a qualitative descriptive approach [15] which studies the meaning of *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur*, the period of development, and the method used. The primary legal material used in this research is in the form of books, journals, and other scientific articles that discuss *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* in terms of its meaning, development period, and methods used. Whereas dictionaries and encyclopedias are used as secondary legal materials.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Definition of Tafsir Bi al-Ma'tsur

In language, *al-ma'tsur* comes from the word *astara - ya'sturu – astran - astaratan*, which etymologically means to move (quote), to glorify, the word *ma'tsur* also means that which is narrated. The word *al-atsar* also has the meaning of hadith, and former [16].

According to Manna 'al-Qaththan, what is called *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* [17] is

"interpretation that is based on authentic quotations based on the order (thabaqat) of mufassirin, where the Qur'an can be interpreted with the Qur'an, or with the Sunnah which explains the Qur'an, or with what was narrated by the Companions because they are the ones who know the Book of Allah best, and also with the words of the great tabi'in figures because in general they received it from friends".

According to Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni, *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* is the interpretation of the Qur'an or hadith or the sayings of friends to explain something that Allah SWT wants [18], in the view of Muhammad Ali Al-Shabuni *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* is divided into 3, namely the interpretation of the Qur'an with verses of the Qur'an, the interpretation of the Qur'an with the hadith of the prophet, and the interpretation of the Qur'an with the words of the companions, Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni inbook *al-tibyan fii ulum al-Qur'an* interpretation of *bi al-ma'tsur* with the interpretation of *bi al-riwayah* or the interpretation of *bi al-naql*.

According to al-Zarqani interpretation *bi al-ma'tsur* is the interpretation given by the verses of the Qur'an, sunnah, and companions [19]. *Tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* according to Ali Hasan al-Aridl said is the interpretation (explanation) of the verses of the Qur'an to the meaning of other verses of the Qur'an, in this sense al-Aridl stated that basically the interpretation of the Qur'an 'an with the Qur'an this is the best. However, in his book *ilm al-tafsir wa manaahij al-mufassirin*, al-Aridl states that what is also included in the *bi al-Ma'tsur* is the

1. Interpretation of the Qur'an with the traditions narrated by the Prophet Muhammad, this is used in explaining some of the difficulties encountered by the companions while the Prophet was still alive;
2. Interpretation of the Qur'an with the opinion of the Companions based on their *ijtihad*;
3. Interpretation of the Qur'an with the opinion of the *tabi'in* to explain the ambiguity encountered by the Muslims regarding some of the meanings of the Qur'an.

According to Muhammad Husain al-Dzahabi tafsir *bi al-ma'tsur* is the interpretation narrated from the Prophet Muhammad, the companions, and the *tabi'in* of every explanation and information related to the interpretation of the texts of the holy book (al-Qur'an) [20].

1. Period of Development of Tafsir Bi al-Ma'stur

The development of *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* is divided into 2 periods [21]:

1. Period of Narration

This period starts from the time of the Prophet Muhammad, who explained verses that were difficult to understand to his companions, then the companions interpreted the Qur'an from the provisions that had been given by the Prophet Muhammad, from here then the companions narrated to each other among themselves [9]. At this time the existence of the interpretation of *bi al-ma'tsur* same as the existence of the hadith in terms of its authenticity, this continued until the end of the Companions.

Furthermore, the *tabi'in* who devote their attention to the interpretation, collect the interpretations of the Prophet Muhammad, his companions, then they add their interpretations with the ability of reasoning and *ijtihad*, until then comes the generation after the *tabi'in* who carry out interpretations as their predecessors until it continues through generations another.

1. Bookkeeping

This period starts from the end of the narration period, in this period the bookkeeping of Islamic sciences as a whole begins [22]. The existence of interpretation itself is in the sciences that are recorded. The stages of bookkeeping of interpretations in this period [23]:

1. Stages of bookkeeping of interpretations which are still part of the hadith;
2. The stages of separating the interpretation from the hadith, in this case the *shahifah* narrated by Ali ibn abi Talib, ibn Talha, and ibn Abbas;
3. The stages of bookkeeping of interpretations are in the form of *juz*, such as 1 *juz* belonging to abi Waraq and 3 *juz* from Muhammad bin Thauri from ibn Juraij;
4. The stages of bookkeeping of interpretation in the form of an encyclopedia;
5. The stages of transition from the bookkeeping of the *bi al-ma'tsur* interpretation to the *bi al-ra'yi* interpretation.

6. Bi al-Ma'tsur Method of Interpretation

7. Interpretation of the Qur'an with the Qur'an

ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعْظِمِ حُرْمَتِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَأُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ الْأَنْعَامُ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ ۝

30. Thus (god's instructions and commandments). Who glorifies what is honorable on the side of Allah (Qurumāt) is better for him on the side of his Lord. All farm animals have been justified for you, except those that are explained to you (their monasticism). So, stay away from (worship) those unclean idols and stay away from (also) the words of lies. (al-Hajj [22]:30).

The word عَلَيْنِكُمْ يُتْلَى مَا إِلَّا is interpreted with another verse:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أَهَلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ

3. It is forbidden to you (eat) carcasses, blood, pork, and (animal flesh) slaughtered not in the (name of) Allah, ... (al-Maidah [5]:3).

1. Interpretation of the Qur'an with hadith

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ عَلْقَمَةَ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ لَمَّا نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ {الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبَسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ} شَقَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَقَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَأَيُّنَا لَا يَظْلِمُ نَفْسَهُ قَالَ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ الَّذِي تَعْنُونَ أَلَمْ تَسْمَعُوا مَا قَالَ الْعَبْدُ الصَّالِحُ {يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ} إِنَّمَا هُوَ الشِّرْكَ

Has told us Abu Mu'awiyah has told us Al A'masy of Ibrahim of Alqamah of Abdullah he said; When this verse comes down: (Those who have faith and do not confuse their faith with tyranny, they are the ones who get security and they are the ones who get the instructions.), it makes the people heavy, and they say; O Messenger of Allah, who among us did not disqualify him? He said: "Verily not as you mean, have you not heard what a servant says: الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبَسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ) Indeed, what is meant is shirking. [24]

Prophet Muhammad SAW in the hadith above interpreted the word "بِظُلْمٍ" with the word "الشِّرْكَ" according to the word of Allah Almighty in Q.S. Lukman [31]:13,

وَإِذْ قَالَ لَقْمَنُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

13. (Remember) when Luqman said to his son, as he exhorted him, "O my son, do not fellowship with God! Indeed, fellowshiping (God) is really a great tyranny."

1. Interpretation of the Qur'an by friends (shahabah)

Ibn Abbas recounts "I used to not know what *فطر السموت فاطر* came 2 bedouins asking to be qishashed and one of the two said *فطرته أنا* (I started it) from here only then did Ibn Abbas understand that the meaning of *فاطر* was the one who first created [25].

Another example of the interpretation of the Qur'an by friends (*shahabah*), al-Shabuni cited a hadith in his book *al-tibyan fii ulum al-Qur'an*,

"Bukhari narrated from Sa'id bin Jubair of Ibn Abbas, he said "Umar r.a. took me with the Badr leaders. It was as if some of them took it for granted, saying, "why is this child included with us? that indeed we have children like him?" then Umar answered that he was the son you would know (his intelligence), then Umar invited them and put me with them. So I thought that inviting me with them was just to introduce me to them. He said, what do you think of the word of God *إذا نصر الله والفتح*? some of them replied "we are commanded to praise and ask God for mercy, by asking for help and spaciousness over us", some of them silently saying nothing. Then Umar said to me, is that so your opinion, O Ibn Abbas? then I replied "No", he said again, what do you think? I replied, "it was the death of the Messenger of Allah that was told to him, the word of Allah praise you let (Muhammad), death your of address the is it thus *إذا جاء نصر الله والفتح*, By said, Umar repentance". to all-accepting is He verily mercy, for god your beg and said". you what than other anything verse the from know I Allah

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results and discussion there are 3 conclusions that can be drawn in the subject of the study: First, etymologically the naming of *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* is taken from the word *astara - ya'sturu*, in terminology the interpretation of *bi al-ma'tsur* is a process of interpreting the verses of *al-ma'tsur*. The Qur'an with the Qur'an, hadith, and the words of friends (*shahabah*). Second, the process of developing *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* began at the time of the Prophet at the stage of narration, then it was recommended that the narrations of interpretation and hadith be accommodated in the bookkeeping process. Third, the method in *bi al-ma'tsur* interpretation is carried out in 3 ways, namely the method of interpretation with the verses of the Qur'an, the method of interpretation with the hadith, and the method of interpretation with the words of friends.

Looking at the different views of experts in defining the interpretation of *bi al-ma'tsur*, it is necessary to re-examine the implementation of the etymological dimensions of the interpretation of *bi al-ma'tsur* with the terminology aspects given, so that the aspects of the *riwayah* that can be used as a method of interpreting *bi al-ma'tsur*.

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