

## **STUDY OF THE BOOK OF TAFSIR MA'ALIM AT TANZIL BY AL BAGHAWI**

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### **ABSTRACT**

There are verses in the Qur'an that we can understand directly, and there are those that require further explanation. To make it easier to understand what the Qur'an conveys, we need interpretations from experts. So understanding the matter of interpretation is a step that should not be skipped by a Muslim. Therefore, in this article, the author wants to dissect one of the products of interpretation, namely Ma'alim At-Tanzil by Al-Baghawy. This article aims to dissect the book of interpretation by Ma'alim At-Tanzil by explaining various aspects of the book. The author uses the literature study method to collect the data needed for this writing. This article will describe, starting from the background of writing the book of interpretation, the method of interpretation, the style of interpretation, the characteristics of the book, the way of presentation used by Al-Baghawy, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the book. The results explain that this monumental book of interpretation is very closely related to linguistic and fiqh features; also, Al-Baghawy, in his interpretation, combines the methods of interpretation bil ma'tsur and bil ra'yi. The Ma'alim At-Tanzil has many advantages and only a few shortcomings that do not damage the results of its interpretation.

**Keywords: Interpretation, Al-Baghawy, Qur'an.**

## A. INTRODUCTION

Al-Qur'an is (*kalamullah*) the revelation of Allah to the Prophet Muhammad through the Jibril (*ruh al-amin*), which took approximately twenty-two years to complete. As a Muslim, you should realize the importance of understanding that the Qur'an is not just a holy book. but also as an ideological, scientific, and human basis for behaving as a human being who has God. Departing from this awareness, a science called the science of interpretation was born.

The interpretation of the Qur'an, which is written in Arabic, has developed rapidly. This is shown by the birth of various works of interpretation, both during the *al-mutaqaddimin* era and during the *al-mutaakhirin* period, up to the present modern era. Of course, each of these commentary works has different methods, patterns, and interpretation techniques. Likewise with the systematic arrangement and style of language used.

The book of Ma'alim at-Tanzil commentary by Imam al-Baghawi is one of the well-known works of interpretation. Which of these interpretations included classic commentary books written to meet the needs of the people of his time, especially students and friends who asked him to write a complete interpretation of the Qur'an and refer to the Prophet ﷺ.

We wrote this paper with the aim of parsing one of the books of exegesis, namely Ma'alim al-Tanzil by al-Baghawi. This interpretation is a summary (*mukhtashar*) of al-Kasyf wa al-Bayan's "A Tafsir Al-Qur'an by Al-Tsa'labi" about the methodology used by al-Baghawi in interpreting the Qur'an.

## B. TINJAUAN PUSTAKA

This research will dissect various aspects of the book Ma'alim At-Tanzil, which was studied by Abdul Ghafur in his thesis entitled "*Al-Baghawiy Wa Manhajuhu Fi Al-Tafsir.*" This article also quotes Al-Baghawy's own writings from his interpretation book, Ma'alim At-Tanzil, to explain the book's background. Lina Sofy's writing, "Kajian Kitab Tafsir Ma'alim Al Tanzil Karya Al Baghawi", will be quoted to add to the explanation of the Ma'alim At-Tanzil's characteristics.

## C. METODE

This study uses library research methods. Which use books, journals, and so on as data sources for article writing. This research was conducted by reading, studying, and analyzing various existing literature, namely the Al-Qur'an, hadith, books, and research results. With the literature study, a lot of data for research was found, including previous studies.

## D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Biography and Works of Al-Baghawi

Al-Imam al-Hafiz ash-Syahir Muhyi As-Sunnah Abu Muhammad ibn Husin ibn Mas'ud ibn Muhammad ibn al-Farra al-Baghawi ash-Syafi'i is his full name. He is a scholar of Khurasan and an expert in hadith and interpretation. He has written several essays and is an expert in hadith and interpretation. Ibn al-Ahwal said about him, "*He is a person who masters scientific disciplines and has useful essays; apart from that, he is also a person who is ascetic, wara', and qana'ah.*" For example, the author of Syadzarat adz-Dzahab once stated that he (al-Baghawi) was an ascetic and *qana'ah* leader who ate only bread until he became bored; one time he mixed oil in the bread.

Born in Baghsyur, Baghawi's ratio to him (Baghsyur) has no kikiasan. "The name of the city is Bagh," it says, "which is a small town located between Hazzah, Moro, and Ar-Rudz from Khurasan." He grew up with the *Shafi'i* school because he grew up in a family of *Shafi'i* followers. and studied with his followers' scholars, has left a valuable legacy: an imam who is a role model, a hadith expert, an Islamic sheikh, lives the sunnah, and has written many of his essays.

These social, political, and cultural conditions helped shape the figure of al-Baghawi to become a scholar who adheres to the Shafi'i school of thought and is a follower of the Sunni who wants to revive the sunnah against ideologies that are opposed to the Sunni, such as Shi'a and others. Therefore, his works, such as *Ma'alim at-Tanzil*, contain the fiqh views of the *imam madzhab*.

Al-Baghawy, a well-known scholar of interpretation, based his knowledge on two references, which became a benchmark for the breadth of his knowledge and an important pillar of his expertise in the field of interpretation. The first was to learn from a number of scholars, specifically al-Baghawy, who learned from well-known scholars such as al-Imam al-Husain bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Marwadzi al-Qadhi, a faqih in Khurasan with the *Shafi'i* school of thought who died in 462 H. He also studied with al-Faqih al-Fadhil Abu Hasan Ali bin Then, in the second, he obtained his knowledge from books. In this regard, al-Baghawi is also a *muhaddis* and listens a lot to hadiths from his memorizers. He learned from the authentic, Sunan, and Musnad books. Apart from that, he also studied language books and books of fiqh as a support for scientific strength in compiling a book of commentary.

Imam Baghawi is an imam who collects the knowledge of the Koran, sunnah, and fiqh. The scientific spirit within him is very large, so that he has produced a number of valuable books, including:

- a. *Majmu'ah minal Fatwa*, is a book of fatwas from his teacher, which was opened in a special book. The teacher in question was Abu Ali Hasan al-Husain bin Muhammad al-Marwazi.
- b. *At- Tahdzib fi Fiqh as-Syafiyyah*, is a book that discusses the jurisprudence of Imam Shafi'i. This book is a free essay that has been corrected and usually does not contain arguments. This book is adapted from the opinions of Imam Syafi'i.
- c. *Syarh As-Sunnah*, namely, a book that explains the contents of the hadiths of the Prophet ﷺ.
- d. *Ma'alim at-Tanzil*, is a monumental work in the field of interpretation of the Qur'an.
- e. *Al-Anwar* or *Atsar al-Anwar fi Syama'il an-Nabiy al-Mukhtar*
- f. *Al-Madkhal ila Mashabih As-Sunnah*

## 2. The Story of the Book's Creation

Regarding the background of writing the book, Al-Baghawi wrote in *Ma'alim at-Tanzil* as follows:

فسألني جماعة من أصحابي المخلصين، وعلى اقتباس العلم مقبلين: كتابا في معالم التنزيل وتفسيره، فأجبتهم إليه، معتمدا على فضل الله تعالى وتيسيره، ممتثلا وصية رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فيهم فيما يرويه أبو سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه أنه عليه الصلاة والسلام قال: " إن رجلا يأتونكم من أقطار الأرض يتفقون في الدين، فإذا أتوكم فاستوصوا بهم خيرا " واقتداء بالماضين من السلف في تدوين العلم إنقاء على الخلف. وليس على ما فعلوه مزيد ولكن لا بد في كل زمان من تجديد ما طال به العهد، وقصر للطالبين فيه الجد والجهد تنبها للمتوفقين وتحريضا للمتنبطين، فجمعت بعون الله تعالى وحسن توفيقه، فيما سألوا كتابا وسطا بين الطويل الممل، والقصير المحل، أرجو أن يكون مفيدا لمن أقبل على تحصيله مريدا.

*"Several of my friends who are sincere and passionate about studying have asked me for a book about the guidance (ma'alim) of the Qur'an and its interpretation." So I fulfill their request by hoping for Allah's fadhla and convenience from Him. I did this because I obeyed the will of Rasulullah, as stated in the hadith narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudriy that Allah's Apostle said: "Indeed, people will come to you from all over to seek knowledge." So when they come to you, treat them well." And I also do this with the intention of following in the footsteps of the previous scholars in recording knowledge so that it can be passed on to future generations. I do not*

*add to the results of the toil they have poured out. However, in every age there must be a renewal of the old, and the students of knowledge are limited in their sincerity and opportunities to awaken people who are negligent and provide motivation or encouragement to people who are silent. With the help of Allah and His good knowledge, I compiled the book that was requested by them, the middle book—not too long, saturating, and not so short, limited. I hope this book is useful for everyone who studies it.”* (Al-Baghawiy, 1988).

From his writings, we can conclude that the background for writing the book Ma'alim At-Tanzil started with the requests of students and friends. Indeed, many of the works of interpretation were the result of external influences. But internal influences also certainly pushed him to write the book of interpretation, as seen in how he referred to the hadith from Abu Said Al-Khudri. So the writing of Ma'alim At-Tanzil has the following background:

- a. Request a number of friends and students.
- b. Execute the Prophet's ﷺ will.
- c. Follow the previous Salaf scholars in preserving the science of interpretation, even if there are not many additions. However, it is a necessity in every era to carry out revisions (*tajdid*), as long as it is possible and the demand is so great (Lina Sofy).

### **3. Methods and Styles of Ma'alim At-Tanzil**

Tafsir Ma'alim al-Tanzil is more often called Tafsir Al-Baghawi. Many classify Al-Baghawi's Tafsir as the book of commentaries (*bil ma'tsur*) (Muh. Maksum, 2014). Because he relied on the source of his interpretation, the Qur'an, the hadith of the Prophet, the opinions of friends, and the tabi'in (Muhammad 'Abdul 'Adzim Al-Zarqani, 1995). Some *ulama'*, including Abu Shahbah, have included Al-Baghawi's interpretation in the group of bi al-Iqtiran commentaries that combine *bil ma'tsur* and *bil ra'yi* (Abu Shahbah, 1407).

The Book of Ma'alim Tanzil quoted many hadiths of the Prophet as an interpretation of *bil ma'tsur*, but only *shahih* (authentic) hadiths of the Prophet, that is accepted (acceptable) hadiths. As for the hadiths that fall into the category of *dhaif* (weak), let alone those that are *mawdhu'* (false), of course he rejected them and did not make them the basis of his arguments at all. He is a *ulama* who is also a hadith expert, so he can judge which hadiths are valid: *hasan*, *dha'if*, and *mawdhu* (false). He did not attempt to review and criticize the differences among Salaf *ulama'* because everything could be true. In his commentary, he does not reveal much about the discussion of *i'rab* and explanations of

*balagah*, avoids delving into issues of theology (kalam) related to verses of the creed, and sticks to the school of the Salaf (M.Rusydi Khalid, 2017).

Regarding the method of interpretation used by Al-Baghawi, he is classified as a mufassir, who combines various methods of interpreting the Qur'an. In terms of the orderly interpretation of the Qur'anic verses or the presentation of their interpretations, Ma'alim al-Tanzil uses the *tahlili* interpretation method. However, when viewed from a broad perspective, he favors the *Tafsily/Itnabi* interpretation method (Mohammad & M. Lytto Syahrums Arminsa, 2020).

The method of explanation used by Al-Baghawi tends to use the Bayani interpretation method (description), which is just describing without doing analysis. This aims to enrich the ideas and knowledge in the book of interpretation. Not only that, he also based all his explanations on *riwayah*. When viewed from the style of interpretation, Al-Baghawi's interpretation is very thick in the lughawi style, where he emphasizes linguistic aspects. For example, when he interprets the word *bismillah*:

بسم الله الباء أداة تخفض ما بعدها مثل: من وعن، والمتعلق به الباء محذوف لدلالة الكلام عليه، تقديره: أبدأ بسم الله، أو قل: بسم الله

Before beginning the explanation, he explained Arabic grammar from a linguistic standpoint, Nahwu (Mustaqim, n.d.). Thus, the style that is more appropriately classified in Al-Baghawi's interpretation is the lughawi style (linguistic). Al-Baghawi's interpretation also has a style of fiqhi interpretation. In fact, when analyzing a verse, he frequently emphasized the legal aspect. In general, many interpretations of *bil-ma'tsur* give birth to fiqh-style interpretations. The argument is that when friends find it difficult to understand the words and laws contained in the Qur'an, they immediately ask the Prophet (Ignaz Goldziher, 2015). On the one hand, it reveals the Prophet's interpretations of *bi al-ma'tsur*. However, on the other hand, it shows a pattern of *fiqhi* interpretation. As a result, the majority of books on the interpretation of *bi al-ma'tsur* are written in a *fiqhi* style (Khalid).

Of course, in the case of Tafsir Al-Baghawi, he also has a *fiqh* style in his interpretation due to the influence of the breadth of knowledge he has, namely a figure who is an expert in *fiqh*. His *fiqh* reputation is clearly illustrated by other works in the field of fiqh. Al-Baghawi's interpretation has two inseparable features, namely, *lughawi* (linguistic) and *fiqhi* (jurisdictional or legal) patterns. In addition, it was also stated that Al-Baghawi's interpretation was in the style of *ma'ani*, the science of *qiraat*, *ahkam fiqh*, strings of wisdom,

*isyarah*, as well as several innovative thoughts and hadiths previously contained in al-Tsa'labi's interpretation (Lina Sofy).

#### 4. Method of Presentation and Characteristics of the Ma'alim At-Tanzil

Al-Baghawi says in his book that he tries to avoid long-winded, detailed explanations and summaries that omit important points (Abu Al-Hasan Al-Khaziniy, 1317). This means that he takes the middle ground in several presentations of previous *ulama'* interpretation books. The general description of the steps of Al-Baghawi's interpretation is as follows (Abd al-Ghafur, 1980):

- a. *First*, mention the name of the *surah* and the number of verses.
- b. *Second*, mentioning whether it is a makkiyah or madaniyah letter, sometimes going into detail in this matter, namely while mentioning whether it is a madaniyyah or makkiyah classification.
- c. *Third*, mention the reason for the revelation of the verse, if any.
- d. *Fourth*, explaining the meaning of certain pronunciations or sentences by looking for the original meaning and contextual meaning while referring to Qur'anic verses, Prophetic hadiths, or righteous salaf opinions.
- e. *Fifth*, discuss some of the sentence's *i'rab* and how they affect the meaning.
- f. *Sixth*, when there are verses related to faith and *tauhid*, he explains them based on the opinion of the *Ahl al-Sunnah* and rejects other schools of thought.
- g. *Seventh*, when there are verses related to law, he mentions the opinions of *ahlul fiqh* such as Imam Shafi'i, Abu Hanifah, and others.
- h. Eighth, for *riwayah*, Al-Baghawi mentions all of his *riwayah* at the beginning of the book so that when interpreting verses, he no longer needs to mention the *riwayah*.

The following are the characteristics of Ma'alim At-Tanzil (Lina Sofy):

- a) Interpret in easy language, don't beat around the bush, discuss *gharib* words to arrive at the intended meaning by referring to word derivations accompanied by cross-checks in the Al-Qur'an and Hadith, *tabi'in*, and the linguistic expert.
- b) Explaining the meaning using the *Al-Qur'an bi Al-Qur'an* or *bi al-hadits aw bi awqal al-shahabah* method. Also being guided by *Aqwal al-Tabi'in* and *Mujtahidin*. This method is an exploration of the theory of *anna Al-Qur'an yufassiru ba'dhuhu ba'dhan*, so that verses that are *mujmal* in one place are *tafshil* in another place, or *takhsish* verses that are "general" with other verses.
- c) Doing clarification on certain *qira'at*, which he feels causes a change in meaning.

- d) Referring to the opinions of *Ahl Sunnah* in rejecting opinions that are contrary to them as well as defending the opinions of *Ahl Sunnah*, either by means of *manqul* or *ma'qul*.
- e) Provide a *fihiyyah* explanation of the verses related to it. According to *muhaqqiq*, most of them repeat *ahlul fiqh* opinions while also reviewing Shafi'i's views. However, sometimes al-Baghawi also allows it without doing any recitation.
- f) Sometimes, in his interpretation, al-Baghawi also mentions *Isra'iliyyat* stories.
- g) In the path of *riwayah*, al-Baghawi also reproduces the path of al-Kalabi.

## 5. The Ma'alim At-Tanzil's Advantages and Disadvantages

### a. The Ma'alim At-Tanzil's Advantages

Here are the advantages of this interpretation book:

- 1) This interpretation is one of the first interpretation books whose discussion is presented in a light language so that it can be understood and analyzed by various groups, especially lay people.
- 2) Presenting a solid and informative explanation that relies on *riwayah*.
- 3) Rarely uses scientific terms such as those found in the fields of literature, fiqh, theology, or *aqidah* so that they are easy for readers to understand.
- 4) Be very careful in choosing hadiths; only include valid and hasan hadiths because of the high standard of quality requirements.
- 5) Include various explanations, including: securing verses with other verses of the Qur'an (*munasabah*), hadith, fiqh, language, and the opinions of *ulama'*.
- 6) There is not much mention of *qiraat*, only *qiraat* which allows a change of meaning (Khalid).
- 7) Pays close attention to linguistic aspects, including Arabic rules (*qoidah*).
- 8) There are laws in the interpretation that broaden the scope of the discussion.
- 9) Include various ideas in the interpretation of the Qur'an (Arofatur Anhar dan Dkk, n.d).

### b. The Ma'alim At-Tanzil's Disadvantages

Here are the disadvantages of this interpretation book:

- 1) For researchers and interpretation reviewer, this book of interpretation has not yet provided a detailed explanation because the discussion is brief and broad, not in-depth.
- 2) If there are differences of opinion or *riwayah*, most of them only cite and rarely *tarjih* and comment on the differences cited.
- 3) There are still many *israi'liyat* stories, especially those that contradict the degree and *ma'sum* of the prophets, such as the story of the Prophets Yusuf, Dawud, and Sulaiman, which makes the *israi'liyat* story the yardstick of truth, whose validity should need to be retraced. Al-Baghawi, in the case of *israi'liyat*, includes people who accept by establishing concessions (Munirah, 2016).
- 4) Fanaticism in fiqh *madzhab* and sects that lead to subjectivity in detention (Izzudin Washil, 2016).

## E. CONSLUSION

It can be concluded from the explanation that has been presented above that Imam al-Baghawi created a very monumental book of his composition, namely Ma'alim at-Tanzil in the interpretation of the Qur'an, which uses the *tahlily* method, namely interpreting the Qur'an based on the sequence of verses in the *mushaf* and stating the meaning of vocabulary, arguments from hadiths and their *sanad*, and fatwas from Prophet's companions, *tabi'in*, and *tabi' tabi'in*, therefore, al-Baghawi's interpretation uses *bil ma'tsur* method. If, in terms of interpretation analysis, the author always emphasizes legal issues, then from this perspective it can be said that al-Baghawi's interpretation uses a fiqh style with a tendency towards the Shafi'i *madzhab*.

Al-Baghawi the author of the Ma'alim at-Tanzil interpretation book, is a *faqih ulama'* (an expert in Islamic law) who belongs to the Shafi'i *madzhab* of thought. He mastered various religious disciplines. He obtained religious knowledge by studying directly with prominent *ulama'* and studying himself by reading reference books. With the breadth of his knowledge, he has also authored several books, as described above. Not a few of the al-Baghawi explained legal matters in the verses of the Qur'an and avoided interpreting the Qur'an with excessive *ra'yu*. In analyzing the verses of the Qur'an, he sometimes uses linguistic rules so that the contents of his interpretations can be easily understood.

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