



## The Concept of Istidraj in the Qur'an

(Comparative Study of the Interpretation of Al-Imam Al-Qurtubi and Shaikh Wahbah Al-Zuhaily)

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**Abstract** Happiness is one of the natural attitudes of humans when getting a lot of pleasure from Allah SWT, such as health and sustenance. However, not many of humans are correct in responding to these blessings, pleasures that are not properly addressed are termed *istidraj*. *Istidraj* is a punishment given by Allah SWT to the perpetrators of immorality in the form of worldly pleasures that seem beautiful but cause negligence in the real world. Therefore, it is necessary to be aware of *istidraj* as a sign of caution in order to avoid immoral acts. The phenomenon of *istidraj* in this study explores the concept of this in the Qur'an through the perspective of two mufasirs, namely al-Imam al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily in answering 2 focuses, namely: 1. How to interpret *istidraj* in the Qur'an according to al-Imam al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily 2. What are the similarities and differences between al-Imam al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily regarding *istidraj*. To understand the concept of *the istidraj phenomenon*, this study applies a qualitative method of literature study with a comparative study approach. In this approach, the researcher compares the interpretation of al-Imam al-Qurtubi through the tafsir "Al-Jami' li al-Ahkam al-Qur'an" with the interpretation of Wahbah al-Zuhaily through the tafsir "Al-Tafsir al-Munir". The researcher examined the interpretation data from the two mufasirs related to *the concept of istidraj*. A comparative approach is used to gain a deeper understanding and see the differences and similarities in the views of the two towards *istidraj*. As for the results of this research, al-Qurtubi sees *istidraj* as a gradual punishment process for those who deny the verses of Allah SWT. Wahbah al-Zuhaily sees it as a gift of favor or success. Both mufasirs agree that *istidraj* involves giving pleasure as a test of Allah. The difference in interpretation lies in the context of the object of *istidraj*. al-Zuhaily emphasizes his interpretation on the test of a servant, while al-Qurtubi emphasizes the interpretation of *istidraj* on slow withdrawal as punishment.

**Keywords:** Istidraj, Al-Qur'an, Comparative

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an is a holy book containing the words of Allah SWT, which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, with the intermediary of *al-Amin*, namely the angel Gabriel AS (al-Sabuni, 2016). The words of Allah SWT are neatly arranged in *mus{h}af-mushaf* and reach Muslims in a *mutawatir* manner. It begins with *surah al-fatihah* and ends with *surah al-Nas* (al-Sabuni, 2016).

Allah SWT presents the Qur'an as a gift to Muslims to be a guide and guide for life. Humans are led to be good servants, because of the many things that humans have to face during their lifetime (al-Qardawi, 1999). As Allah SWT says in QS. Al-Hashr : 18

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ.

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and let everyone pay attention to what he has done for tomorrow (the hereafter), and fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is very careful about what you do (Ministry of the Republic of Indonesia, 2000).."

Thus, the Qur'an is comprehensive as a guideline and stipulation in providing scientific information on legal, social, commands, prohibitions. In fact, the enjoyment and threat to the obedient and rebellious people in this world and in the hereafter (al-Kaf, et al., 2004).

This is illustrated in the enjoyment in the world that Allah SWT presents, namely to increase the obedience of a servant to Him. Although, at any time the form of pleasure in the world can be the cause of the decline in obedience to Allah SWT. In an example of what is considered a pleasure and brings goodness according to a servant, it does not necessarily bring good (Musyfiqah, 2018). As Allah SWT says in QS al-Baqarah: 216

وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"But it may be that you do not like something, but it is good for you, and it may be that you like something, but it is not good for you. Allah knows, but you do not know."

The form of pleasure in the world can bring good and bad to a servant. Allah SWT brings pleasure in the world so that it can be used to increase obedience to Him. Pleasure that brings goodness must be in line with the grace of Allah SWT. However, if the blessing is not used to get closer to Allah SWT, it means that the blessing will be *istidraj* (Supriyanto, 2020).

In a *hadith*, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH said:

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا رَشِيدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى بْنِ سَعْدِ بْنِ أَبِي الْحَجَّاجِ الْمَهْرِيُّ عَنْ حَزْمَةَ بِنْتِ عِمْرَانَ التَّجِيبِيِّ عَنْ عُقْبَةَ بْنِ مُسْلِمٍ عَنْ عُقْبَةَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَ اللَّهَ يُعْطِي الْعَبْدَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى مَعْاصِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ اسْتِدْرَاجٌ ثُمَّ تَلَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا دُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ (حَتَّى إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ) (رواه الإمام أحمد)

"Narrated to us Yahya bin Ghailan, he said: Narrated to us Risydin bin Sa'd Abu al-Hajjaj al-Mahri, from Harmalah bin Imran at-Tujibi, from 'Uqbah bin Muslim, from 'Uqbah bin 'Amir, from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he said: "If you contemplate how Allah gives the pleasure of the world to those who commit immorality according to their wishes, it is only a form of Istidraj (deception of Allah). Then the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم of Allah recited the verse: "(If they ignore the warning that has been given to them, then We will open all the doors of pleasure for

*them. However, when they were delighted with what had been given, we suddenly inflicted torture on them, so that they became silent and despaired.)* (HR. Imam Ahmad)."

From the *hadith hasan* above, the pleasure that Allah SWT gives to the perpetrators of immorality who ignore the warnings of Allah SWT, then the pleasure will turn into *istidraj* that keeps away from the values of obedience to Allah SWT. In fact, it is mentioned 2 times in the Qur'an, namely in al-A'raf verse 182 and al-Qalam verse 44

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

*"And those who deny Our Signs, Later We will draw them gradually (towards destruction), in a way they do not know."*

فَذَرْنِي وَمَنْ يُكَذِّبُ بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

*"So leave it to Me and those who deny this word. In the future, We will punish them gradually from a direction they do not know."*

From the two verses above, it can be understood that Muslims who deny the verses of the Qur'an with immoral behavior, but Allah SWT still gives worldly pleasures, then this is *istidraj*. In one of the opinions of the commentators, al-Imam Ahmad al-Mustafa al-Maraghi in his tafsir *al-Maraghi* : the word *istidraj* in the verse deceives, deceives, and makes negligence.

As happens in the social sphere, some people feel extraordinary pleasures ranging from the blessings of health, the blessings of sustenance and others. Then, with this, a person feels everything that Allah SWT presents and is used for negative things, of course it will make him far from the values of obedience to Allah SWT.

Some Muslims have an indifference to the form of pleasure that Allah SWT presents, as a good Muslim should have a feeling of humility and awareness that all pleasures from Allah SWT are only temporary gifts. *Istidraj* is a form of punishment that Allah SWT gives to the perpetrators of immorality in the form of worldly pleasures that change everything to look beautiful but will bring ugliness in the form of negligence (Yasa, 2022).

Allah SWT presents the Qur'an for Muslims so that it is always a guide in various aspects of life. Allah SWT repeatedly reminds humans to always take wisdom from whatever is a provision from Allah SWT. So as not to be tempted by worldly pleasures and have an

impact on *istidraj* (Furqan, et al, 2022). As Allah SWT says in the Qur'an in Surah al-An'am: 32

وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَلِلدَّارِ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ يُتَّقُونَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

"And there is no life in this world, apart from mere jokes and jokes. And indeed, the village of the hereafter is better for the pious people. Then don't you understand it?"

The above verse can be correlated to the impact of *istidraj*, because, it brings pleasure that is temporary and can distance you from obedience to Allah SWT to get a painful torment. Therefore, the games and jokes of the sentences "أَلْعِبُ" and "الْهَوُ" will apply to Muslims who ignore the provisions and words of Allah SWT.

The *istidraj* phenomenon is widely found in daily life. In fact, when you get pleasure, without any awareness of the deeds that have been done to distance yourself from obedience to Allah SWT. In one example of people who commit adultery or gamble, but they get pleasure and happiness (Nasution, 2023).

This means that discussions such as sinful deeds that have an impact on punishment in the world or calamities because of sins committed can be realized by anyone who experiences them. However, it will be different, if the consequences of this are like *istidraj* that comes with a pleasure that makes people negligent and increasingly trapped in sinful acts (Zubir, 2020).

Humans often show a tendency to be less sensitive in observing phenomena that appear and disappear in the course of life. In terms of *istidraj*, this condition can be seen as a form of punishment in the form of pleasure that comes from Allah SWT. As a result, only a few people are really aware of the manipulation of *istidraj* in aspects of life that are being lived (Jauhari, 2018).

So, in conducting research on the concept of *istidraj* in the Qur'an, the researcher made a comparison between classical and contemporary mufasir, namely: Imam al-Qurtubi with the book of tafsir *al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an* which has a background in various Islamic disciplines, including *fiqh* and *hadith*. In this case the style of *fiqhi* or focus on *fiqh*, It will provide a more comprehensive approach in understanding the concept of *istidraj*, because it will involve legal aspects and the context of life. and his interpretation has a tendency towards *the model of al-tafsir bi al-Ra'yi*. (Sholeh, 2018). This allows the researcher to refer to and analyze his views related to the concept of *istidraj* in more depth.

Meanwhile, Shaikh Wahbah al-Zuhaily with his book of tafsir *al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidat wa al-Shari'at wa al-Manhaj* he is a contemporary mufasir of a moderate and contextual approach to tafsir and he connects the message of the Qur'an with the current situation and

context. This is very relevant in the study of *istidraj*, which requires a contextual understanding, which is contained in the style of his tafsir, namely *adabi ijtima'i, fiqhi*, and *'ilmi* with the model of *al-Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur* (al-Zuhaili, et al., 2009).

Therefore, from the context of the above research, the researcher is interested in raising a theme with the title "The Concept of *Istidraj* in the Qur'an (a comparative study of the interpretation of Imam al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaili), both of whom are classical and contemporary mufasirs.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

### Research Approach and Type

The methodology in this study, the researcher uses a qualitative research approach of the type of research to the library (*Library research*). According to Dr. Muthadi Abd Mun'im, a qualitative approach is data expressed in the form of words, sentences, pictures, or charts that are not measured by numbers (Mun'im, 2013). According to Abdul Rahman Sholeh, it is to use the way to place facilities in the library, namely, books, magazines, documents, records of historical stories related to the title (Sholeh, 2005).

### Data Source

This study utilizes two types of data sources, namely primary and secondary sources, to provide a comprehensive framework. The main data sources provide direct insight from the research object, namely the book *Al-Jami' li al-Ahkam al-Qur'an* by al-Imam al-Qurtubi and *Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidat wa al-Shari'at wa al-Manhaj* by Shaikh Wahbah al-Zuhaili while secondary data sources support such as works related to the research context, both from literature, journals, books, and internet media related to the theme that is the focus of the research.

### Data collection techniques

Data collection in this study uses the literature study documentation method (Mahmud, 2011). Namely a series of activities related to the method of collecting library data, where the researcher tries to document data through literature studies related to the mufasir's view of *istidraj* specifically related to the problems discussed in the focus of the research, both in the form of findings from primary data and secondary data, then classifying the results of data findings with themes in each discussion (Mustaqim, 2014).

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### The concept of *Istidraj* al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily in the Qur'an

##### Interpretation of the Qurtubi on *Istidraj* in the Qur'an

Al-Qurtubi, in its commentary, elaborates on the meaning of QS. al-A'raf verse 182 as a warning from Allah SWT about the destiny of those who deny His verses.

.And do not be fooled by the fact that there is no such thing as a false one  
*"Those who deny Our Verses We will let them gradually (lead to destruction) from a direction they do not know."* (al-A'raf:182)

Ibn Abbas explained that what is meant by "*damir hum*" is "they" in this verse are the inhabitants of Mecca. In this verse, the phrase *سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ* which comes from the word "*Istidraj*" is interpreted as a process of attraction gradually from one level to another. The basic word, *درج* means something that is folded or rolled. He also said that there are other opinions that link *istidraj* with the word *دَرَجَةٌ*, which in this context indicates a gradual decline in degree (al-Qurtubi, 2006).

The Qurtubi goes on to say that there is a view that states, "Every human being who sins will have his enjoyment added". Once, a scholar was asked about the deception that often befalls people, and he replied, "with the best and the best". From this explanation, Allah SWT states that He will pull them towards destruction slowly in a way that they do not know. This is due to their ungratitude for the blessings given by Allah SWT (al-Qurtubi, et al., 2006).

Then Allah SWT said about *istidraj* in surah al-Qalam verse 44

فَدْرَنِي وَمَنْ يُكذِّبْ بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

*"Let me be with those who deny this word (the Qur'an). We will let them gradually (go to destruction) from a direction they do not know."* (al-Qalam:44)

In Surah al-Qalam verse 44, al-Qurtubi interprets that the sentence of the word of Allah SWT, "*فَدْرَنِي*" is interpreted as a command to let and leave all affairs to Him. In this situation, Allah SWT informed the Prophet Muhammad PBUH that the problem of those who deny the Qur'an, especially regarding the Day of Resurrection, is His responsibility 9 al-Qurtubi, et al., 2006).

This verse provides peace and support to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH by showing that Allah SWT will take care of and reward those who deny the Qur'an. Furthermore, it is stated, "سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ", which means, "Later We will gradually draw them towards destruction from a direction they do not know". This means that Allah SWT will come to them with negligence and destruction, while they are not aware of it. In this context, *the istidraj* of Allah SWT describes the punishment that comes slowly and unexpectedly for those who deny it. Some of the interpretations of scholars accepted by the Qurtubi, including the statement from Safyan al-Thauri which stated, "The meaning of the words of Allah SWT is that We will give them blessings, and We will also make them forget to be grateful". Al-Hasan also gave his opinion by stating, "The meaning of the word of Allah SWT is how many people are slowly drawn towards destruction through the giving of kindness to them. How many people are tested with the compliments given to them. How many people have been deceived by the protection given to them".

Al-Qurtubi details a view related to *istidraj* by revealing that the meaning of the word of Allah SWT is that He will withdraw them little by little, without giving sudden notice (al-Azhariy, et al., 2015). Al-Qurtubi's view of *istidraj* is that the concept basically has the meaning of moving from one condition to another, such as various stages. This concept is related to the word "دَرَجَةٌ" which means degree or position above position. In an example sentence, *istidraj* can be illustrated by the phrase "إِسْتَدْرَجَ فُلَانٌ فُلَانًا", which means that a person requests that the property or property owned by another person be removed gradually or slowly. Other examples include "دَرَجَهُ إِلَى كَذَا" and "إِسْتَدْرَجَهُ إِلَى كَذَا", both of which have the same meaning, which is to slowly bring it closer to something. In conclusion, *istidraj* can be related to "النَّدْرُجُ".

### **Wahbah al-Zuhaily's Interpretation of *Istidraj* in the Qur'an**

In Surah al-A'raf verse 182 and Surah al-Qalam verse 44, there is a concrete discussion about the phenomenon of *istidraj*, where Allah SWT states using similar words, namely "نَسْتَدْرِجُ". Wahbah al-Zuhaily, in his interpretation of these two verses, adopts a comprehensive approach. He analyzed the phenomenon of *istidraj* from several aspects, detailing the aspects contained in the text and the context of the sentence. His approach not only includes linguistic dimensions, but also involves contextual, historical, and legal dimensions. Thus, al-Zuhaily's interpretation provides a deep understanding of *the istidraj* points revealed in Surah al-A'raf and al-Qalam (al-Zuhaily, et al, 2009).

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

*"Those who deny Our signs We will let them lose gradually from a direction they do not know".*

In Wahbah al-Zuhaily's analysis of Surah al-A'raf verse 182, he explained that the sentence *سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ* in the verse is related to the previous sentence, namely *وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا* which refers to those who reject the signs of Allah SWT among the people of Mecca. al-Zuhaily interprets that the sentence describes a process of *istidraj*, where He slowly pulls them in, leading them level by step into the abyss of punishment, bringing them gradually closer to destruction. He emphasized that giving time by Him to them is part of Allah SWT's good and solid plan.

He explained from a historical point of view that *istidraj* is a scenario set by Allah SWT in response to the rejection of His word. The narration from Abi Hatim and Abu Shaikh Ibn Hayyan al-Ansari illustrates that Qatadah bin Dua'iamah narrated that the Prophet PBUH stood on the top of the Safa hill, summoned the Quraish one by one, trying to remind them of the punishment and torment of Allah SWT. However, the response from these people actually ridiculed the invitation of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, this was confirmed by the descent of verse 184.

Wahbah al-Zuhaily in his interpretation of Surah al-A'raf verse 182 states that those who experience *istidraj* are those whom Allah SWT allows to go astray, and then He slowly pulls them towards punishment without them realizing it. Furthermore, Allah SWT brings them closer to destruction by giving blessings, opening the door to sustenance, and facilitating the means of life every time they commit sins or mistakes. This causes them to become more arrogant, fall into corruption, continue to be misguided, and be tempted by various blessings and pleasures, as expressed by Allah SWT in verses 55-66 of Surah al-Mu'minun.

أَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ مَّالٍ وَبَنِينَ لِنُسَارِعَ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ بَلْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

*"Do they think that what We have given them is in the form of treasures and children". that means that) We hasten to give them the good? (Not so,) but they are not aware of it".*

and QS. al-An'am verses 44-45.

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ فَقَطَّعَ دَابِرَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ .



"So, when they neglect the warnings that have been given to them, We open the doors of all kinds of enjoyment for them. So, when they rejoice in the gifts, We torture them suddenly, and at that moment they become silent and despairing. Therefore, those who act cruelly are destroyed to the roots. All praise be to Allah, the Lord of hosts."

From a historical point of view, al-Zuhaily discusses that what is considered arrogance, such as in the events of the Battle of Badr, Khandaq, the liberation of the city of Mecca, and other battles, is actually the victory that Allah SWT gave to His Messenger. When the treasure from Kisra was brought before Umar, he prayed, "O Allah, I take refuge in You so that I may not be trapped, for I have heard You say, We will trap them from the way they do not know".

As for Allah SWT, it is said about *istidraj* in surah al-Qalam verse 44

فَدْرَنِي وَمَنْ يُكَدِّبْ بِهَذَا الْخَدِيثِ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"Allow Me to be with those who reject this truth (the Qur'an). Later We will let them lose gradually from a direction they do not know".

In surah al-Qalam, Wahbah al-Zuhaily's interpretation of *istidraj* has a correlation with the verses that were previously in surah al-A'raf verse 182. Although *istidraj* is conveyed in similar words, the context is slightly different. Wahbah al-Zuhaily explained that *the istidraj* mentioned in this verse is aimed at those who refuse to listen and practice the commands of Allah SWT. The verse begins with the sentence *فَدْرَنِي* which means "leave me", in the meaning of "let me" with those who reject the guidance of Allah SWT. *Istidraj* in this context is a form of neglect and neglect by Allah SWT towards those who reject His instructions. By combining elements of language and the context of the verse, Wahbah al-Zuhaily said that this *istidraj* is a form of neglect and retribution slowly against those who are reluctant to submit to His word (al-Zuhaili, et al., 2009).

In the historical context, Wahbah al-Zuhaily explained that Surah al-Qalam verse 44 is a form of motivation for the Prophet Muhammad PBUH who was struggling to spread the word of Allah SWT. This verse provides encouragement and reinforcement to the Prophet PBUH so that he does not feel sad or hopeless in his struggle, as experienced by the Prophet Yunus AS who prayed in a state of sadness and despair when fighting for the truth. This view shows that the verse not only provides moral guidance and motivation for the Prophet Muhammad SAW,

but also as a lesson not to get caught up in sadness and despair, along with the great task carried out by an apostle.

In this verse, *istidraj* is explained as the absolute right of Allah SWT which is proven through the beginning of the verse sentence which means "let me". This indicates that Allah SWT stipulates that those who reject His commands and righteousness will be left alone, and Allah SWT Himself will give *istidraj* punishment to this group. Wahbah al-Zuhaily interprets that those who reject this feel that they are right, when in fact they are in a despicable state. Thus, *istidraj* in this context is a form of punishment that Allah SWT gives gradually to those who reject His guidance and truth.

Based on Wahbah al-Zuhaily's interpretation of Surah al-Qalam, *istidraj* is seen as a mechanism of punishment or retribution from Allah SWT against those who reject His guidance and truth. This concept is reinforced by the opening words of the verse which shows that He decrees that those who refuse will be allowed to get what they want from a glory and pleasure, and the punishment of *istidraj* will be given gradually. This is considered to be the will of Allah SWT to punish directly, and this process reflects that those who refuse are actually harming themselves, even though they may feel right. This analysis provides an understanding that *istidraj* is not only a form of punishment, but also as a proof of His truth to those who reject Him.

### **Similarities and Differences of al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily About *Istidraj***

#### **Similarities of Interpreters of *Istidraj* al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily**

##### **a. Gradual Process**

Al-Imam al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily, both agreed that *istidraj* is a gradual process. *Istidraj* occurs slowly, providing an opportunity and opportunity for individuals to repent or realize the truth.

These two mufasirs agree that verse 45 in surah al-Qalam

وَأْمَلِي لَهُمْ إِنْ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ

"I gave them a grace period. Indeed, My plan is very firm." (al-Qalam:45)

Al-Qurtubi interprets this verse that in the context of the interpretation of *istidraj* there is a gradual process against the perpetrators of immorality so that this process becomes a way for a person to repent and realize that he has been blinded by pleasure.

Al-Zuhaily interprets that the word "أُمْلِي" is part of Allah SWT's plan so that every act of immorality and ingratitude for the blessings of Allah SWT can still be realized to repent and return to the right path.

#### **b. Withdrawal to Destruction:**

The main concept of *istidraj* is withdrawal or liberation towards destruction. The two scholars emphasized that those who reject the guidance of Allah SWT will experience consequences in the form of withdrawal or liberation which leads to the loss of the hereafter (al-Qurtubi, et al).

So this withdrawal to destruction is contained in both surah al-A'raf:182 and al-Qalam:44, then al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily agree that the word "سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ" is a withdrawal, but according to al-Qurtubi interpreting destruction in this context is to lead to the level and degree of a person who will be eliminated (al-Qurtubi, et al).

As for Wahbah al-Zuhaily, he interprets the withdrawal towards destruction leading to the pleasure that is being present and enjoyed by the perpetrators of immorality, then Allah SWT deliberately pulls the pleasure from an unexpected direction (al-Qurtubi, et al).

### **Differences in the Interpretation of *istidraj* al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily**

#### **a. Context and Focus of the Verse:**

Al-Imam al-Qurtubi and Wahbah al-Zuhaily understand *istidraj* in the context of different verses. Al-Imam al-Qurtubi specifically highlights verse 44 of Surah al-Qalam, which is related to the challenges faced by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and the response of Allah SWT to him (al-Qurtubi, et al). Meanwhile, Wahbah al-Zuhaily emphasized especially on QS. al-A'raf verse 182, which relates to the disbelief and denial of the previous ummah (al-Qurtubi, et al).

#### **b. The Role of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH**

Imam al-Qurtubi discussed the involvement of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH in facing the rejection of his people, especially in Surah Al-Qalam (al-Qurtubi, et al). Wahbah al-Zuhaily more generally discusses *istidraj* as a general phenomenon that can affect individuals who reject the guidance of Allah SWT (al-Qurtubi, et al).

#### **c. Giving Opportunities**

The concept of giving opportunities and openness to those who refuse is further explained by the Qurtubi, especially in Surah al-Qalam. The word "فَدْرَنِي" emphasizes resignation and

gives opportunities to individuals who reject the truth of the Qur'an, but this is not explained by Wahbah al-Zuhaily because he only explained that time in this context is a proclamation of time so that they are increasingly trapped in sinful behavior (al-Qurtubi, et al).

The researcher examined the past discussion, that the most relevant to be related to the meaning and interpretation of *istidraj* is the opinion of al-Qurtubi because his interpretation, especially in verses 44-45 in surah al-Qalam, interconnects the sentence "مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ" which means "from an unexpected direction" with the word in the verse after it, namely "أَمْ لِي". *istidraj* is a plan of punishment from Allah SWT in the form of withdrawal to destruction to the perpetrator of immorality, but He gives the perpetrator a long time so that he has the opportunity in the process of the presence of *istidraj* to repent to Him again.

### **Contextualization of *Istidraj* in Social Reality**

#### **1. Shirk**

Al-Qurtubi, *istidraj* which refers to a slow withdrawal towards destruction can be related to the phenomenon of shirk. Allah SWT can increase the error of a person who continues to deny His verses, providing an opportunity for the individual to continue living in confusion without realizing the true consequences.

Wahbah al-Zuhaily, *istidraj* can occur as a blessing to someone who likes to sin, aiming to mislead him. In the context of shirk, *istidraj* can involve giving pleasure as a test, so that individuals can be trapped in sin and error.

#### **2. Wicked**

Al-Qurtubi, the concept of a slow withdrawal towards destruction in *istidraj* can describe how some wicked actions can lead a person to loss and destruction gradually.

Wahbah al-Zuhaily, *istidraj* can be a supporting facility in carrying out negative actions, which ultimately harm oneself. Giving pleasure as a form of *istidraj* can be a tool to test the extent to which a person can fall into wicked deeds repeatedly.

#### **3. *Kufr al-Ni'mah***

Al-Qurtubi, *istidraj* as a slow withdrawal can reflect how a person who is not grateful for the blessings of Allah SWT can continue to live in limited understanding and indifference to the punishment that may be received.

Wahbah al-Zuhaily, not being grateful for the pleasure of Allah SWT can be part of *istidraj*, where the giving of blessings that should be a test or warning instead leads individuals to indifference to the truth of religion.

Thus, *istidraj* in the view of both can have a correlation with the discussion of shirk, wickedness, and kufr favor, all of which lead to misdirection, negative deeds, and ungratitude for the blessings of Allah SWT.

#### **4. COVER**

##### **Conclusion**

After the researcher understands the concept of *istidraj* in the Qur'an through the interpretation of Wahbah al-Zuhaily and al-Qurtubi, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. In the interpretation of the Qurtubi, *istidraj* is explained as a gradual process towards destruction for those who deny the verses of Allah. This process involves a gradual withdrawal from one level to another as a form of punishment for human ingratitude to the blessings of Allah SWT. Wahbah al-Zuhaily interprets *istidraj* as the giving of pleasure or success by Allah SWT, often as a test for individuals who are close to the truth. However, the emphasis is on ungrateful attitudes and the potential for abuse of pleasure in any form.
2. The two mufasirs agreed that *istidraj* involves giving pleasure as part of the test of Allah SWT. Both emphasized that this is a form of wisdom and testing, emphasizing that Allah SWT gives His blessings as a means to test and educate His servants. The main difference between the two views on *istidraj* lies in the different emphasis. Wahbah al-Zuhaily highlights the aspect of individual testing, while al-Imam al-Qurtubi highlights the concept of slow withdrawal as a punishment and consequence of heresy. This difference reflects their unique perspective on the dynamics of *istidraj* in human life.

##### **Suggestions**

To the readers of this research, it is hoped that the Qur'an and *Sunan Nabawiyah* as well as the fatwas of salaf and khalaf ahlusunnah scholars will be used as guidelines and handles, in order to avoid everything that can cause the presence of *istidraj* in life.

Researchers in the same direction, namely the concept of *istidraj*, are expected to conduct studies and development of other mufasir views, because each mufasir has a

uniqueness in studying something in general and will improve the quality of academic research, especially the study of the concept of *istidraj* in the Qur'an.

The researcher also hopes that this thesis will bring an academic and life benefit from the researcher and other academic communities, both within the scope of the Faculty of Da'wah and Ushuluddin and other scopes.

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