

# The *Munāsabāt al-Nuzūl* Approach as a Reformulation of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*: A Study of Surah al-Fatihah and its Relevance to the Foundations of Islamic Theology

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## Abstract

Studies of *asbāb al-nuzūl* have been key to understanding the historical context of revelation, but the special position of Surah al-Fātiḥah as the core of Islamic teachings demands an understanding that transcends temporal events. This study aims to offer a new analytical framework through the concept of *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* to reveal the theological and universal message of the surah. Using a descriptive qualitative method based on library research, this study integrates historical data with an analysis of the correlation between values in the text. The results show that the *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach is able to position al-Fātiḥah as a dynamic and timeless guide for humanity. These findings reveal that al-Fātiḥah comprehensively summarizes the relationship between servants and God through the dimensions of theology, worship, and divine guidance. Thus, this study contributes to the development of a more comprehensive methodology of tafsir science by offering a perspective that not only emphasizes historical factors but also highlights the interconnection of universal values that are contextually timeless for humanity.

*Asbāb al-Nuzūl; Munāsabāt al-Nuzūl; Surah al-Fātiḥah; Islamic Theology.*

## Abstrak

Kajian tentang *asbāb al-nuzūl* telah menjadi kunci dalam memahami konteks historis turunnya wahyu. Namun, posisi khusus Surah al-Fātiḥah sebagai inti ajaran Islam menuntut pemahaman yang melampaui peristiwa-peristiwa temporal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menawarkan kerangka analitis baru melalui konsep *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* guna mengungkap pesan teologis dan universal dari surah tersebut. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif berbasis penelitian kepustakaan, studi ini mengintegrasikan data historis dengan analisis korelasi antar nilai yang terdapat dalam teks. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* mampu memposisikan al-Fātiḥah sebagai pedoman yang dinamis dan melampaui waktu bagi umat manusia. Temuan ini mengungkap bahwa al-Fātiḥah secara komprehensif merangkum hubungan antara hamba dan Tuhan melalui dimensi teologi, ibadah, dan petunjuk ilahi. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan metodologi ilmu tafsir yang lebih komprehensif dengan menawarkan perspektif yang tidak hanya menekankan faktor historis, tetapi juga menyoroti nilai-nilai universal yang kontekstual dan lintas waktu bagi kemanusiaan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Asbāb al-Nuzūl; Munāsabāt al-Nuzūl; Surah al-Fātiḥah; Teologi Islam.*

## INTRODUCTION

In order to understand the contents of Surah al-Fātiḥah more deeply and comprehensively, one important approach is to examine the background to the revelation of these verses, known in Islamic scholarship as *asbāb al-nuzūl*. This approach provides an overview of the historical, social, and spiritual context behind the revelation of the verses, so that the intended meaning can be

understood more fully. According to Subhi Shalih, *asbābun nuzūl* is a factor or event that caused the revelation of one or more verses of the Qur'an, which sometimes appear as a response to an event or as an explanation of the law related to an ongoing event (al-Shalih, 1988). Manna' al-Qaṭṭān also defines *asbāb al-nuzūl* as factors behind the revelation of verses of the Qur'an, either as an explanation of an event or to answer questions that arose at that time (al-Qaṭṭān, 1420). Within this framework of understanding, it is important to see how the concept of *asbāb al-nuzūl* relates to *Surah al-Fātiḥah*, which has a special position as the opening of the mushaf as well as the core of Islamic teachings covering aspects of faith, worship, and prayer.

The study of *asbāb al-nuzūl* is crucial for understanding the initial context of the revelation of the verses (Nasution et al., 2024). *Asbab al-nuzul* serves as a historical window that records the dialectic between revelation and the socio-cultural reality at the time the verses were revealed (Jamal et al., 2022). Furthermore, tafsir explores the substance of the verse analytically in order to formulate universal principles. If this understanding is placed within the framework of the *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach as a development of the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, the scope of the surah's meaning can be expanded so that historical events are no longer seen as the sole determinant, but rather as a gateway to values whose relevance transcends time.

Previous studies have examined the methodological aspects of *asbāb al-nuzūl* and *munasabah* separately in the interpretation of the Qur'an, with a focus on Surah Al-Fatihah. (analyzes the pattern of *al-munāsabah* in Surah Al-Fatihah according to Tafsir al-Misbah, showing the interconnection between verses such as *al-ḥamdu lillāh* and *ihdīnā ṣ-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* to strengthen tauhid rububiyah. Meanwhile Pamuji (2023) discusses the integration of *asbāb al-nuzūl* and *munasabah* in the post-truth era to avoid misinterpretation of verses, although it has not yet been reformulated through *munasabat al-nuzul* specifically. Meanwhile (Nusaibah & Sanuri (2025) through the article *The Revelation of al-Fātiḥah* emphasizes the historical context, theological themes, and the social impact of Surah al-Fātiḥah with a thematic and historical approach to interpretation, but still relies on the conventional concept of *asbāb al-nuzūl* and has not elaborated on the structural relationship between the context of the surah's revelation and the internal structure of the verses. The next study was conducted by Taufikin et al. (2025) which interpreted Surah al-Fātiḥah as the foundation of moral and spiritual values in the context of inclusive education, emphasizing rahmah, justice, and hidayah, but the study is applied-thematic in nature and does not relate it to *the asbāb al-nuzūl* of Surah al-Fātiḥah. Therefore, contemporary studies generally focus more on normative approaches and very few integrate the reformulation of *asbab al-nuzul* through the *munasabat al-nuzul* approach with implications for the foundations of Islamic theology. Thus, previous literature still tends to be partial and has not yet integrated the historical, contextual, and theological dimensions comprehensively.

Based on a review of the literature, research on *munasabāt al-nuzūl* is still very limited, because existing studies are more focused on *asbāb al-nuzūl*, which is historical in nature, or on *munāsabah*, which examines the internal relationship between verses after they were revealed. This indicates that there is room to reformulate the understanding of the process of verse revelation through a more integrative approach, especially in Surah al-Fātiḥah. It should be emphasized that *munāsabah*, which is the relationship of meaning between verses after revelation, is not the same as *munāsabāt al-nuzūl*, which attempts to link the context of revelation with the overall coherence at the time of

revelation. The *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach provides a broader understanding of the universal nature of sharia, which is not bound by time or specific conditions, so that the message of the verse can be understood beyond the historical context of its initial revelation. This study fills this gap by applying the *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach as a reformulation in the study of *asbābun nuzūl*, namely by combining the analysis of the mufassir, a contextual reading of the nuzul process, and the principles of Islamic theology that form the foundation for the interpretation of Surah al-Fātiḥah, thereby producing a more comprehensive understanding.

The purpose of this study is to explain the relationship between the initial context of the revelation and the universal message it contains. *Asbāb al-nuzūl* provides information about the historical situation behind the verses, while tafsir opens up a breadth of normative meanings that remain valid across time. When these two aspects are analyzed through the *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach as a reformulation of the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, the scope of meaning becomes more comprehensive; historical events are not positioned as the sole determinant, but rather as a gateway to uncovering values whose relevance transcends temporal boundaries. Thus, *Surah al-Fātiḥah* is not merely understood in the context of the initial events of its revelation, but as a comprehensive guideline that shapes the beliefs and religious practices of humanity throughout the ages, there by demonstrating its strong relevance to the foundations of Islamic theology.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research method, as all data is sourced from written literature that examines *Surah al-Fātiḥah* through various scientific perspectives. The primary data consists of authoritative tafsir works, especially *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl* by al-Baiḍāwī, which is the main reference in analyzing the linguistic structure and meaning of the verses. The analysis of *asbābun nuzūl* is reinforced through a study of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl al-Wāḥidī*, as well as *Tafsīr al-Miṣbāḥ* by Quraish Shihab. Meanwhile, the discussion of *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* refers to Sayyid Qutb's explanation in *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān* and is expanded through academic studies, particularly Qutb Muṣṭafā Sānū's article entitled *Ḍawābiḥ Manhajyyah fī al-Ta'āmul ma'a al-Naṣ al-Syar'i*, which provides a methodological basis for understanding the relationship between the contexts in which the verses were revealed. The literature was selected *purposively*, taking into account the level of scientific authority, thematic relevance, and contribution to the focus of the study.

In this research process, data collection was carried out through document studies, namely by compiling various written sources such as the text of the Qur'an, tafsir books, journal articles, and other relevant literature related to the focus of the study. Data analysis was carried out in three main stages. First, a textual study of the verses of Surah al-Fātiḥah to examine aspects of language, verse structure, and meaning as explained in the classical exegesis tradition. Second, the study applies the *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach as an analytical framework to explore the compatibility between the circumstances surrounding the revelation and the universal message conveyed by Surah al-Fātiḥah. This approach does not place historical context as the sole determinant of the meaning of the verses, but rather as a backdrop that clarifies the urgency of a theological message that transcends time. Third, the results of the analysis are directed at assessing the relevance of

Surah al-Fātiḥah to the foundations of Islamic theology, particularly in terms of affirming the concept of divinity, the relationship between servants and God, and humanity's need for divine guidance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Asbāb al-Nuzūl and Munasabat al-Nuzūl

In the discipline of interpretation, the term *asbāb al-nuzūl* is one of the important concepts used to understand the context in which the verses of the Qur'an were revealed. There are various opinions among scholars in defining the scope of this term. These differences in definition have implications for the methods of interpretation and the limitations on the use of historical data in understanding the meaning of the Qur'an (Nasution et al., 2024). Al-Wāhidī (d. 468 H), one of the leading figures in the study of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, understood this term broadly. According to him, all general conditions or specific events that occurred during the revelation of the Qur'an, whether related to the social conditions of society, the dynamics of life, or certain events that were later explained by the Qur'an, can be categorized as the cause of the revelation of verses (al-Naisaburi, 1411). Thus, Al-Wāhidī's approach focuses on the connection between historical reality and the text of the Qur'an, without requiring a direct relationship between an event and the revelation of the verse (Mundzir & Farhani, 2023).

In contrast, Al-Suyuthi (d. 911 H) provides a stricter definition of *asbāb an-nuzūl*. According to Al-Suyuthi, the cause of the revelation of a verse is an event that occurred precisely at the time of the revelation of the verse or a question asked by someone, so that the verse was revealed afterwards to explain the law or provision related to the event or question. With this definition, not every event narrated in the Qur'an is considered *asbāb an-nuzūl*, unless there is an explicit temporal and causal relationship between the event and the revelation of the verse (al-Suyūṭī, 2008).

Based on this understanding, it can be formulated that verses that were revealed without a prior event or were revealed after a long interval from the event associated with them are not included in the category of verses that have a reason for their revelation. One example cited by scholars is the story of the elephant army (*Asbāb al-Fīl*). Although Surah Al-Fīl talks about this event, the story is not mentioned as the reason for the revelation of the surah, because the event occurred long before the prophetic period and was not a direct factor that triggered the revelation of the verse.

The difference in definition between Al-Wāhidī and Al-Suyuthi indicates two methodological approaches in understanding the context of the revelation of the Qur'an: a broad historical-descriptive approach and a more rigorous causal-temporal approach. Understanding this difference helps researchers to place *asbāb al-nuzūl* data proportionally in tafsir studies, so that the historical context does not become a limitation on the meaning of the verse, but rather a means to clarify the meaning of the Sharia. If we use Al-Wāhidī's definition of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, we can include general events as part of the *asbāb* as long as they are related to the history of the verse or surah of the Qur'an when it was revealed. For example, Al-Wāhidī includes several general accounts as *asbāb al-nuzūl* of Surah Al-Fatihah, even though some other scholars do not include them in their criteria for *asbāb al-nuzūl*.

Whatever definition of *asbāb al-nuzūl* we take, the majority of scholars agree that what is taken as a basis is the generality of the wording, not the specificity of the reason for its revelation. This rule is an important rule in *usul fiqh* and *tafsir* science. This means that when a verse of the Qur'an is revealed due to a specific cause or special event, the law or meaning of that verse is not limited to that event alone, but applies generally in accordance with the wording of the verse (al-Nabhan, 2005). In other words, the reason for the revelation of a verse may be specific (a particular event), but what becomes the basis for the ruling is *the nash* (the wording of the verse), which is often general and universal (al-Ṭayyār, 2008).

Based on this, there is a methodological proposal that offers an approach using the term *munāsabāt al-nuzūl*. This shift in approach is not merely semantic, but has epistemological implications for understanding the relationship between the text of the Sharia and its historical context. Linguistically, *munāsabah* means suitability or compatibility. When associated with *nuzūl* or *wurūd*, the meaning is no longer the cause of the text's revelation, but rather the situation or conditions that coincided with the text's revelation. Thus, the historical context accompanying the revelation of a verse or hadith is understood as the background atmosphere, not as a determining factor in the presence or absence of the Sharia text. In this framework, sharia is seen as superior to space, time, and situation, not the other way around. Verses or hadiths retain their universal validity, unaffected by the temporal factors surrounding them.

### Asbāb al-Nuzūl Surah Al-Fatihah

In the book *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fī asbāb al-Nuzūl*, Imam al-Suyūṭī did not include a discussion of Surah al-Fātiḥah, because according to him there were no historical accounts or opinions of scholars explaining the reasons for the revelation of this surah (al-Suyūṭī, 2008). Therefore, al-Suyūṭī begins his book by discussing *the asbāb al-nuzūl* of Surah Al-Baqarah. Meanwhile, Al-Wahidi, in his book *asbāb al-nuzūl*, provides an explanation of the revelation of Surah al-Fātiḥah by presenting a number of opinions related to its *asbāb al-nuzūl*.

The reason for the revelation of *Surah al-Fātiḥah* was when the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was in seclusion, he often heard voices which he then conveyed to Khadijah and Waraqah. Regarding this, Waraqah advised him to pay attention to and observe these voices, until one day an angel came and commanded him to recite *Surah al-Fātiḥah*. As narrated through the chain of Abu Usman Sa'id bin Muhammad bin Ahmad az-Zahid, from Abu Amr al-Hiriy, from Ibrahim bin al-Harith and Ali bin Sahal bin al-Mughirah, both from Yahya bin Abi Bukair, from Israil, from Abi Ishaq, from Maisarah:

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ كَانَ إِذَا بَرَزَ سَمِعَ مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِيهِ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ فَإِذَا سَمِعَ الصَّوْتِ انْطَلَقَ هَارِبًا فَقَالَ لَهُ وَرَقَةُ بْنُ نَوْفَلٍ: إِذَا سَمِعْتَ النَّدَاءَ فَانْثَبُتْ حَتَّى تَسْمَعَ مَا يَقُولُ لَكَ قَالَ: فَلَمَّا بَرَزَ سَمِعَ النَّدَاءَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ قَالَ: "لَبَّيْكَ" قَالَ: قُلْ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾ حَتَّى فَرَعَ مِنْ فَاتِحَةِ الْكِتَابِ

"That when the Prophet Muhammad heard a voice calling, "O Muhammad," he would run away. However, Waraqah bin Naufal told him, "If you hear such a call, then steady your heart and listen until it is clear what is being conveyed to you." Maisarah said, "So when the Prophet (peace be upon him) heard the call, 'O Muhammad.'

He replied, “Yes, very well.” The call which turned out to be from Jibril then said, “Say: All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, the Possessor of the Day of Judgment,” until he finished reciting Surah al-Fatihah. This narration is attributed to Ali bin Abi Thalib with a weak chain of transmission.”

Another narration was transmitted through Muhammad bin Abdirrahman an-Nahwi, from Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Ali al-Hiri, from Ahmad bin Ali bin al-Mutsni, from Yahya bin Ayyub, from Ismail bin Ja’far, from al-’Alla’, from his father, from Abu Hurairah. He narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا الْإِنْجِيلِ وَلَا الزَّبُورِ وَلَا فِي الْقُرْآنِ مِثْلَهَا إِلَّا هِيَ السَّبْعُ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ الَّذِي أُوتِيْتُهُ

“By the One in Whose hand is my soul, Allah has never revealed in the Torah, the Gospel, the Zabur, or the Qur’an anything similar to it. Indeed, it is the seven verses that are read repeatedly and the great Qur’an that has been bestowed upon me.” This hadith was narrated by al-Tirmidhi in al-Tafsir (no. 3125), and al-Hakim in al-Mustadrak (2/258) found it to be a *sahih* hadith, and it was approved by Adh-Dhahabi according to the conditions of Muslim.

### Analysis of the Interpretation of Surah Al-Fātiḥah

Al-Biqā’ī, in his book *Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsūq al-Āyāt wa as-Sumar*, explains why Surah al-Fātiḥah begins with the basmalah and why it is the opening of the Qur’an. According to him, the position of the basmalah in relation to al-Fātiḥah is like the position of al-Fātiḥah in relation to the entire Qur’an. All matters are first returned to Allah, and this is the essence of the meaning of the basmalah, which is then elaborated in Surah al-Fātiḥah. Quraish Shihab explains why *al-ḥamdu lillāh* in al-Fātiḥah is not accompanied by the mention of specific blessings because Surah al-Fātiḥah contains praise that is comprehensive and covers all of Allah’s blessings, without limiting it to one particular aspect. This also confirms the position of al-Fātiḥah as the core of the entire content of the Qur’an. Therefore, a tafsir study of this surah, verse by verse, is important to explore the deeper meaning of the following is the interpretation of Surah al-Fātiḥah verses 1-7.

1. The phrase بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.”

The letter ب in the phrase بِسْمِ indicates that every deed should begin by asking for help and blessings through the name of Allah, so that the person who utters it is essentially surrendering himself to Him before doing something. The word *ism* itself means “name,” and according to Imam al-Baiḍāwī’s explanation, *ism* functions as an intermediary to refer to *the musammā* (the named), not the essence itself, but rather a sign that points to that essence. Thus, the mention of *bismi* is not only intended as a mere pronunciation, but also includes the presence of the meaning contained in the essence of Allah indicated by His name. The phrase الله is *ism al-’alam* (a specific name) for the Most High, which encompasses all attributes of perfection and majesty, cannot be used for anyone other than Him, and is considered a great name (*al-ism al-’aẓam*) because it contains all divine attributes (Abdurrahman, 2018). The first verse in this surah is a form of total surrender in which the use of Allah’s name serves as a means to connect human actions, which are limited, with God’s absolute power. Practically speaking, this mention

transforms ordinary actions into acts of worship because every activity is based on the attributes of perfection contained in that name.

The words *Ar-Rahman* and *Ar-Rahim* both come from the root word *rahmah* (mercy), but they have different meanings in terms of their scope and application. *Ar-Rahmān* refers to the vastness of Allah’s mercy, which encompasses all creatures without distinction between believers and disbelievers. Meanwhile, *ar-Rahīm* indicates a more specific mercy, namely eternal mercy intended for believers, especially in the hereafter. According to Imam al-Baiḍāwī’s explanation, the mention of *ar-Rahmān* first emphasizes the breadth of Allah’s mercy, while the mention of *ar-Rahīm* after it affirms the specificity of that compassion. This arrangement teaches us that Allah is not only the Most Gracious in general, but also the Most Merciful specifically to His faithful servants (Al-Baidhawi, 2000). When *Ar-Rahman* and *Ar-Rahim* are integrated after the word Allah, there is a union between absolute, unattainable majesty and tangible compassion, creating a dialectic in which limited humans are able to interact with the Unlimited through the door of mercy. Thus, the Basmalah is a process of aligning the existence of the servant with the flow of blessings that originate from the essence of the Divine Being.

2. The phrase **الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ**  
 “All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.”

According to al-Baiḍāwī’s explanation, the phrase *al-ḥamdu* means praise for deeds done with perfection and will. The use of the article *al* in *al-ḥamdu* indicates the meaning of generality (*li al-istighrāq*), namely that all forms of praise that are absolutely perfect belong only to Allah. Furthermore, the phrase *lillāh* affirms that praise belongs entirely to Allah, for He is the source of all blessings and perfection. The word *rabb* means sustainer, creator, and ruler, while *al-alamīn*, according to al-Baiḍāwī, includes all rational beings such as humans and jinn, although some scholars extend it to include all of Allah’s creations (al-Baidhawi, 2000). This second verse emphasizes the dependence of the universe on the Being who manages the entire order of life in a sustainable manner. The mention of *al-ḥamdu* at the beginning of the verse serves to shift the focus from self-pride to the recognition that every excellence that exists in creatures is actually a reflection of God’s glory. By juxtaposing the name of Allah directly with the predicate *Rabb*, there is a message that God’s role does not stop at the process of creation, but continues in the detailed and comprehensive maintenance of every element in the universe. This awareness leads humans to view every blessing as part of God’s orderly system of care, so that gratitude arises as a logical response to the security of life in the vastness of creation.

3. The phrase **الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ**  
 “The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate,”

The repetition of the attribute of mercy has a profound meaning. According to al-Baiḍāwī, this indicates that God’s love encompasses all of God’s creatures. At the same time, mercy is also specific to believers, especially in the hereafter. The repetition of these two attributes after the verse about praise and rububiyah emphasizes that Allah’s arrangement of His creatures is always accompanied by mercy (Abdurrahman, 2018). Thus, this verse fosters a servant’s hope for His mercy and instills an attitude of complete servitude. From a spiritual

perspective, the repetition of these two names trains the heart to view the realities of life through the lens of mercy. Every blessing is appreciated as Allah’s compassion, and every trial is seen as a door to divine education that leads to strong faith.

4. The phrase <sup>ق</sup>مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ  
 “The Owner of the Day of Reckoning.”

Imam al-Baiḍāwī explains that there are two *qir’āt*, namely *Māliki* (owner) and *Maliki* (king). Both are correct and mean that Allah is the only owner and ruler on *Yawm al-Dīn* (the Day of Judgment). That day is the Day of Judgment, when every creature will receive consequences according to their deeds (al-Baidhawi, 2000). This verse affirms Allah’s justice after previously conveying His mercy. Thus, mercy and justice are two complementary attributes, whereby Allah, the Most Merciful, is also the Ruler of the Day of Reckoning. This balance confirms that God’s mercy provides space for every deed to find its true value. This places every individual in the awareness that life is a journey with an ultimate goal, where moral integrity is the only asset that determines a person’s position in the face of the certainty of tomorrow.

5. The phrase <sup>ق</sup>إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ  
 “Only You we worship and only You we seek help from.”

The phrase *īyāka* (only to You) is placed at the beginning to emphasize a specific meaning, namely that worship is solely directed to Allah. Meanwhile, the word *na’budu* encompasses all forms of obedience and submission. As for the phrase *wa īyāka nasta’in* (and we seek help only from You), it indicates that after a servant has established worship, he also realizes that he is completely dependent on Allah’s help (al-Baidhawi, 2000). After the previous verse mentioned that He is the most deserving of all praise, and described Him with the great attributes that distinguish Him from everything else. In this fifth verse, the phrase *īyāka* (only to You) uses *the dhamīr mukhāṭab* with the intention of worshiping Him in a tangible way and being able to communicate with Him directly.

6. The phrase <sup>ق</sup>اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ  
 “Guide us to the straight path.”

The phrase *ihdinā* means guide us, the imperative form of the word *hudā* (guidance). The meaning of this request is to ask for guidance to remain on the path of truth (Abdurrahman, 2018). The word *aṣ-ṣirāṭa* refers to the path to Allah’s pleasure, while *al-mustaqīm* means straight, that is, the path that is consistent with the truth, namely Islam (Al-Baidhawi, 2000). This prayer is recited after the confession of worship and dependence, signifying that a servant not only worships but also asks for strength to be able to walk in truth. This request emphasizes that continuity in truth requires support that transcends individual limitations, so that Allah’s guidance is essential for intentions to remain in line with actions. The focus on the straight path implies that spiritual integrity is a dynamic process that demands consistency and vigilance against all forms of deviation in life.

7. The phrase <sup>ق</sup>صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَّا غَيْرَ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ  
 “(namely) the path of those whom You have blessed, not (the path) of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor (the path) of those who have gone astray.”

The phrase *ṣirāṭa alladhīna an’amta ‘alayhim* explains who is meant by the followers of the straight path. They are those who have been blessed by Allah, namely the prophets, *ṣiddīqīn, syuhadā’*, and *ṣāliḥ* people. Imam al-Baiḍāwī interpreted that the mention of this group was clearly intended to encourage Muslims to emulate their noble lives (Abdurrahman, 2018). This is also a detailed explanation of the meaning of the straight path mentioned earlier. This verse provides an illustration of the examples of people who must be followed in walking this path.

The phrase *ghayri al-maghdūbi ‘alayhim* means that we do not ask for the path of those who have incurred the wrath of Allah. What is meant by *al-maghdūbi ‘alayhim* (those who have incurred the wrath of Allah) is a group of people who actually know the truth but do not follow it and refuse to practice it. In fact, some of them deliberately oppose the truth. This group is identified with some of the Jews and anyone who follows a similar path to them. As for *ad-dāllīn* (those who are astray), they refer to those who deviate from the path of truth and goodness because they are reluctant to believe and reject Allah’s guidance. This group is equated with some Christians and those who follow them (Abdurrahman, 2018). Thus, the supplication in Surah al-Fātiḥah not only asks to be shown the path of those who have received blessings, but also protection from following the path of those who are cursed or misguided.

Table 1: Vocabulary of Surah al-Fātiḥah

Vocabulary	Translation	Brief Analysis of Interpretation
نَعْبُدُ	We worship; acts of worship and complete submission	Declaring a promise of complete servitude. All outward and inward obedience is directed solely toward Allah, so that life is centered on the effort to glorify Him in every activity.
اهْدِنَا	Guide us; a request to remain on the straight path	Revealing the awareness that humans inevitably need guidance to remain consistent on the path of truth and not be led astray by personal weaknesses or worldly temptations.
نَسْتَعِينُ	We ask for help; an acknowledgment of complete dependence on Allah	Affirming that the ability to worship and live life depends entirely on Allah’s help, giving rise to humility and trust in Him.
وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ	And not those who are astray; those who follow a deviant path	Describing the request to be kept away from the lifestyle of those who reject guidance or practice religion without knowledge.

### Analysis of the Concept of Munāsabāt al-Nuzūl

In Islamic scholarly tradition, it is understood that the revelations of the Qur’an and Sunnah were sent down to improve the condition of humanity as a whole. Some texts are indeed related to specific events, but their meanings are not always bound to the physical context, because many verses and hadiths are actually present to explain broader values and principles. That is why events should not be used as the sole determinant of the meaning of verses. Knowledge about the reasons

for the revelation of verses remains useful, but it is not the only key to understanding the Sharia (Sānū, 2001). Imam al-Dahlawī also emphasized that understanding *asbābun nuzūl* must focus on the true reasons for revelation, not just the events that accompanied it (al-Dahlawī, 1986).

The use of the concept of *asbāb al-nuzūl* often traps discussions in the connection between the text and the events that accompany it, when what is more important is understanding the universal nature of Sharia law, which is not dependent on specific times and conditions. Revelations did not come down solely because of one specific situation, but often appeared in general conditions experienced by many people, so it is not appropriate to narrow them down to only apparent events. Social change is merely a dynamic of life, not a determinant of the meaning of the text, because the Qur'an has its own structure and purpose. This approach emphasizes that the shar'i method is fixed in its basic principles because it is based on the object at hand, namely *al-insān* (Sānū, 2001). The fact is that humans have a fixed nature; all changes and developments only occur on the surface and do not change the essence of their creation. On this basis, the attention of classical exegetes to the context in which the verse was revealed was not intended to limit the meaning of the verse to the initial group or specific situation, but rather to recognize the human condition that led to its emergence so that the message of the verse could be understood correctly without being bound by a limited historical context (Qutb, 2003).

This confirms that humans as subjects of *khitāb* have a broader scope than humans living in specific conditions and situations at the time of revelation, namely humans who are addressed by the text in specific forms, times, and circumstances. If these conditions are treated as factors that limit understanding temporally, this can have serious consequences that reduce the methodology of determining law from perfection to deficiency. In this context, the distinction between the terms *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* and *asbāb al-nuzūl* is a conceptually valid distinction. *Munāsabāt al-nuzūl* refers to the general atmosphere accompanying the revelation, without directly influencing the text in terms of the presence or absence of context, because the term *munāsabah* in language indicates the meaning of suitability. As for the reason for the revelation of a verse, it refers to the specific circumstances that triggered the revelation of the text, which terminologically has an influence on the text in terms of the existence or absence of the reason; existence means that something requires a reason, while absence indicates that something does not require a reason, thus signifying the absence of that reason (al-Mīlī, 1983). In fact, the Qur'an was not revealed as a result of a specific cause, but rather as a divine guide that came with a broader and more fundamental purpose than simply responding to momentary events. It carries principles that transcend time, social conditions, and specific situations, so that the message it carries remains relevant to humans in every age.

The methodological implications of this perspective are very important. With the term *munāsabāt an-nuzūl*, researchers no longer focus on limiting the meaning of verses to the specific situations that led to their revelation, but rather on the universal message contained in the text. Historical context is used only as a pedagogical and educational tool to clarify understanding, not as a single binding determinant of meaning. This is in accordance with the basic nature of the Sharia text, which is intended for humans throughout space and time.

Sayyid Qutb, in his book *Fi Zilāl al-Qur'an*, emphasizes that the Islamic method derived from the text of the Sharia is fixed in principle, although flexible in its application to changing human

conditions. The essence of humanity as the object of the text of the Sharia does not change, so that the text of the Qur'an, which is fixed, also remains relevant to every generation and every historical context. The verses and hadiths that were revealed in response to specific situations during the Prophet's time are the same texts that are capable of guiding humanity in different situations throughout history (Qutb, 2003).

With this understanding, *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* is interpreted as the environment or atmosphere in which the revelation was revealed, not as a structural element of the text itself. The situation and conditions surrounding the revelation of a verse are merely the context of the event, not part of the substance of the revelation. Thus, considering the context as a limitation on the meaning of the text is a reduction of the universal nature of the Qur'an, which is intended for all of humanity in all ages (Abū 'Āshī, 2021).

Al-Dahlawī believes that the connection between some verses and hadiths with certain events and moments is not because these events were the actual cause of the revelation, but because there was a need to explain certain verses that contained allusions to specific events during the time of the Prophet or earlier periods. Such allusions place the reader in a state of anticipation and effort to understand the underlying context, so that the meaning of the verse cannot be fully grasped without knowledge of the events, stories, or causes related to it. Therefore, a detailed account of the story and an explanation of the reason for the revelation of the verse are important, not because they determine the essence of the revelation, but because they serve to help readers understand the meaning of the verse more fully and proportionally (al-Dahlawī, 1986).

Scholars who study the Qur'an do not use *asbāb al-nuzūl* as a limitation on the meaning of the Qur'an, so that the explanation of the verse is only understood in the context of the reason for its revelation, even if that reason is narrated in a mutawatir manner. They have a deep methodological awareness that what is referred to as cause is not a causal cause in the philosophical sense, that is, a cause that necessarily produces an effect so that without that cause the verse would not have been revealed. Instead, the revelation of a verse occurs in conjunction with a specific event, so that the relationship between the event and the revelation of the verse is one of *correlation* (*iqtirān*), not a deterministic cause-and-effect relationship (*ta'lil wa tasabbub*), where if the cause exists, the effect will certainly exist, and if the cause disappears, the effect will also disappear (al-Dahlawī, 1986). This understanding of causality is not adopted by muhaqqiq scholars in their study of the Qur'an. On this basis, a well-known methodological rule in the science of tafsir and usul fiqh was established: "what is to be relied upon is the generality of the wording, not the specificity of the cause." Therefore, the term reasons for the revelation of verses must be understood from the perspective of historical relevance, not from the perspective of ontological causality.

Thus, the *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach can reinforce the view that the texts of the Sharia, both the Qur'an and the Sunnah, are universal, transhistorical, and not bound by specific causes. The historical context serves as an aid in understanding the text, but it should not limit the breadth of its meaning and relevance across space and time. In addition, the use of this term also has implications for reducing the misperceptions among the general public and liberal thinkers who view the Qur'an as a cultural product, as a result of rigidly understanding *asbāb al-nuzūl* as mere

historical facts, rather than as part of *munāsabāt* or introductory passages that serve to complement the understanding of the revelation of a verse, as previously explained (Sānū, 2001).

Table 2: The Concept of *Munāsabāt al-Nuzūl*

Aspect	Concept of <i>Munāsabāt al-Nuzūl</i>
Basic definition	The environment, atmosphere, and human spiritual needs that led to the revelation. The context does not bind the verse to a specific event, because the text exists to educate humans continuously in various situations.
Relationship with the meaning of the verse	Emphasizes that verses address humanity’s problems in a broad sense, so that the meaning of verses remains relevant in various new situations throughout the ages without being causally dependent on specific events that occurred at the same time as the verses were revealed.
Rules of Interpretation	Strengthening the rules of generality of wording. Historical context is used as a pedagogical tool to explain, while the meaning of verses is drawn to relevant universal principles.
Methodological Function	It functions as a conceptual framework that places context in proportion. The historical dimension is recognized as the background for the emergence of the text, while the substance of revelation is understood as a transhistorical normative guideline that addresses human nature throughout time.

### Surah Al-Fatihah with the *Munāsabāt al-Nuzūl* Approach

In the context of Surah al-Fātiḥah, the *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach can be understood as an attempt to read the connection between the atmosphere in which the revelation was sent down and the message contained in the surah, without making the historical context a determining or limiting factor in its meaning. Al-Fātiḥah was revealed in the early phase of prophethood when the people of Mecca were in spiritual darkness: their belief system was fractured, moral values were weakening, and people were searching for a definite direction in life. In such an atmosphere, the existence of a revelation that paved the way for guidance became very important. Viewed through the perspective of *munāsabāt al-nuzūl*, al-Fātiḥah serves as an answer to humanity’s need for basic orientation regarding who is the God worthy of worship, how humans should live their lives, and to whom they should turn for help. In other words, the social context is not the trigger for the revelation of the surah, but rather the backdrop that clarifies the urgency of its universal message.

The concept of *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* also confirms why al-Fātiḥah is placed as the opening of the Qur’an. In the early days of da’wah, the ummah needed a simple but solid theological foundation. Al-Fātiḥah offers this framework: recognition of the oneness of Allah, affirmation of His *rubūbiyyah* and *rahmah*, and human dependence on divine guidance. This shows the compatibility between the condition of the ummah at that time and the content of the surah, without tying the meaning of the verses to specific events. Through this perspective, al-Fātiḥah appears as a conceptual map that guides humans so that they do not stray onto paths that are despised or deviant. Within this framework, understanding *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* also helps to clarify

the universal nature of the Sharia, whose messages are not bound by time, space, or specific social conditions, but apply to all human beings throughout the ages.

### **Relevance to the Foundations of Islamic Theology**

Surah al-Fātiḥah, as mentioned in QS. al-Ḥijr [15]: 87, occupies a special position as the core of the theological teachings of the Qur'an. This surah is not only the opening of the mushaf, but also represents the core values of Islam, which affirm the oneness of Allah, His universal mercy, and His justice and guidance for mankind. Fakhruddin al-Razi in *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* asserts that Surah al-Fātiḥah contains the entire main purpose of the revelation of the holy book, namely a comprehensive introduction to the essence, attributes, and deeds of Allah (al-Razi, 2000).

The connection between Surah al-Fātiḥah and the foundations of Islamic theology is evident through its structural meaning. The first verse, *bismillābir-rahmānir-rahīm*, forms the ontological foundation that affirms that all human existence and activity must begin with the name of Allah. The second verse affirms *tauḥīd al-rubūbiyyah* through the recognition of Allah as *Rabb al-'ālamīn*, while the mention of the attributes *ar-Rahmān ar-Rahīm* in the third verse describes the divine love that forms the basis of the relationship between God and His creatures. The transition to the fourth verse, *maliki yawmi ad-dīn*, affirms *tauḥīd al-ḥākimiyyah*, that only Allah has the right to establish laws and give rewards.

The climax in the statement *īyāka na'budu wa īyāka nasta'īn* in the fifth verse contains the principle of *tauḥīd al-ulūbiyyah*, namely the purification of worship and submission only to Allah. As explained by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, this verse is a spiritual turning point that frees humans from dependence on anything other than Allah (al-Jawziyyah, 2011). Each verse in Surah al-Fātiḥah is conceptually intertwined, forming a theological system that unites divine mercy, power, and justice in a harmonious unity. This sequence is concluded by the sixth and seventh verses as an acknowledgment of the limitations of human cognition, which requires divine guidance to maintain consistency on the path of truth and avoid deviation.

From a practical perspective, Surah al-Fātiḥah has profound relevance to the formation of the theological consciousness of Muslims. Its repetition in every rakaat of prayer is not merely a liturgical routine, but a reflective process to strengthen faith and build a correct spiritual orientation. Each verse becomes a means of internalizing the values of tawḥīd into ethical, moral, and social dimensions, as the guidance towards *ṣīrāt al-mustaqīm* describes a commitment to living in righteousness. Thus, Surah al-Fātiḥah functions as an opener of theological awareness that guides Muslims to understand the meaning of divinity, humanity, and the existential purpose of life.

### **DECLARATION OF USING AI**

In writing this journal article, I made limited use of artificial intelligence technology, specifically DeepL, to help improve linguistic aspects such as clarity, coherence, and neatness of sentence structure. This use did not include the formulation of ideas, research design, data collection and analysis, or the development of scientific arguments, as the entire substance of the study is the result of my own academic thinking and work. The data presented in this article is

authentic and was obtained through research procedures that comply with scientific standards and analyzed independently. Thus, I am fully responsible for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the entire content of this work

## CONCLUSION

Based on this study, it can be concluded that Surah al-Fātiḥah has a special position as the core of the teachings of the Qur'an, combining the aspects of monotheism, mercy, justice, and divine guidance in a comprehensive unity. Understanding of this surah can be obtained not only through its text, but also through analysis of the context of its revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) and the relationship between its meaning and the situation at the time of its revelation (*munāsabāt al-nuzūl*). The *munāsabāt al-nuzūl* approach emphasizes that the historical context is not the sole determinant of meaning, but rather a backdrop that clarifies the urgency of the surah's universal message for humanity throughout the ages. Thus, Surah al-Fātiḥah is a comprehensive guide that leads Muslims to understand their relationship with Allah, strengthen their faith, and guide their lives on the straight path.

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