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Muhammad Naim Madjid

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THE QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVE ON DISASTER SEMIOTICS

Mardan

Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Alauddin Makassar

Email: mardan@uin-alauddin.ac.id

Abstract

This research entitled *The Qur'anic Perspective on Disaster Semiotics*. It uses interpretive approach with the method of *tafsīr maudū'ī*" and comprehensive semantic analysis. The object of this research is The Qur'an verses concerning with disasters. The results indicate that the disaster semiotics in the Qur'an, include the following terms: *al-balā'*, *al-muṣībah*, *al-fitnah*, and *al-'azāb*. From these words, several facts are obtained: (1) disaster as a test is a necessity of life for mukallaf humans, which is carried out by God himself without the involvement tried in determining the way, time, and form of the disaster; (2) a disaster, which is a necessity of life including spaciousness and life suffering, whose levels are in accordance with the level of one's faith, the higher experience disasters more severe than others; (3) the disaster in the form of God's gift or favor cannot be used as evidence of divine affection as suffering does not always mean His wrath; (4) disasters come, in addition to natural factors, also because of human sins. If that also happens, humans must respond to the disaster as education and divine enlightenment, as a blessing to believers, and a warning to sinners and punishment for those who are unjust and overreach.

Keywords: The Qur'an, humans, disaster, semiotic analysis.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas "Semiotika Bencana Perspektif al-Qur'an" dengan menggunakan pendekatan "*ilmu tafsīr*" dan metode "*tafsīr maudū'ī*" serta analisis semantik yang komprehensif. Objek penelitian ini adalah ayat-ayat al-Qur'an yang berkenaan dengan bencana. Hasil penelitian yang diperoleh menunjukkan bahwa semiotika bencana dalam al-Qur'an, meliputi *term-term* berikut: *al-balā'*, *al-muṣībah*, *al-fitnah*, dan *al-'azāb*. Dari lafal-lafal ini diperoleh beberapa hakikat: (1) bencana sebagai ujian adalah keniscayaan hidup bagi manusia *mukallaf*, yang dilakukan oleh Allah sendiri tanpa keterlibatan yang dicoba dalam menentukan cara, waktu, dan bentuk bencana itu; (2) bencana, yang merupakan keniscayaan hidup meliputi kelapangan dan penderitaan hidup, yang kadarnya sesuai dengan tingkat keimanan seseorang, yang lebih tinggi mengalami cobaan lebih berat daripada yang lainnya; (3) bencana berupa anugerah atau nikmat Allah tidak dapat dijadikan sebagai bukti kasih sayang Ilahi seperti halnya penderitaan tidak selalu

berarti murka-Nya; (4) bencana datang, di samping karena faktor alam, juga karena dosa-dosa manusia. Untuk mencegahnya, manusia dituntut untuk mencegah dosa dan kemaksiatan, banyak berdoa dan beristigfar, serta senantiasa menegakkan amar ma'ruf dan nahi munkar secara tepat dan berkesinambungan. Kalaupun bencana tetap menimpa manusia, maka pada hakekatnya, ia berfungsi sebagai pendidikan dan pelipurlara Ilahi, bahkan menjadi rahmat bagi orang-orang beriman, serta menjadi peringatan bagi para pendosa dan azab bagi mereka yang zalim dan melampaui batas.

Kata Kunci: Al-Qur'an, Manusia, Semiotika, Bencana.

المخلص

إن موضوع هذا البحث هو آيات القرآن المتعلقة بالزلازل. المشاكل التي يتناقشها هي: (1) المفاهيم التي يمكن استخلاصها وصياغتها من عبارات القرآن المتعددة حول البلاء سواء كانت تلك العبارات تأتي مباشرة عن كلمة البلاء أم كانت هي عبارات مشابهة له. (2) مكانة البلاء في القرآن. (3) الأسباب التي تؤدي إلى نزول البلاء وحدوثه، ومحاولات تجنبه. (4) الأبعاد المرتبطة بالبلاء في القرآن والغايات الحقيقية من تلك الأبعاد. (5) الآثار المترتبة على نزول البلاء من نواحي متعددة؛ آثاره في العقيدة، والتقوى، والزهد في الدنيا، والعلم، ومحاولات التغيير المستقبلية، والتضامن المطلوب في الأمة. (6) مواقف الناس من الزلازل، وتشمل: مواقف الناس المبتلين بالبلاء، ومواقف الناس غير المبتلين بالبلاء تجاه المصابين. للإجابة عن هذه المشكلات، يستخدم الباحث منهج علم التفسير بوجه عام و طريقة التفسير الموضوعي بصفة خاصة، ثم التحليل الدلالي الشامل عن طريق المناهج التفسيرية الآتية. ويتبين من خلال البحث أن الآيات القرآنية التي وردت فيها كلمة البلاء -وهي 38 آية- بكل أشكالها واشتقاقاتها، استخلصت منها الحقائق التالية: (1) إن البلاء أصبح ضرورة حتمية في حياة الإنسان المكلف وذلك نتيجة لإرادة إلهية دون تدخل من أي طرف آخر في تحديد نوعية البلاء من حيث كلفيته وتحديد وقت نزوله و تحديد أشكاله. (2) إن البلاء بمفهومه السالف شامل لبعديه الثنائي وهما البلاء في شكل نعم الحياة الدنيا وفي شكل نقمها. (3) إن ابتلاء الله لعباده في صورة النعم لا يمكن تفسيره دائما على أنه أثر من آثار حب الله لهم كما هو الحال بالنسبة لابتلاء الله لعباده بالمصيبة، فلا يمكن هو أيضا تفسيره على أنه أثر من آثار بغض الله لهم. (4) إن البلاء يكون في حالات معينة بمثابة طريقة من الطرق الإلهية لأن يغفر ذنوبهم ويزكي أنفسهم، والارتقاء بعباده إلى درجة أعلى. أما أهداف البلاء فتحتوي على أهداف منها، لإبراز جذدة الإيمان للعبد أو تثبيتا لإيمان المؤمنين، و إيقاظا للغافلين المفتونين المغترين، والدعوة إلى الذين يبحثون عن بقعة من ضوء الحقيقة. وإظهار أن الله يعرف طبيعة ومواقف وسلوك جميع الناس خلال حياتهم في هذه الحياة. الكلمات المفتاحية: المفاهيم، آيات الزلازل، مكانة البلاء، الأسباب البلاء.

A. Introduction

Humans generally and the Indonesian people in particular, from year to year have never been separated from various disasters, both in the form of natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, landslides, fires, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, corruption, drugs, riots / fights between groups, etc.), social disasters, for example: riots, threats of national disintegration, inter-group fights, riots between students and students, feuds between elites; as well as religious disasters, for example: the ulama are converted by Allah, the crisis of moral and moral thinking, social solidarity and a sense of love and affection between people are increasingly fading, crisis of exemplary figures, injustice and dishonesty among the rulers, the ulama tend to be politicians, and religious teachings are no longer practiced, so it is not wrong if there is a view that says Indonesia is a disaster window because almost all of the above disasters exist.

The majority of the Indonesian people regard the disaster as a punishment for the perpetrators of iniquity against Allah and His Messenger, others say ordinary calamity, and some consider it as a misfortune, even though some of them also want to ask the differences between misfortune, calamities, test, slander, and punishment in the Qur'an.

In the Qur'anic perspective, the four terms are often used rather ambiguously in society, especially after the tsunami in Aceh at the end of 2004. If the discussion is directed at rising the patience of the community, the tsunami disaster is assumed to be a disaster, or a misfortune, or a slander, if directed to remind sinners, wrongdoers and people who are overreaching, then the tsunami disaster is assumed to be doom. The term "disaster" in the Qur'an contain multi-dimensional meanings, for example, the spiritual dimension, moral dimension, work ethic dimension, intellectual and political dimensions, socio-historical dimension, sociological dimension, philosophical dimension, and psychological dimension.¹ On the other hand, in terms of disaster also contains high moral dimension, as well as dimension of "ethos" or high tenacity and motivation to achieve success in carrying out a business and struggle, and indeed when viewed from the background of revealed verses of disaster in The Qur'an is due to the occurrence of a moral crisis in the community (QS al-Qalam/68: 17).

In addition, disasters cause various impacts, especially psychosocial impacts on primary victims and secondary victims. In the life of reality and socio-cultural and political phenomena, understanding of disasters is not in line with the conception of disasters in the Qur'an. Humans see it as something negative and scary.

In connection with the background above, it is known that the problem of disasters in the Koran is not simple, even in the life of social, cultural, and political realities, understanding of disasters is not in line with the conception of disasters in the Qur'an, so that the breadth of insight seems covered, as well as the importance of being elaborated.

¹See Hassan Hanafi, *Islam and the Modern World: Religion, Ideology, and Development*, Vol. 1, (Cairo: Dar Keebaa Book Shop, 2000), p. 484-485.

The main problem can be formulated, namely: "what is the disaster semiotic on the Qur'an perspective?" to answer the main problem, the author uses interpretive approach, with the method of *tafsīr mauḍūʿī*, although other methods and approaches are still used, as long as the methods and approaches are relevant to the problem being studied, even the method of tafsir *mauḍūʿī* will be more perfect if it is compromised by other methods, especially the method of *tafsir taḥlīlī* and the method of *tafsīr muqāran*.

This research is descriptive, namely an effort to explore and formulate concepts about disasters in the Qur'an that are qualitative.² The use of these approaches and methods is based on the fact that the data faced is descriptive in the form of verbal statements, not quantitative data.

In the analysis and interpretation of data, objects that can be interpreted are vocabulary (including particles or letters), phrases, clauses, and verses in the Qur'an. The interpretation techniques used in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an relating to disasters are as follows: (a) textual interpretation; (b) linguistic interpretation; (c) socio-historical interpretation; (d) psychological interpretation; and (e) logical interpretations.

B. Disaster Semiotics in the Qur'an

The results of the study show that the Qur'an contains multi dimensional and comprehensive concepts of disaster semiotics, which can be formulated as follows:

1. The nature of disaster semiotics

Semiotics intended in this discussion are all things related to the system of signs and symbols in human life. For Peirce, humans are homo semiolicus, meaning that in everyday life, humans are always faced with signs, and related to them. In addition, he is active in order to respond to the signs that come to themselves. Even for Pierce, this universe is a sign. For example, police track crime, people who are in love see the movements of the opposite sex to cry sadly or smile or even confused, also in choosing a good durian fruit, doctors see the patient's illness, signs of anger from people, signs of language, symbols, dreams, and others.³

In human life, signs also play an important role in religion, at least in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The world as a creation with its various aspects is often described as a sign of Allah Almighty, a sign of the omnipotence of Allah. In Islam, signs and markings are important elements. The word (verse) whose basic meaning is a sign there are approximately 285 times used in the Qur'an, for example, in the QS Fushshilat/41: 53.

From this verse, it is understood that Allah introduces Himself through the signs He gives. So to know Allah and believe in His truth, humans need to interpret and reflect on the signs that are and are seen by them, both those in themselves (microcosm) and in this universe (macrocosm) that God created for humans.

²Hassan Hanafi, *Islam and the Modern Word: Religion, Ideology, and Development*, p. 32.

³George Richard T. De., *Semiotic Themes*, (Lawrence: University of Kansas Publication, 1981), p. 27.

Besides Allah revealing signs of the macrocosm and the microcosm, Allah also gives signs in the form of texts called scriptures, such as the Torah, Zabur, Bible, and the Qur'an. The signs of this text also need to be interpreted to improve ma'rifat and faith to Almighty Allah.⁴ Disaster semiotics in the Qur'an, at least, there are 4 (four), namely: *al-balā'*, *al-muṣībah*, *al-fitnah*, and *al-'azāb*.

Disasters in the form of *al-balā'* with all its derivative forms are used by Allah swt. 38 times,⁵ spread over 35 verses in 25 surahs, whose meanings include: 1) *al-ikhtibār* (test),⁶ like the words of Allah in QS al-Baqarah/2: 155; 2) *al-ni'mah wa al-miḥnah* (gifts and trials),⁷ like the words of Allah swt in QS Ibrāhīm/14: 6 and QS al-A'rāf/7: 141; and 3) *al-takālif* (religion obligations),⁸ such as the words of Allah swt. in QS Muḥammad/47: 31.

From the above meanings, it can be concluded that the nature of the disaster in the form of a term *al-balā'* which can be understood from the verses of the Qur'an, namely: (1) disaster is the necessity of the life of a human *mukallaf*; (2) a disaster which is a necessity of life which includes the space and suffering of life; (3) disasters in the form of Allah's gifts or favors, cannot be used as evidence of his love, just as a disaster in the form of suffering does not always mean his wrath; (4) the disaster that befell a person, in certain cases, is the way Allah forgives sins, purifies the soul, cleanses himself, and on the other hand, it can be used as a tool to elevate one's rank as a martyr (*syuhada*), or to elevate humanity to a more noble place, or vice versa as a tool to punish wrongdoers and transgressors.

Disasters in the form of term *muṣībah*, this word with all forms of invocation used in the Qur'an 77 times, spread over 56 verses, in 27 surahs. Thirty three times in the form of the past tense verb (*fi'il māḍī*), thirty times in the form of the present verb (*fi'il muḍāri'*), and twelve times in the form of a noun (*ism*).⁹

The term *muṣībah* comes from the root words with the letters *ṣ*, *w*, *b*, refers to the meaning of "fixed and calm things". From this meaning formed the word *al-ṣawāb fī al-qaul wa al-fi'l* (true in words and deeds), which in essence, only words and deeds can result to calmness. On the other hand, the word means "befalling or overwriting", which at first this word is related to "throwing," if the throw regarding the target.¹⁰

In lexical terms, the word *muṣībah* means "everything that befalls human beings is negative", which according to Muḥammad Husayn al-Ṭabā' tabā'i, disaster is any event that befalls humanity which is not desired and is negative. In that case,

⁴Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 7.

⁵See Muhammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahrās li Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Bairūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1401 H/1981 M), p. 135-136.

⁶See Abu- al-Husain Ahmad bin Fāris bin Zakariyā, *Mu'jam al-Maqāyis fī al-Lugāh*, di-taḥqīq oleh Syihāb al-Dīn Ab- 'Amru, (Bair-t-Libnān: Dār al-Fikr, 1415 H/1994 M), p.152.

⁷See Butros al-Bustānī, *Quṭr al-Muḥīṭ*, Juz I, (Bairūt-Lubnān: Maktabah al-Lubnān, t.th.), p. 141.

⁸See Abu al-Faḍl Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad bin Mukram Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, Jilid I, (Bacrūt: Dār Sadr-Dār Baerūt, 1968 M/1396 H), p. 355.

⁹Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahrās*...., p. 415-416.

¹⁰Ibnu Manzūr al-Anṣārī, *op. cit.*, Juz I, p.24.

disaster is all negative things that happen to humans. "This is understood from the word *muṣībah* that is used by the Qur'an 10 times,¹¹ all of which refers to the meaning of "something unpleasant"¹²

Disasters in the form of slanderous terms, this word with all its derivative forms is used in the Qur'an 60 times, spread over 50 verses, in 32 surahs. Ten (10) times in the form of *fi'il māḍī* (past verb), twelve (12) times in the form of *fi'il mudāri'* (present and future verb), and thirty eight (38) times in the form of *ism* (noun).¹³

The term slander is taken from the Arabic root word with the obligation letters *f, t, n*, which refers to the basic meaning of *idkhāl al-zahabi al-nāra li tazhara jaudatuhū* (burning gold to know the level of its quality) as a sign that the word slander¹⁴ in the meaning of *ibtilā' wa ikhtibār*¹⁵ (test and trial) is used in the Qur'an to know the "core of human faith". On the other hand, it means "torture". Therefore, the verse *al-fitnah asyaddu min al-qatl* (QS al-Baqarah/2: 191) and the verse *al-fitnah akbaru min al-qatl* (QS al-Baqarah/2: 217) are not correctly interpreted with meaning "slander (bringing a hoax and vilifying others) is more cruel or greater sin than murder. The mistake arises from a misunderstanding of the word *slander* which is exacerbated by ignoring the context of the reason why the verses come down.

In that case, slander meant by the two verses above (QS al-Baqarah/2: 191 and 217), is torture committed by the idolaters in Mecca as mentioned above. Not in the sense of false words or without the basis of the truth that is disseminated with the intention of vilifying people, such as: defacing a good name, or harming the honor of a person. In contrast to *al-balā'*, the word *slander* is more used in something that is in the nature of life suffering.

Disasters in the form of the term *'azāb*, which means "torture," which means the term *al-balā'* in the form of life suffering.¹⁶ The word *'azāb* with all its derivative forms is used in the Qur'an as much as 372 times, which is spread over 354 verses, in 68 surahs. Four times in the form of past tense verbs (*fi'il mā aī*), 36 times in the form of present and future verbs (*fi'il mudāri'*), and 332 times in the form of nouns (*ism*).¹⁷

In terms of language, the word *'azāb*, which is the plural form *'azibah* which means "torment", comes from the root word with the letters 'a, z, b, whose basic meaning, the scholars differ. Some argue that it is taken from the root word "*'azāb al-mā'u*" (fresh [drunk], tasteless); or taken from the root of the word *al-'azābah* which means *aṭrāf al-suyūf*, which is "the tip of the whip"; so from the root *'azzaba* it becomes' *'azāb*¹⁸ which means "torture or loss of fresh and comfortable

¹¹Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahrās....*, p. 415-416.

¹²Ibn Manzūr al-Anṣārī, *op. cit.*, Juz I, p.24.

¹³Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahrās....*, p. 511-512.

¹⁴Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahrās....*, p. 511-512.

¹⁵Sec Aḥmad bin Fāris bin Zakariyā, *op. cit.*, p. 825.

¹⁶Sec Ibn Manzūr al-Anṣārī, *op. cit.*, Juz II, p.72.

¹⁷Sec Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *op. cit.*, p.450-455.

¹⁸Sec Ibn Manzūr al-Anṣārī, *op. cit.*, Juz II, p.72.

feeling." No matter what the above meanings, in the end, all of that ended in the meaning of "torment".

The word '*azāb*' itself is used by the Qur'an 322 times, in addition to about 50 times other forms of the same root word. This word, at first, is used to describe, "something fresh and comfortable", such as "fresh and comfortable water to drink," then the word '*azzaba*' becomes '*azāb*' which means "loss of something fresh taste and comfortable, "then turns into a painful" torment"

The term '*azāb*' is often identified with the term '*iqāb*' which means "punishment" Although there are actually some differences between the two. The word '*iqāb*' is seen from the side that Allah will punish His servants who do deviations from His provisions; whereas the word '*azāb*' is seen in terms of the form '*iqāb*' Allah itself. In other words, '*iqāb*' is the name for Allah's punishment; while '*azāb*' is a form of punishment Almighty Allah.¹⁹

2. Disaster position in the Qur'an

The position of the disaster in the Qur'an is seen when connected with *terms*: *īmān* (QS al-Maidah/5:94), *'āmal* (QS Hūd/11: 7), and *iḥsān* (QS al-Anfāl/8: 17). These three *terms* are the basic teachings of Islam. This implies that the *disaster* occupies a central and important position in the study of the Qur'an, especially in moral formation and the promotion of human virtuous deeds.

Such noble moral formation is seen when Allah associates the word *balā'an* with the word *al-ḥ asanan* in QS al-Anfāl (8): 17. The word *al-ḥ asanāt* in the paragraph above is a plural form of the *mufrad al-ḥ asanah*, which is used in the Qur'an three times, namely: QS al-A'rāf/7: 168; QS Hud/11: 114; QS al-Furqān/25: 70.²⁰

In the verse above, the word *hasan* appears to be used twice in sequence. First, the word means "good acceptance, which is received by Maryam as in the hands of Allah; while the second, said *ḥ asan* asserts that Maryam grew healthy and became a noble woman. The word *al-iḥsān*, in essence, used to refer to high-quality meanings, namely "the peak of good deeds."²¹

The coupling between *al-balā'* with *iḥ sā n* in the *wabalaunā hum bi al-ḥ asanā t* clause (and We test them with virtues) at verse 168, surah al-A'rāf this implies that "Allah reveals the attitude and behavior of Bani Isrā'ī l in the reality of life is to examine the extent of their gratitude to God behind the life pleasures that have been bestowed upon them (*al-ḥ asanā t*). In the context of the cause of descent, this verse comes down with regard to the coming of the angel Gabriel meeting the Prophet Muhammad SAW, asking him to take a handful of small stones mixed with sand then throwing them at the polytheists while ordering the Islamic forces to attack. At the time, the sand mixed with stones about the eyes, nose, and mouth of the enemy, so they were too messy and defeated."²²

¹⁹See Azyumardi Azra (ed.), *op. cit.*, Juz I, p.195.

²⁰See Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *op. cit.*, p.203.

²¹See Azyumardi Azra (ed.), *op. cit.*, Jilid II, p.178.

²²See Abu Hasan al-Wāḥidī, *op. cit.*, p.133. Lihat juga Muḥammad Fakhruddīn al-Rāzī, *op. cit.*, Juz VIII, p. 145.

According to Muḥ Ammad Mutawallī al-Sya'rāwī (1912 AD), the test is called *balāan ḥasanan* (good test), if: 1) a person can take lessons and wisdom from each *al-balā'* which afflicts; 2) someone who has been hit by *al-balā'* can face it with patience; 3) someone who is tested can pass it; 4) someone is able to accept the level and level of Allah sincerely.²³ While al-Imām Fakhuddīn al-Rāzī understands that the test intended in this clause is a test of the great pleasures of worldly life, which include: the pleasure of victory in the war that Muslims obtain for the help of Allah swt.; favor in the form of obtaining large amounts of goods; and they get high rewards beside Him.²⁴ These favors are a test for Muslims to know: 1) that how many of Allah's blessings have been bestowed upon them; 2) the truth and certainty of His promises; 3) people who are grateful for Allah's blessings that have been bestowed on them; and 4) the extent of Allah's help to the Muslims and how much large amounts of goods they have obtained.²⁵

Therefore, the name *balāan ḥasanan* is meant in verse 17, the surah al-Anfāl above, is the pleasures of life bestowed by Allah swt. to the Muslims in the Battle of Badr, which includes: 1) a glorious victory that determines the fate of Islam and Muslims in the future; 2) opening the door to the glory of Islam and Muslims in the future; 3) the number of ganimah goods obtained; and 4) the acquisition of many rewards and high rewards at His side.

The causes of disasters should not be addressed as limited to ordinary natural events (*sunnatullah*), because besides he descends on the basis of permission and the will of Allah,²⁶ (QS al-Tagabûn/64: 11), also occurs due to human²⁷ sins²⁸ (QS al-A'rāf/7: 163), including because it opposed the prophets and messengers of Allah, and because social control in the midst of society was weak.²⁹

In that case, efforts to prevent it are confirmed in QS al-Anfāl/8: 25, which is the translation, “*And avoid the torment that does not happen to the wrongdoers among you in particular, and know that Allah is very severe in His torment*”.

This verse basically commemorates mankind, moreover the fact shows that not a few disasters come in the midst of the people, due to humans ignoring the call of Allah and His Messenger, which in reality if the disaster falls, not only wrongdoers (who violate and are reluctant to allow the call of the Apostle Allah swt.) was affected, but also included people who had been good and obedient to Allah and His Messenger. In this case, this verse at the same time implies that in order to prevent the arrival of various disasters in the midst of society, it is demanded that everyone promote and enforce amar ma'rū f and nahi munkar, and

²³ *Tafsīr al-Sya'rāwī*, *op. cit.*, Juz VIII, p.4619.

²⁴ See al-Imām Muḥammad Fakhruddīn al-Rāzī, *op. cit.*, Juz VIII, p.145-146.

²⁵ See *Tafsīr al-Munīr*, *op. cit.*, Juz IX, p. 278-279.

²⁶ See Abū Fāris, *op. cit.*, p.15-16. Selanjutnya, lihat Harun Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran-aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan* (Cet.V; Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press, 1986), p.98-99.

²⁷ See al-Imām al-Baidāwī, *op. cit.*, Juz II, p. 21. Lihat juga Sayyid Quṭb, *op. cit.*, Juz III, p. 1383.

²⁸ See Ibn 'Āsyūr, *op. cit.*, Jilid V, Juz X, p. 223. Lihat juga Syekh Muḥammad Mutawallī al-Sya'rāwī, *al-Sabr 'Inda al-Muṣībah*, (Bair-t: Dār al-Fikr, 1992), p. 23.

²⁹ See *Al-Mishbāh*, *op. cit.*, Juz XIV, p. 276.

that the implementation is more effective and more beneficial, should be carried out jointly, coordinated by an institution or organization built with the intention of Allah (QS Alu 'Imrān/3: 104).

Preventive efforts and disaster management in the perspective of the Qur'an have been guided as follows: first, war on the perpetrators of sin and immorality (QS al-Anfāl/8: 39-40) in a professional, planned, and sustainable manner; second, a lot of *praying* and *istigfār*³⁰ (QS Shād/38: 24-25), both when it is overwritten and before; third, the use and mastery of information technology and telecommunications (QS Muḥammad/47: 31).

3. Disaster forms and objects

The forms of disaster in the Qur'an³¹, in general, are two, namely: the suffering of life and spaciousness of life³², (Surah Al-Anbiyā/21: 35).

a. Disasters in the form of difficulties in life.

Disasters in the form of *al-maṣā'ib* (various difficulties in life), including: lack of assets, death, illness, loss of something, natural disasters or earthquakes, and so on. These disasters require patience and willingness to accept the existence and level of Allah swt.

History has noted that the former people got trials in the form of calamities and doom, because they committed immorality, defiance of the teachings of Allah, denied their prophets, insulted and harassed the shari'ah of Allah which was carried by the prophets and messengers. Even they make their own god and teachings (Shari'at).³³

The dialectical relationship between microcosm creatures and macrocosm creatures is mostly described in the Qur'an, for example: rain which was a bearer of mercy (Surat al-An'ā m [6]: 99), suddenly becomes a source of flood disaster destroy the area of life (Surat al-Baqarah [2]: 59). The mountains that had become *pasak bumi* (QS al-Nabā/78: 7), suddenly spewed out dust, hot lava, and poisonous gas (QS al-Mursalat/77: 10). The wind that had previously distributed clouds (Surat al-Baqarah: 164) and caused pollination in the world of plants (Surat al-Kahf/18: 45), suddenly appeared so ferocious that it ruined everything that was passed (QS Fuṣṣilāt/41: 16). The sea, which was once surrendering to serve human mobility (QS al-Hajj/22: 65), suddenly went berserk and rolled up whatever it was going on (Surat al-Takwīr/81: 6), and so on.

In the historical viewpoint, the previous people before the Prophet Muhammad sent, doom is a torment aimed at those who transgress, such as: the stubborn people of Noah who were tinged with various tyrants (Surah al-Najm/53: 52), were destroyed by massive floods and perhaps the first tsunami wave in the

³⁰See *al-Mufradāt fī Garīb*, *op. cit.*, p.364.

³¹See Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah, *Hikmah al-Ibtilā'* (Cet.V; al-Qāhirah-Miṣr: Dār al-Salām, 1419 H/1999 M), p. 50-52.

³²See Ab- Fāris, *op. cit.*, p.20-41. Selanjutnya, lihat Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Syāyī, *op. cit.*, p. 47-61.

³³See Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Abu Fāris, *al-Ibtilā' wa al-Miḥan fī al-Da'wāt*, (Amman-Yordaniyyah: Dār al-Tawzi' wa al-Nasyr al-Islāmiyyah, 1990), p. 81-82.

history of the humans (Surah Hūd/11: 40); the people of Prophet Syu'aib who were full of corruption and fraud (QS al-A'rāf/7: 85, QS Hūd/11: 84-85) were destroyed with an earthquake that blared and died (QS Hūd/11: 94); the people of Prophet Saleh who were kufr and hit by hedonism, and the excessive love of the world (QS al-Syūrā/26: 146-149) were destroyed by an endemic viral malignancy and followed by an earthquake (QS Hūd/11: 67-68); The people of Prophet Luth were plagued with immorality and sexual deviation (Surah Hūd/11: 78-79) destroyed with a massive earthquake (Surah Hūd/11: 82); the Yemeni ruler, King Abraha who tried to take over the Ka'bah as part of his ambition to monopolize all economic sources, was also destroyed in a pathetic manner as described in (QS al-Fīl/105: 1-5), and so on.

Thus, the forms of disasters that have befallen past people, among others, including: (1) flash floods/tsunamis; (2) powerful natural disasters in the form of thunderous sounds; (3) terrible landslides; (4) animal viruses that transmit to humans horribly; (5) deadly bacteria carried by insects, as directed to Abraha and his troops.³⁴

b. Disasters are life pleasures, including:

- a. Disaster in the form of al-amwāl (property, QS al-Kahf/18: 7-8),³⁵ which is the decoration and human needs of life in the world, including: lack of wealth, loss of something, or in the form of zakat obligations and giving alms; and in terms of how to obtain and how to use it, all of which will be held accountable in front of Allah.³⁶
- b. Disaster concerning *al-anfus* (self or soul, Surah Ali 'Imrān/3: 186)],³⁷ all human beings will experience it, either in the form of wounds and pain due to war, or the persecution of the enemy, or in the form of diseases, loss soul (dead);³⁸ as well as on abstract things, such as the tendency of the soul to follow lust and other excessive worldly delights, which when satan/evil dwells in it, he mostly encourages evil and does what is forbidden.³⁹
- c. Disaster in the form of al-aulād (children, QS al-Anfāl/8: 28), not only when parents are motivated by love so that they violate, but also the position of children as Allah's mandate. He tested humans through his children, in order to nurture them actively in several ways: (1) educating and developing the potential of children well so that they become godly people in the world and in the hereafter; (2) fulfilling their life and inner needs; and (3) prioritizing patience and resilience when they are struck by a disaster, for example, the death of the child.⁴⁰

³⁴See Syaikh Muhammad 'Abduh, *Tafsir Juz' 'Ammah*, (Miṣr: Dār al-Matābi' al-Sya'b, t.th.), p. 107.

³⁵K.H. Ali Yafic, "Falsafah Sakit Sebagai Cobaan," dalam M. Quraish Shihab (et al.), *Sakit Menguatkan Iman* (Cet.I; Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996), p. 3.

³⁶See, Aḥmad bin Fāris bin Zakariyā, *op. cit.*, p.969.

³⁷See Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, p.2377-2378.

³⁸See, Fakhrud-dīn Muḥammad al-Rāsī, *op. cit.*, Juz IX, p.127-131.

³⁹See, Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī, *op. cit.*, Juz VI, 336-337.

⁴⁰See Abu Ja'far Muḥammad bin Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, (w.310 H), *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān*, Juz III, di-*taḥqīq* oleh 'Imād Zakī al-Bārūdī, (al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Taufīqiyyah, 2004), p. 406.

The object of the intended disaster is the concepts that are targeted, so that disasters are sent down by Allah both individually and collectively. From the verses that are relevant to this problem, we can see several disaster objects, namely:

- a. Humans in general with all attitudes and behavior (birth and mind),⁴¹ Muslims or non-Muslims (QS. Al-Insan (98)/76: 2).
- b. Believers, including prophets and messengers of Allah and orphans (QS. Al-Anfal/8:17).

Of course also need to know that the subject of disaster that can be understood from the verses of the Qur'an includes: Allah Himself as the perpetrator of the disaster and His creatures in the form of humans, namely the caregivers of orphans who have been commanded by Allah to test the orphans' abilities and intelligence first in managing their property. If they are able to process it well, then the assets will be handed over to them.

4. Functions and purposes of the disaster

Disaster descends not empty wisdom and messages, even it always goes down by carrying a number of functions. The function of the disaster is intended, among others:

- a. as divine education and consolation towards humans (QS. Al-Anfal/8:17.).
- b. as mercy (QS al-A'rāf/7: 156) for believers, as the Prophet said, which means (historical hadith) from Anas bin Mālik r.a. said: I have heard the Messenger of Allah. said: "Verily, Allah says, when I test my servant with the function of a pair of senses that he loves, then he is patient, then I replace both of them with heaven (Narrated by al-Imam al-Bukhari).
- c. as a warning⁴² to return to the truth⁴³ (Surah al-Baqarah/2: 49) and *kaffārāt* (Surah Ali Imrā n [3]: 154) for sinners. According to Sayyid Quṭb (1906 AD), the exams experienced by the Muslims in the battle of Uhud functioned to dilute what was in the heart so that it could be removed from the heart all sins and blemishes in the form of falsehood, in order to reveal their essence without being nothing forced.
- d. as doom (Surah al-A'rāf/7: 141) for those who are unjust and transgress. Disasters that are negative, if they are aimed at wrongdoers and transgress, they function as a punishment for them.

The results of the research on the function of the disaster above is one form of new findings in this reseach, because it is able to reduce the understanding of society so far regarding disasters, which are considered as something negative and frightening, even as God's wrath. In fact, in the insights of the Qur'an, disasters that are responded to properly and correctly can turn out to be mercy, becoming a method of strategic education and divine enlightenment for His servants, at least, as a warning for sinners to return to the right path. Even though, it is indeed sometimes

⁴¹See Ibn Taimiyyah, *al-Tafsīr al-Kāmil*, Juz VIII, di-*taḥqīq* oleh Ab- Sa'īd 'Umar al-Amrawī (Cet. I; Baer-t: Dār al-Fikr, 1423 H/2002 M), p. 13.

⁴²See Sayyid Quṭb, *op. cit.*, Juz III, p. 1386-1387.

⁴³See Maḥmūd Ṣāfi, *op. cit.*, Juz I, p. 123.

a punishment, if the one who is struck by the disaster is the perpetrator of the crime as happened to the people of the prophets before the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad.

The purpose as seen in QS. Ali Imran/3: 140, 141, and 154. From these three verses, it can be drawn, that the purpose of the disaster was revealed by Allah to humans as stated in the verses above, are: (a) To know the level of human faith⁴⁴ (QS Ali Imrān/3: 154). Faith that is acquired by man, steady or fragile, successful or failed, in this world, must be experienced by all humans in all ages. Therefore, humans should not grumble in the face of every disaster that comes, moreover humans are not given enough knowledge to know God's overall plan; (b) to make man as His martyr⁴⁵ (QS Ali Imrān/3: 140); (c) to elevate humanity to a more noble level; (d) to purify the soul and cleanse human beings; (e) to find out the Mujahidin and adherents⁴⁶ (QS Muḥammad/47: 31); (f) to know the best deeds (QS Hūd/11: 7); and (g) to distinguish between obedient and disobedient to Allah (Surat al-Mā'idah/5: 94) with those who are kufr and disobedient.

5. Human attitudes toward disasters.

Human attitudes toward disasters, at least, are of three kinds, namely: those directly affected, those who are not directly affected, and specifically attitudes towards natural disasters.

a. The attitude of humans who are directly affected by disasters, according to the guidance of the Qur'an is as follows:

1) Patience, as in QS al-Baqarah/2: 155.

Patience in this paragraph is intended to be the ability to control oneself in the face of all kinds of disasters,⁴⁷ whether in the form of takā lī f (religious obligations), encouragement of hawanafsu, property, children, and various disasters, and willing to accept Allah's kada and qadar (levels), for expecting the best from Allah.⁴⁸ The implementation of the patient attitude referred to the paragraph above, among others, is in the form of saying "innā li-Allah wa innā ilaihi rā ji'ū n" (Surat al-Baqarah/2: 156). This expression is not enough verbally, but also with the heart and real actions professionally. Even suggested after saying al-istirjā 'to recite prayers: *Allahumma ajirni fī muṣ ī batī wakhluf lī khaha minhā*, (O Allah give me rewards from calamities that befall me and give me more substitutes better than that).

b. The attitude of people who are not directly affected by disasters, such as in QS Muḥammad/47: 4.

⁴⁴See Ibn 'Āsyūr, *op. cit.*, Jilid II, Juz IV, p.139. Selanjutnya, lihat Muḥammad Maḥmūd Hijāzī, *op. cit.*, Jilid I, p.297.

⁴⁵It is also means *al-huḍūr ma'a al-musyāhadah*. Lihat *al-Mufradāt fī Garīb*, *op. cit.*, p.271.

⁴⁶M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Quran: Tafsir Maudhu'i atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat* (Cet. I; Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 1996), p.501. Than, see Ibn 'Āsyūr, *op. cit.*, Jilid II, Juz IV, p.107.

⁴⁷Lihat Majmā al-Lugāt al-'Arabiyyah, *Mu'jam Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Jilid II, (al-Qāhirah: al-Haiyah al-Miṣriyyah al-'Ammah li al-Ta'lif wa al-Nasyr, 1390 H/1970 M), p.52.

⁴⁸Lihat Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī, *Mahāsīn al-Ta'wīl*, Juz III, (t.tp.: Dār Ihyā al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah, 1376 H/1957 M), p.394.

This verse recognizes that humans are social beings, who come from one species (QS al-Nisā'/4: 1), then reproduce through marital relations, form small families which then, increase to a large family (QS al-Furqān/25: 54), then continues to develop in terms of ethnicity, race, and nation (QS al-Hujurāt/49: 13) and establish social interactions in various field of life (QS al-Zukhruf/43: 32). This interaction can not only be fostered among fellow Muslims, but can also break down the walls, family, class, ethnic, racial, national and religious boundaries. The Qur'an does not prevent Muslims from fostering social relations with non-Muslims.

In connection with this, the attitude of a believer that should have been carried out against those affected by the disaster is;

- 1) giving advice to those affected by disasters so that they are always in faith and patience;
- 2) visiting him, if the disaster is a disease;
- 3) Donating to help people affected by the disaster. This was instructed with the intention of alleviating the heavy burden they suffered.

c. Human attitudes specifically towards natural disasters.

Disasters such as earthquakes / natural disasters (Surat al-Aḥzāb/33: 1) can be understood from this verse. This verse provides additional understanding of the information contained in the previous verses. The above verse explains that the picture of the great events that took place in the Khandak war, whose influence and response of acceptance varied among Muslims, which in essence, were complete and detailed trials for them, to see those who truly believed and who hypocritical clearly and without doubt.⁴⁹

The word natural disaster or earthquake, usually taken from the Arabic word *zalzalah* (زَلْزَلَةٌ) which means shock or earthquake. This term is taken from the root word *zalla* (زَلَّ), which means the subject "falls slipped."⁵⁰

*Zalzalāh*⁵¹ means this verse is a shock or earthquake before the doomsday, and shortly before the sun rises from the west. Actually the one who moves and who shakes is the earth along with the other planets, but this verse attributes the shock to the end. This is because the shock or earthquake is a sign of the coming of the end, or occurs at the time of the end. It is also possible that the word *zalzalah* in this verse is understood in the sense of soul shock due to the awesomeness and horrors that occur before or at the end of the world.⁵²

According to al-Sya'rāwī (1912 AD), earthquakes or natural disasters are derived from the Arabic word *zalzalah*, which according to the language, has a repetitive arrangement, the letters *zai and lām* are repeated twice, so that it is

⁴⁹See Sayyid Qu'āb, *op. cit.*, Juz V, p.2837. Than see Muḥammad al-Zamakhsyār³, *op. cit.*, Juz III, p.511-512. See also, al-Biqā'³, *op. cit.*, Ju XV, p. 303-304.

⁵⁰See Aḥmad bin Fāris bin Zakariyā, *op. cit.*, p.452.

⁵¹See Muḥammad al-Zamakhsyār³, *op. cit.*, Juz III, p.138.

⁵²See *Al-Mishbāh*, *op. cit.*, Juz IX, p. 6-7.

closely related to the meaning of the vocabulary, namely "shake right, left, face and back repeatedly".⁵³

In the view of geologists, earthquakes are a shift that occurs in the skin of the earth because of the turmoil in the bowels of the earth, volcanic rocks rise to the surface, causing intense vibrations. At that time, volcanic and lava stones spilled from the bowels of the earth in various directions, so that the earth's stomach was very hot. Fortunately, humans are on the surface of the earth, so they don't feel the heat of the earth's stomach. Even though, according to them, earthquakes are natural phenomena that cannot be predicted when they occur, because they are out of the original regulation, like the rotation of the earth, humans as earthlings do not feel the slightest that the earth rotates continuously.⁵⁴

The Qur'an has hinted at the above essence to humans, as His word in Surah al-Anbiyā/21: 31. The word *rawāsiya* in the verse above means "mountains that are very sturdy"⁵⁵ They were made into the pegs of the earth so the earth would not move. From here, it can be seen that the earth was created in motion, so that it needed a number of pegs to strengthen it.

The ignorance of humans when an earthquake will occur, in essence, holds great wisdom for healthy-minded humans, among them, they are always careful and vigilant in life so that they do not die in a state of sin or immorality; also a warning to them to correct various weaknesses, so that they can hurry to repent and return to Allah. Losses caused by natural disasters are actually not mere losses, but at the same time provide valuable lessons for humans to always be alert, if they want to survive and succeed in the world and in the hereafter.

Therefore, the piety ordered in the first verse of the surah al-Hajj above is due to the existence of *zalzalah*, namely the awesomeness of the shock of natural disasters before the coming of the Day of Judgment, both physically and spiritually, where everyone will feel fear and worry. Even for those who are not cautious, their worries continue without stopping accompanied by terrible torments.⁵⁶

The coupling of *al-balā* and *al-zalzalah* above, also implies a close relationship between earthquakes or natural disasters with the shock of the soul. Both have similarities, namely shock and vibration. Verse 11, surah al-Aḥzāb above, in its essence, tells of a great event that took place in the war of Khandak. At that time, Muslims were besieged by enemy forces from all directions consisting of a unit of Quraysh troops led by leaders Abu Sufyan ibn Harb and the forces of Gatfan were led by Uyainah Hisin, including the Fazara tribe and the Banu Murrāh, as well as the Jews who took part in defending them. Fortunately, Muslims managed to dig large trenches, so they could fortify them from the invasion of enemies that surrounded the Muslim community. At that time, Muslims felt pinched from their

⁵³See Syekh Muḥammad Mutawalli al-Sya'rāwī, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁵⁴See Zaglūl Rāgib Muḥammad al-Najjār, *al-Zalāzil fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Cet.I; al-Qāhirah-Miṣr: al-Idārat al-'Ammat li al-Nasyr, 2007 M), p. 97.

⁵⁵See Muḥammad al-Syauqāni, *op. cit.*, p. 934.

⁵⁶See Maḥm-d al-Nasafī, *op. cit.*, Jilid II, p.104. than see Zagl-l Rāgib Muḥammad al-Najjār (1933 M), *al-Zalāzil fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, (Cet. I; al-Qāhirah-Miṣr: al-Idārah al-'immah li al-Nasyr, 2007), p. 55-56.

upper and lower directions, so that among them, there were those who prejudiced Allah and His Messenger, they were hypocrites. One of them was named Mi'tab ibn Qusyair, until he said: "Muhammad promised us that someday we would gain the property of the Persian Emperor and Roman Emperor, in fact today, we are surrounded by enemy forces from all directions, so that no one even among us who feel safe to defecate."⁵⁷

Those are the patience and true belief in Allah, which is in the hearts of believers, so that they come out victorious and reach Allah's pleasure and help, even though exams come after each other, there are even some tests that make the view blurred and the heart became crowded, as happened and faced by the believers in the Khandak war.

Violations of the verses of kauniyyah has direct on humans in the world, sometimes even immediately. For example, a person who accidentally dips his hand in boiling hot water will experience intense pain and blistering skin because it has violated the rules of tolerance of skin and human flesh to heat, or in other words has violated the laws of nature that govern tolerance of skin tissue and human muscle to heat. While sanctions given by God to people who violate the verse qauliyyah, have a longer grace period than violations of the verses of kauniyyah. Such sanctions can be felt since in the world and in the hereafter, which is not imagined by humans when they occur, but will certainly occur.

In the perspective of layout and conservation, the disaster-prone areas mentioned above are not suitable to be used as human activity sites (cultivation areas), but are more suitable to be used as conservation areas, namely as coastal border areas if they are on the beach, river border areas if there is a river bank, a conservation forest area if it is found in a valley or an erosion-prone foot or mountain ridge or is prone to volcanic eruptions.⁵⁸

C. Conclusion

This research finds several conclusions as a result of scientific studies that have been carried out, as follows:

1. This study found that in a scientific-specific perspective of disaster semiotics in the Qur'an, disasters are essentially negative things about the human self, such as: illness, loss of trade transactions, loss of goods, loss of someone from loved ones, earthquakes, tsunamis, failed in the local elections or presidential elections, and the like.
2. The main factor in the presence of various disasters in human life is the behavior of irresponsible human hands, including acts of crime (sin) of humans that are carried out consciously and planned as well as violations of the laws of causality established by Allah SWT. The solution is to enforce the laws of causality of God Almighty, and leave all forms of crime by enforcing amar ma'ruf nahi munkar in

⁵⁷See Syekh Muḥammad Mutawalli al-Sya'rāw³, *op. cit.*, p.23. than see Ismā'īl Ibn Kašīr, *op. cit.*, Juz III, p. 473.

⁵⁸Haeruddin, "Memaknai Bencana Alam Menurut Alquran" *Fajar*, No. 105 Tahun ke-30, 14 Januari 2011, p. 4.

- the midst of massively responsible and professional societies, and together and collaborating between the government and the community.
3. This research succeeded in reducing the understanding of the people who viewed disaster as something negative and was the wrath of Almighty Allah, frightening; it becomes a positive and wonderful thing, namely that if it is addressed properly and correctly, it can turn into an infinite grace, guidance and method of divine education in increasing human dignity to a more dignified and noble position.
 4. The results of this research show how much the usefulness and effect of reducing disasters to humans in the perspective of the Qur'an, which can have an impact on the birth of knowledge, awareness, and love and affection, so that living as individuals and as members of society interact with the environment becoming more refined, creative, and highly dignified, both on the side of fellow humans and in the presence of Almighty Allah.
 5. The results of this research can be a major contribution to humanity, because human life in essence is a trial for themselves and their environment. This is not realized by most of humanity, so that in navigating the sea of their lives, they cause disaster not only for themselves, but also for their environment. The insubordination of Almighty Allah, which is manifested in various forms of deviation and defiance of His teachings and rules, is the result of the unconsciousness of human beings regarding the nature of this life. Therefore, disaster as a form of concepts contained in the Qur'an is important to be understood correctly, internalized, and earthed in the community.

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