

Interpreting the Death and Ascension of Prophet Isa a.s. in the Qur'an: A Comparative Study of al-Tabari and al-Alusi

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Abstract

The interpretation of the death and ascension of Prophet Isa in the Qur'an remains a debated issue in Islamic exegesis, particularly regarding the meaning of *tawaffā* and the role of transmitted and rational sources in interpretation. Differences in exegetical approaches among classical scholars highlight the need for a critical and comparative analysis of their interpretive methods and sources. This study aims to analyze Qur'anic verses related to the death and ascension of Prophet Isa and to compare the interpretive approaches of al-Ṭabarī and al-Ālūsī. The research employs a qualitative library approach using thematic analysis and content analysis. It also applies sanad criticism within the framework of *al-dakhīl fī al-tafsīr* to evaluate the validity of transmitted reports. The findings show that the relevant verses include Q. 3:55, Q. 4:157–158, Q. 5:117, and Q. 19:33. The sources of interpretation in both tafsīr works consist of tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr, tafsīr bi al-ra'y, and isrā'iliyyāt. Both al-Ṭabarī and al-Ālūsī interpret *tawaffā* as the taking of Prophet Isa from the earth and his ascension to heaven. However, they differ methodologically: al-Ṭabarī strengthens his interpretations through Qur'anic cross-references, hadith, and companions' opinions, while al-Ālūsī emphasizes linguistic and rational analysis. The study also finds that the isrā'iliyyāt narrations used are considered acceptable insofar as they align with Islamic teachings. This study contributes to understanding the diversity of classical tafsīr methodologies and highlights how different epistemological approaches shape interpretations of key theological issues.

Death and Ascension; Prophet Isa a.s.; Tawaffā; Al-Ṭabarī; Al-Ālūsī.

Abstrak

Penafsiran tentang kematian dan pengangkatan Nabi Isa dalam Al-Qur'an merupakan salah satu isu yang masih diperdebatkan dalam studi tafsir, khususnya terkait makna *tawaffā* serta penggunaan sumber riwayat dan rasio dalam penafsiran. Perbedaan pendekatan di kalangan mufasir klasik menunjukkan perlunya kajian komparatif yang kritis terhadap metode dan sumber penafsiran mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang berkaitan dengan kematian dan pengangkatan Nabi Isa serta membandingkan metode penafsiran al-Ṭabarī dan al-Ālūsī. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan, serta metode tematik dan analisis isi. Selain itu, digunakan kritik sanad dalam kerangka *al-dakhīl fī al-tafsīr* untuk menguji validitas riwayat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ayat-ayat yang relevan meliputi Q.S. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 55, Q.S. al-Nisā' [4]: 157–158, Q.S. al-Māidah [5]: 117, dan Q.S. Maryam [19]: 33. Sumber penafsiran dalam kedua kitab tafsir mencakup tafsir bi al-ma'sūr, tafsir bi al-ra'y, dan riwayat isrā'iliyyāt. Kedua mufasir memiliki kesamaan dalam memaknai *tawaffā* sebagai pengambilan Nabi Isa dari bumi untuk diangkat ke langit. Namun, keduanya berbeda secara metodologis: al-Ṭabarī menguatkan penafsirannya dengan ayat lain, hadis, dan pendapat sahabat, sedangkan al-Ālūsī lebih menekankan analisis kebahasaan dan rasional. Riwayat isrā'iliyyāt yang digunakan dinilai dapat diterima sejauh tidak bertentangan dengan ajaran Islam. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dalam memahami keragaman metodologi tafsir klasik serta menunjukkan bagaimana perbedaan epistemologis memengaruhi penafsiran isu teologis penting.

Kata Kunci: Kematian dan Kenaikan; Nabi Isa a.s.; Tawaffā; Al-Ṭabarī; Al-Ālūsī.

INTRODUCTION

Prophet Isa was one of the *ulūl 'azmi* (leaders of the righteous) who was granted several miracles, including his survival from a tragic death. Afterward, Prophet Isa's ascension to heaven occurred, a miracle mentioned in the Qur'an. This story is closely related to Prophet Isa's prophecy, the Jewish conspiracy to kill him, and God's plan to save him (al-Dimasqī, 2013). This incident represents a significant difference between Islamic and Christian teachings. Prophet Isa was born without a father from the womb of his mother, Maryam, after he encountered the angel Jibril, who appeared in human form (Syaadah & Azhari, 2026). Prophet Isa himself is titled *al-Masih* because on a certain day before the Day of Judgment, he will be sent back to Earth to fight and kill the *Dajjal*, known as the *Masih* (Yarni & Ridha, 2022).

The death of Prophet Isa is a topic that has a different perspective in the context of Islam. According to the Islamic view, Prophet Isa did not die on the cross as Christians claim. According to the Qur'an, Prophet Isa was raised directly to heaven by Allah SWT and saved from being persecuted by the Jews (Shihab, 2024). The verse that is often referred to is QS. an-Nisa' (4): 157-158. This verse states that Prophet Isa did not die as Christians believe (Armstrong, 2012). Some scholars, such as Ibn Kasir, explain that there was a follower who was equated with Prophet Isa and that person was crucified.

The ascension of Prophet Isa to heaven was part of Allah's plan to save Prophet Isa from the Jews who conspired to kill him. This event shows that Allah is Almighty in protecting the prophets and thwarting the schemes of Prophet Isa's enemies, thus failing to carry out his plans. Prophet Isa was raised to heaven with a command given by Allah, namely to return to earth to fight the *Dajjal al-A'war* who misleads humanity at the end of time (Shihab, 2024). From the perspective of Islamic teachings, this has indications with the interpretation of the Qur'an and hadith.

In several places like libraries, books, journals, etc., several works have been found that discuss verses about the story of the life of the Prophet Isa. As example *Stylistics of the Story of Prophet Isa Being Ascended to Heaven in the Qur'an*, this journal article focuses more on the stylistics contained in the three verses, whereas in the scientific study that the researcher will examine, the *al-dakhil fī tafsīr* approach will be used to determine the validity of the interpretation of the selected verses (Sa'adah & Rohtih, 2019). Discourse related to the figure of the Prophet Isa has grown stronger in line with the development of critical and serious academic studies, as pioneered by academics. The researcher have found include "Isa Al-Masih in the Qur'an A Comparative Study of the Interpretations of Shaykh Nawawi al-Jawi and Karel Steenbrink" (Fiqih Kurniawan, 2023), which explains the differences in interpretation between Orientalists and Muslims about Prophet Isa. Similarly, the article discusses the differing perspectives on Jesus' position. In the Qur'an, Jesus is seen as a prophet who conveyed the teachings of monotheism to his followers, while in the Gospel, Jesus is seen as the son of God or a symbol of the Trinity (Fadhilah, 2021).

One of the things that distinguishes this work from others is its use of tafsir books. This is done to observe the development of interpretation and obtain concrete and complete results. By presenting the tafsir books *Jāmi' al-Bayān* and *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*, this work will arrive at its core: finding an explanation of the truth about the death of Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) and his

ascension to heaven. This will help to uncover the truth about Prophet Isa (peace be upon him), which has been a matter of debate for so long.

Furthermore, the use of the theory of *al-dakhil fī tafsīr* distinguishes previous research from the scientific study the researcher will write. This was done to determine the validity of the sources of interpretation taken from the *Tafsīr Jāmi' al-Bayān* and the *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*. Then with this research, it can strengthen the argument and form a disclaimer that the death of the Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) is correlated with the event of his ascension to heaven by including several *israiliyyat* narrations. Apart from that, the aim of this research is to open up insight into whether when he ascended to heaven, Prophet Isa was conscious or unconscious (fainted) (Homalilo & Al-'Anazy, 2025).

There are many different perspectives on the death and ascension of Prophet Isa to heaven which has become a hot issue and controversy among Muslims themselves (Steenbrink, 2015). So, the researcher wants to develop further with a different view, because the researcher feels that the research on this theme is not yet complete, so the researcher is here to complete previous research which also discussed the correlation between the death and ascension of Prophet Isa to heaven. Based on the above background, the researcher feels it necessary to conduct a study aimed at uncovering the secrets behind the story of the Prophet Isa ascending to heaven, which remains a topic of debate among Muslims.

METHOD

The research described here utilizes a qualitative approach, utilizing library research. Library research goes beyond simply preparing a research framework or obtaining information on similar research to deepen theoretical and methodological analysis (Arni, 2013). Library research requires interpretation involving multiple methods to examine the research problem. This ensures that the results presented can be scientifically justified. The data obtained directly from the results of collecting research objects, namely the Qur'an and its translation which contains verses about the death and ascension of the Prophet Isa, namely QS. *Āli 'Imrān* (3): 55, QS. *al-Nisā'* (4): 157-158, QS. *al-Māidah* (5): 117, and QS. *Maryam* (19): 33.

This research work is also taken from various literature that has a close relationship with this theme, namely representative *tafsīr* books from *tafsīr bi al-ma'sūr* and *tafsīr bi al-ra'yī*, including *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'An Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*, and *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm Wa al-Sab'u al-Ma'sānī*. Library materials related to primary sources and discussions in the research, generally consist of several supporting data, namely *Mu'jam al-Mufahras Li Alfāz al-Qur'ān*, as well as Arabic dictionaries such as *Lisān al-'Arab*, *al-Munawwir*, *al-Munjid*, books that discuss the story of the Prophet Isa and other sources that are used as references that can support this research.

The data collection method used in this research is a documentation study. Documentation study is one of the qualitative research data collection methods by viewing or analyzing documents from interpretation books, both documents created by oneself and by others (Rahmawati & Rusmana, 2013). In collecting this documentation data, the researcher observes, analyzes and examines the selected interpretation books, archives and so on. The documentation studies used in this research are *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'An Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān* and the interpretation book *Rūḥ al-*

Ma'ānī Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm Wa al-Sab'u al-Mašānī. The results of data collection from documents or archives, interpretation books, such as reports, official records, books, and articles.

The data analysis method used in this study is the content analysis method. So the researcher is tasked with analyzing and interpreting the contents of the text contained in the tafsir book Jāmi' al-Bayān 'An Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān and the tafsir book Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm Wa al-Sab'u al-Mašānī. The important point of this content analysis is to analyze QS. Āli 'Imrān (3): 55, QS. an-Nisā' (4): 157-158, QS. al-Māidah (5): 117, and QS. Maryam (19): 33 and examine in more depth the interpretation of Imam al-Ṭabarī and Imam al-Alūsī regarding the death and process of the Prophet Isa ascension to heaven according to the 4 verses listed above.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interpretation of al-Ṭabarī and al-Alūsī

1. QS. Ali 'Imrān (3): 55

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ خُذْ بِكَ مَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْكَ وَارْتَقِ الْسَمَاوَاتِ وَارْجِعْ إِلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

“(Remember), when Allah Almighty said: “O Isa, verily I will deliver you to the end of your death and raise you to Me and cleanse you from those who disbelieve, and make those who follow you above those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me will your return be, then I will decide between you about the things over which you have always differed.” (RI, 2012)

Al-Ṭabarī give the opinion that Allah SWT raised the Prophet Isa (a.s.) to heaven before he was an adult, then lowered him back to earth when he was middle-aged. Narrated from Ibn Humaid he said narrated from Salamah from Ibn Ishaq from Wahb Ibn Munabbih al-Yamani that he said that Allah SWT killed Prophet Isa, son of Mary, in three hours during the day and then raised him to the sky. Abu Ja'far is of the opinion that when Allah SWT killed Prophet Isa, it was a form of death that was not the same as other deaths, therefore there were two types of death (al-Ṭabarī, 2001). This is because Allah SWT informed His servants that they were created, then killed, then brought back to life, then they were killed again. So he interpreted this verse with the following interpretation: Allah Almighty said to Prophet Isa “O Isa, indeed I have taken you captive from the earth and raised you to My side and purified you from the disbelievers who deny your prophethood.”

Al-Alūsī explained that Allah SWT created a trick and conspiracy by a group of the children of Israel to kill Prophet Isa (a.s.). Their conspiracy began with reporting false rumors to the King, who at that time was also an infidel, that there was a man meaning Prophet Isa (as) who was trying to mislead the people, agitate and incite them to rebel against the King, destroy the condition of the people and destroy the relationship between parents and children (al-Alusi, 1990a). Al-Alūsī's opinion is in line with the interpretation of Sheikh Nawawi, when Yahudza (Judas Iskariyot) and his group wanted to kill Isa, then the Angel Gabriel ordered him to enter a house and then Isa was lifted up to the sky from the window of the house (Kurniawan, 2023).

In this verse there are the forms *al-Taqdīm* (putting first) and *al-Ta'khir* (ending), the meaning of which is putting the word that should end first, in this case the word “*mutavaffika*,”

and conversely, ending the word that should come first, in this case the word, “*rāfi’uka wa muṭabbiruka*.” So, roughly the ta’wil or interpretation of this verse is “I will indeed lift you up to Me, cleanse you from the disbelievers and put you to death after you descend from heaven.”

2. QS. al-Nisā’ (4): 157-158

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

“And because of their saying: “Indeed, We have killed the Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, the Apostle of Allah”, even though they did not kill him nor (nor) crucify him, but (what they killed was) the person who was likened to ‘Isa’ to them. Indeed, those who disagree about (the killing of) Jesus are truly in doubt about who was killed. They did not have any confidence about who was killed, except following mere guesswork, they were not (also) sure that it was Jesus who they killed. But (the truth is), Allah SWT has raised Jesus to Him. And Allah SWT is the Most Mighty, the Most Wise.” (RI, 2012).

It was narrated to us from Ibn Humaid, he said, narrated from Salamah from Ibn Ishaq, he said that actually a king from the Children of Israel who ordered the killing of Prophet Isa was named Daud. After they were gathered, there was a servant of the servants of Allah SWT who was not afraid of death and was not anxious at all. And when he prayed to Allah, Allah Almighty did not reject his prayer. Then when his skin was torn from the wound and bleeding, he entered a house where there were 13 people consisting of the Prophet Isa and Hawariyyun. Prophet Isa said to the Hawariyyun, numbering 12 people, including: Peter, Ya’qub Ibn Zabdi, Yohannes, brother Ya’qub, Andreas, Phillips, Barnabas or Bartholomius, Matthew, Thomas, Jacob Helacrius, Todeus, Simon Zelotes, Judas Iskariyot (Steenbrink, 2015).

The number of Hawariyyun, if counted, was known when they entered the house of Prophet Isa. And when the Jews found Prophet Isa’s house to take him, one of the men disappeared from the original count. But they did not know the appearance of the Prophet Isa, until a follower named Judas Iskariyot offered to show the whereabouts of the Prophet Isa to the Jews for a price of 30 dirhams. Then he said: when you enter his house, I will meet him. Not long afterward, when a Jew entered the house of the Prophet Isa, he instead met Judas, whose face at that time resembled him. Then he was taken by the Jews while the Prophet Isa was lifted into heaven (al-Tabari, 2001).

In fact, those who are in dispute regarding the crucifixion of the Prophet Isa, whether it was he or someone else who was crucified, are truly in doubt and in doubt regarding the nature of this matter (al-Dimasyqi, 2017). They do not have certain and certain knowledge, but they only follow prejudices and presumptions that cannot lead to the truth at all. However, what actually happened was that Allah SWT saved Jesus from the hands of the Jews and raised him to Him (al-Alusi, 1990b). Ibn Wahhab said that Allah SWT put Prophet Isa to death for three days, then He raised him again and raised him to Him. Ibnu Jarir said that al-Rafu’s sentence meant lifting him. Meanwhile, most scholars say that what is meant by the word al-Rafu here is to make him fall asleep (al-Zuhainy, 2002). In the context of Ibn Katsir’s interpretation of the *Isra’iliyat* narration about the crucifixion of Prophet Isa AS, researchers found that his views

on the crucifixion of Prophet Isa AS in QS. An-Nisa [4]: 157-158 confirm that Prophet Isa AS was not killed or crucified (Sari et al., 2024).

3. QS. al-Māidah (5): 117

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

“I never said to them except what You commanded me (said), namely: “Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord”, and I was a witness against them, as long as I was among them. So after You left (raised) me, You were the one who watched over them. And You are the Witness of all things.” (RI, 2012).

The exposure of the evils of the Jewish religious leaders and the Pharisees by Prophet Isa the Messiah was the cause of their crimes against him and their accusations against him before the rulers of that time. Before the rulers of that time, they said that Prophet Isa was the king of the Jews, whereas they recognized no king except the Roman Emperor (‘Asyur, 1984). The rulers of that time sent soldiers to capture Prophet Isa the Messiah. When they came looking for Prophet Isa, Allah SWT made another person, namely Judas Iscariot, who resembled him (Saefullah et al., 2024). He was arrested, then crucified and killed. And it was this Judas who agreed with the monks to show Prophet Isa where he was, in exchange for a reward. Allah SWT saved Prophet Isa from the Jews, so they did not arrest him, and Prophet Isa was not killed or crucified.

This is information to Prophet Isa regarding the attitudes of his followers, their words, and their beliefs. The majority of commentators believe that what is meant by al-Raf'u is the ascension to heaven (al-Mandhur, 1998), in accordance with His words, “Indeed, I will cause you to die and raise you to Myself.” Hasan al-Basri said that the word tawaffa in the Qur'an has three meanings. First, death; second, death while sleeping; and third, death of ascension (Al-Munawwir, 1997). In his explanation of this verse, al-Alusi explains that Allah (swt) caused Prophet Isa to die during the process of being ascension to heaven (al-Alusi, 1990c). This was done as a form of protection from Allah so that he would not be aware of the commotion that occurred due to the actions of the Jews. Therefore, he did not know in detail what happened when he was rescued from the pursuit of the Romans who wanted to kill him.

4. QS. Maryam (19): 33

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

“And peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I am raised to life again.”

Prophet Isa (a.s.) prayed to God to save him in these three turns of life; (1) on the day he begins to open his eyes to face life in this world, (2) in the realm of the grave after death, which is also called the Barzakh Realm, (3) on the day of judgment he will immediately be resurrected again. Those are the words of Isa (a.s.) who was still in his mother's cradle. After he finished speaking, he breastfed, returning to his usual childlike state. This is according to the history of al-Kalbi (al-Tabari, 2001b). Al-Alusi interpreted that this verse explains about the Prophet Isa who could speak when his mother was in his cradle by saying: and salvation for me from all the evils that befall humans at birth, so that Satan does not touch me at that time and does not tempt me when I die and when I am resurrected. So, I am always in a safe condition, and no

earth to fight the
Dajjal

Narrated from al-Musanna he said narrated from Abdullah Ibn Sholih he said narrated from Mu'awiyah Ibn Sholih that Ka'ab al-Ahbar said: Allah swt did not kill Isa, son of Mary, in fact Allah swt sent Isa as a caller and bearer of good news to worship Allah swt, the One. But only a few followed Prophet Isa and many of his people belied him, so they complained to Allah about this. So Allah Almighty revealed to him His words: I will indeed leave you and elevate you to My side. you were not brought to My side while dead, and indeed I will send you to fight the Dajjal and kill him and you will live after him for 40 years, only then will I send you away from worldly life (Hanbal, 1995). From the narrative above, it can be seen that the israiliyyat history conveyed by Ka'ab al-Ahbar is one of the signs of the Day of Judgment, namely the descent of the Prophet Isa to earth to fight the Dajjal and then live with Muslims for 40 years.

This hadith explains that Prophet Isa will be sent down by Allah SWT to earth when the Day of Judgment approaches as one of the signs of the apocalypse. After that, he will live among Muslims for 40 years, where one year is like half a year and one year is like one month. Therefore, this period of time is not the same as today's time because it feels faster than usual. The hadith stating that, "Prophet Isa will kill the Dajjal, then will remain on earth for forty years," is completely unproblematic. Al-Bayhaqi also adhered to the narration stating that Jesus will remain on earth for forty years. As quoted by al-Suyuti, he also strengthened one opinion (and not through compromise). Because if there is additional explanation from narrators who are siqqah (*ziyadah siqqah*) can certainly be used as an argument. Those who claim that after Prophet Isa's descent he will remain for forty years adhere to the numerous narrations, so they prioritize them over the narrations that are said to be few because of the additional certainty they contain (Simamora & Harahap, 2025). The hadith which states that Prophet Isa lived for forty years is the *mutshbit hadith* (which states it explicitly), of course this is the one which must be prioritized."

2. Tafsir bi al-ra'yi

Is one of the rules used in interpretation that uses reason is the Arabic language rule (al-Dzahabi, 2015), so the four verses that discuss the death and ascension of the Prophet Isa will be examined for their linguistic structure. Here are some words that have continuity with the death and ascension of the Prophet Isa, including:

Table 2. Identification of Tafsir bi Al-Ra'yi

<i>Tawaffā</i>	<i>Tawaffaitanī</i> is the verb form of the verb <i>tawaffā</i> . The past tense here does not refer to something that happened in the past, but rather to a form of <i>khobar muqaddam</i> , which is something that will happen at the end but is reported at the beginning
<i>Qatala</i>	<i>Qatalnā</i> is a past tense form derived from the word <i>Qatala</i> and means to kill or destroy.

Tafsir bi al-ra'yi	Analyzing language structure	<i>Māta</i>	<p>This word structure was used by the Jews who believed that Prophet Isa was killed by them. So they thought that Prophet Isa died because he was crucified on a wooden board. <i>Amūtu</i> is a form of <i>fi'il muḍari'</i> derived from <i>ṣiġhāt māta-yamūtu</i> which means to die or pass away. The use of <i>fi'il muḍari'</i> indicates an event that occurs in the present or future. This is because Prophet Isa has not died, therefore he said so because at any time Allah SWT will take his life like other humans.</p>
		<i>Rafa'a</i>	<p><i>Rāfi'uka</i> is a form of <i>ism fā'il</i> from <i>rafa'a</i> which means to lift you up. The meaning of "raising you up" has several different meanings. Some scholars say it means raising you up to the heavens of this world, others say it means raising you up to My presence, and still others say it means ascending to the fourth heaven, the orbit of the sun.</p>

3. Tafsir bi riwāyah al-isrāiliyyāt

There are many kinds of external sources that infiltrate tafsir or what is usually called *al-dakhil fī tafsir*. One of them is *isrāiliyyat* which infiltrates the interpretation through the opinions of the friends and *tabi'in*. Taking the history from the experts of this book is the beginning of the formation of an interpretation of the *isrāiliyyat* history (Ulinnuha, 2019), so it is necessary to review the authenticity of the source. Here it can be seen from the interpretation of al-Ṭabarī who quotes his narration which contains the *isrāiliyyat* story:

قال كعب الأحبار: وذلك يصدق حديث رسول الله ﷺ حيث قال: كيف تهلك أمة أنا في أولها وعيسى في آخرها.

"Ka'ab al-Ahbar said: "and this is confirmed by the hadith conveyed by Rasulullāh saw which reads: "how a ummah will perish, while I am at the beginning and Isa, the son of Mary at the end."

The narrative given by the *tabi'in* named Ka'ab al-Ahbar is reinforced by the hadith of Abu Hurairah r.a., he said that the Messenger of Allah had prayed:

أنا أولى الناس بعيسى ابن مريم في الدنيا والآخرة والأنبياء إخوة لعلات أمهاتهم شتى ودينهم واحد

"I am the person who is closest and loves Isa bin Maryam the most in this world and in the afterlife. The prophets are brothers and sisters even though their mothers are different, and their religion is one" (HR. Bukhari, no. 3443; Muslim, no. 2365).

And from the israiliyyat narration above, what can be used as a parameter is that the israiliyyat narration contained in the two tafsir books is known to be true because it is in accordance with the teachings of the Islamic religion. Because the events of the death of the Prophet Isa as described in these two commentaries do not appear to be anything disturbing (Anwar, 1999). For example, the Prophet Isa did not die on the cross, as the Jews thought. Likewise, the event of the lifting up of the Prophet Isa (as) into the sky is contained in both interpretations. So this can be accepted and narrated.

Similarities and Differences of Interpretation Both al-Ṭabarī and al-Alūsī

Similarities Both al-Ṭabarī and al-Alūsī when interpreting the excerpt of QS. an-Nisā' (4): 157 "even though they did not kill him nor (also) crucified him, but (they killed) someone who was made to look like Jesus to them". Both emphasized that Prophet Isa was not crucified, in accordance with the Islamic creed of *Ablus Sunnah*. Al-Ṭabarī explained based on the narrations of the companions and *tabi'in* that the one who was crucified was someone who was made to look like Prophet Isa, and Prophet Isa was raised to heaven. al-Alūsī also supports this view and even presents various possibilities of who was made to look like, and rejects the Christian belief about the crucifixion.

The specific similarity when discussing the death and ascension of Prophet Isa in the commentary book *Jāmi' al-Bayān* and the commentary book *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī* lies in the meaning of the death of Prophet Isa. Prophet Isa did not die on the cross as claimed by the Jews. In fact, what happened was that Allah SWT changed the face of one of his followers who betrayed Prophet Isa by selling him to the Jews for 30 dirhams. The name of the traitorous follower was Judas Iscariot, so that when the Jews surrounded Prophet Isa's residence, he was the one who was arrested by them because his face was changed to resemble Prophet Isa. Meanwhile, Prophet Isa was raised by Allah SWT to heaven alive, not dead as suspected by non-Muslims. Al-Alūsī also emphasized this and conveyed various views of scholars, including theological and philosophical approaches, but still held the opinion that Prophet Isa would descend in real life. He would return to earth to kill the Dajjal, destroy the cross, and die as an ordinary human.

A striking difference in the discussion of the death and ascension of the Prophet Isa in the commentary on the *Jami' al-Bayan* and the commentary on the *Ruh al-Ma'ani* is the use of supporting interpretative arguments. Al-Tabari attempts to strengthen his opinion by citing other verses with the same context, or citing several hadiths that correlate with the verses discussed, and adding the words of the Companions in his interpretation. This contrasts with Al-Alusi, who tends to use reason or reason when explaining and explaining a verse. However, he also frequently uses verses to strengthen his opinion. Furthermore, the use of Islamic traditions also dominates his interpretation, necessitating further examination of the validity of these sources. Furthermore, in terms of interpretation, Al-Tabari tends more towards *tafsir bi al-naql*. Therefore, it is not surprising that he interprets one verse with another, strengthening it with the Prophetic hadith, sometimes also adding the words of the Companions and the *Tabi'in*.

In contrast to al-Alūsī who tends towards *tafsir bi al-'aql*. So when interpreting a verse, he prioritizes reason, besides also focusing on linguistic structure. He also often adds israiliyyat narrations in his interpretations. The word *rafa'a* literally means: lifting, can mean physical or degree/nobility. In the context of QS. an-Nisā' (4): 158, scholars agree that the lifting of Prophet

Isa was physical and spiritual, not merely metaphorical. Al-Ṭabarī explains that this lifting was the lifting to heaven, as a form of salvation from a murder plot. Citing the narration that Prophet Isa was in the second heaven. al-Alūsī mentions the meaning of physical lifting to heaven, and refutes the interpretation of philosophers/rationalists who interpret this metaphorically. He states that in terms of appearance and the text of the Qur'an and hadith, Prophet Isa is still alive and in heaven. The word rafa'a means physical and spiritual elevation, and strongly refutes the metaphorical interpretations of the Mu'tazilites and modernists.

CONCLUSION

In general, the sources for interpreting the Qur'an are divided into three, namely tafsīr bi al-ma'sūr, tafsīr bi al-ra'yi, and tafsīr bi riwāyah al-isrā'iliyyāt. Using the tafsīr bi al-ma'sūr method, the four verses which explain the death and ascension of the Prophet Isa to heaven will be examined for the validity of the sources of interpretation using sanad criticism. And with the tafsīr bi al-ra'yi method using Arabic rules, the linguistic structure of the four verses which discuss the death and ascension of the Prophet Isa will be examined. And from the isrā'iliyyat narration above, what can be used as a parameter is that the isrā'iliyyat narration contained in the two tafsir books is known to be true because it is in accordance with the teachings of the Islamic religion. Because the events of the death of the Prophet Isa as described in these two commentaries do not appear to be anything out of the ordinary.

For example, the Prophet Isa did not die on the cross, as the Jews thought. Likewise, the event of the lifting up of the Prophet Isa (as) into the sky is contained in both interpretations. So this can be accepted and narrated. This research uncovers an interesting reminder for all Muslims to continually meditate on the verses of the Qur'an and reflect on the power of Allah SWT, believing in His messengers. It also reinforces the belief that Jesus was merely a mortal who experienced death. As servants of Allah SWT, we should deepen our religious knowledge by studying the interpretations of the Qur'an, so that we understand that the death of Jesus (peace be upon him) demonstrates that no god can rival Allah SWT.

DECLARATION OF USING AI

The author used ChatGPT to improve language and readability. The author reviewed and edited the output and take full responsibility for the content.

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