# Istidraj in the Qur'an (Thematic Study of the Istidraj Verses in the Tafsir Mafatih Al-Ghaib by Fakhr Al-Din Al-Razi)

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#### ABSTRACT

God gives man many favors, but man often abuses those pleasures on negative things, even to the point of forgetting God's commands in His shari'a. Often, we see people who disobey and ignore God's commands actually given smooth enjoyment and sustenance. They did not realize that the God-given favor was His wrath. This is what is called istidraj. This study aims to find out al-Razi's interpretation of istidraj verses and al-Razi's interpretation analysis of istidraj verses in mafatih al-Ghaib's interpretation. Knowledge about istidraj is very important so that we as Muslims do not fall into istidraj behavior and can avoid things that lead to this behavior.

Keywords: Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Istidraj, Tafsir

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#### INTRODUCTION

God gives man many favors, but man often abuses those pleasures on negative things, even to the point of forgetting God's commands. For example, Allah gives favors in the form of wealth, but he very rarely does prayers, alms or pays zakat. Then it was clear that the treasure was a test, so he was deceived by the life of the world and neglected to work out God's commands (Çalgan, 2021).

Often, we see people who disobey and ignore God's commands actually given smooth enjoyment and sustenance. They did not realize that the God-given favor was His wrath. This is what is called istidraj (Affandi, 2022).

But what happened, after being given wealth he became miserly, arrogant, and haughty. But God still gives riches, until the appointed time. The story of Qarun is one of

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the stories of human beings who were crushed by istidraj from Allah because they had forgotten Allah's favor and had done evil, haughtiness and pride (Saeed, 2019).

The verses of the Qur'an about istidraj are divided into two, which are lafzi and ma'nawi, in the Qur'an there are 6 verses (Hirschler, 2019). Istidraj lafzi is found in 2 verses, which is the letter al-A'raf verse 182 and Al-Qalam verse 44. As for istidraj ma'nawi, there are letters Ali-'Imran 178, Al-An'am 44 and Al-Mu'minun verses 55-56 (Mutalib, 2019).

Fakhr al-Din al-Razi was a scholar who mastered several disciplines and was very prominent in both naqli and aqli sciences. He gained great popularity in all corners of the world, and has quite a lot of works. Among his famous works is the interpretation of Mafatih al-Ghaib (Shabana, 2019).

In interpreting verses from the Quran, al-Razi does not use only one method of interpretation (Fadele, 2021). This can be evidenced from the breadth of discussion and scope of content contained in its interpretation. For example, in interpreting one problem or one verse only, al-Razi elaborated broadly and deeply using a variety of methods. In addition, in interpreting verses from the Qur'an al-Razi uses modern scientific theories to support its interpretation (Nur, 2019).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methods are one of the scientific ways to obtain data with a specific purpose and use. In order for this research to get maximum results and can be accounted for academically, it is very necessary to have a method that matches the object being studied, because the method is a step that functions as a way to conduct a research or a knowledge (Dell, 2018)

This research, including library research, is a research method to obtain data from books, books, theses, dictionaries and other references that are relevant to the research to be discussed (Belotto, 2018).

In collecting data, the author collects data in the form of interpretive books, dictionaries and also books related to the discussion of istidraj. The data analysis technique used is descriptive analysis, which is describing and explaining the existing data and then analyzing the data.

#### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

## Biografi Fakhr al-Din al-Razi

Fakhr al-Din al-Razi his full name is Muhammad ibn 'Umar ibn al-Husain ibn al-Hasan al-Taymi al-Bakr al-Tabarastani Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. He is better known as Ibn Khatib al-Shafi'i al-Faqih. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi was descended from the nobles of Quraish, the Taimi tribe, and Abu Bakr al-Shiddiq. The name Fakhr al-Din al-Razi was actually the laqab given at the time (Qadafy, 2019).

Fakhr al-Din al-Razi was born on the 25th of Ramadan 544 H/1149 AD. And he died on Monday the 1st of Shawwal/Eid al-Fitr in the area of Herat (Ray) in 606 H/1210 AD. Ray is a city located in the southern region of Iran and northeast of Tehran. In other sources it is also explained that al-Razi was born in 543 and died in 606 H. Al-Razī was

buried not far from Herat, that is, on the mountain of Musaqib, in the village of Muzdakhan (Naguib, 2019).

Al-Razi was one of the most famous mufassir and clerics of the 61st century A.D. from among the Sunnah Experts (Kilinçli, 2019). He was one of the most famous clerics in the northern Persian kingdom of Khawarizm which was under the rule of the Khawarizm kingdom and partly under the rule of the Guriyah sultanate, which had a great influence at the time. Al-Razi is also a place to ask for advice and instructions. Because of his ability to master scientific disciplines, he had also discussed with the Mu'tazilahs in defending the apostasy of the Ahli al-sunnah and the madzhab fiqh of Shafi'i (Arifin, 2019).

A l-Razi came from an educated family so in his childhood he had been engaged in various religious sciences. Al-Razi's education was originally obtained from his own father named Dhiya'uddin 'Umar. He was a shafi'i scholar. His father was a scholar and thinker admired by the people of Ray, especially in the fields of literature, ushul fiqih, theology, hadith and tasawwuf (Büyük, 2019).

On the other hand, al-Razi also studied various kinds of sciences that developed at that time, such as philosophy, mantiq, falaq science, and natural sciences from famous scholars, among them Muhammad al-Baghawi and Majdi al-Jilli (his teacher in philosophy) and also studied kalam science to Kamaluddin as-Samani. Almost all the time in his life was spent on teaching and learning activities (Yüksek, 2018).

Over time, al-Razi also traveled far to areas outside the city of Ray to hold discussions and exchange ideas, such as to the Khawarizmi area, an area where the majority of the population adheres to the Muktazilah and Hanafi sects, while al-Razi adheres to asy'ari theology and Shafi'i fiqh (Suhada, 2019). Al-Razi also expressed controversial ideas with the understanding of community leaders in the city. Al-Razi also traveled to Transoxiana then visited India. The cities he visited in Transoxiana were Bukhara, Samarkand, Khujand, Banakit, and Ghaznah. There he also conducted dialogues on controversial issues in theology, fiqh, ushul fiqih, philosophy and logic (Ogunnaike, 2018).

Al-Razi always works hard and is full of passion and has a strong sincerity. Al-Razi is of the view that when this life is over, then there is no more time to do something. So thathis days are always busy with knowledge and experience. On the other hand, al-Razi is also known as a zuhud person. Eventhough he was a wealthy man, with the wealth he had, did not prevent him from condescending and fearing and hoping for God's pleasure.

## **Definition** Istidraj

Istidraj etymologically in the Al-Munawwir Dictionary comes from the word istadraja-yastadriju-istidrajan which has the meaning of beguiling, bringing it closer gradually (Farooqui, 2018). The word istadraja when viewed from the science of shorrof is fi'il thulathi mazid sudasi which follows wazan istaf'ala. Jadi the word istidraja comes from the word daraja which gets the additional letters hamzah wasal, sin and ta'. Istidraj also has the meaning of a gradual approach or persuasion (Shidqi & Mudinillah, 2021).

In the book of Lisan al-'Arab, Ibnu Manzyour suggests that the meaning of istidraj is to gradually draw closer, and degrade gradually. In the Great Dictionary of Indonesian (KBBI), istidraj is a condition that Allah Swt gives to infidels as a test, so that they

become takabbur and forget themselves to Allah, such as Pharaoh and Qarun (Dewi S et al., 2022).

Whereas in terminology istidraj is the renewal of pleasure time. God gave the pagan the wealth that abounded in dunia to neglect them, in order to grow the love of the world in his heart. In other words, a person is called istidraj when God allows a servant to dwell in his misdeeds, so that the person is not aware that he is gradually brought to destruction (Lumbantoruan et al., 2022).

Ibn Athaillah said of istidraj "Tbe acquainted in the enjoyment of Allah which is always flowing to you, while you continue to commit sins to Him, for it is indeed istidraj for you."

From some of the definitions of istidraj described above, if you look at it in terms of language, istidraj has the meaning of beguiling in a gradual way. Whereas in terms istidraj is a favor given by God so that he forgets himself that the favor given is God's way of gradually drawing closer in perdition, and they do not feel that it is istidraj (Mufid et al., 2022).

# Verses of Istidraj in the Qur'an

Istidraj in the Qur'an can be categorized into 2 forms, namely istidraj by lafzi, and istidraj by ma'nawi. Istidraj lafzi which is istidraj which is shown by the phrase directly in the Qur'an. Whereas istidraj is ma'nawi which is istidraj which is not shown with the pronouncement directly, but with a condition indicating istidraj (Hikmah et al., 2022).

The verses of the Qur'an on istidraj lafzi and ma'nawi in the Qur'an there are 6 verses (Gabriela et al., 2022). Istidraj lafzi is contained in 2 verses, namely sura al-A'raf verse 182 and Al-Qalam verse 44. The istidraj ma'nawi is found in Ali-'Iletter 178, A l-A n'am 44 and A l-M u'minun verses 55-56, namely (Gultom et al., 2022):

Al-A'raf ayat 182

And those who lie about Our verses, later We will withdraw them gradually (towards perdition), in a way they do not know.

Al-Qalam ayat 44

So, hand over (O Muhammad) to Me (the business of) those who lie about these words (the Quran). Later We will withdraw them gradually (in the direction of perdition) from a direction they do not know.

Ali-'Imran ayat 178

And let the unbelievers not think that Our resilient gift to them is better for them. We have given them mercy only to increase their sins. and for them the punishment of the degrading.

Al-An'am ayat 44

So, when they forgot the warning that had been given to them, We opened all the doors of pleasure for them; so that when they rejoiced in what had been given them, We tormented them with a smile, Then they fell silent in despair.

Al-Mu'minun ayat 55-56

Do they think that the treasures and children that We gave them (meaning that), We immediately gave them goodness? No, in fact they are unconscious.

# The interpretation of al-Razi on the Verses of Istidraj in Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghaib

From several verses about *istidraj* both *lafzi* and *ma'nawi*, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi in the interpretation *of Mafatih al-Ghaib* gives the interpretation as follows (Tri Wulandari & Adam Mudinillah, 2022):

1. Surah Al-A'raf ayat 182

and those who lie about Our verses, later We will withdraw them gradually (towards perdition), in a way they do not know.

Al-Razi explained in his interpretation that *istidraj* comes from the word which means to climb level by level, drawing closer to destruction by multiplying their torments from directions they do not know. This happened because every one of them sinned. God opened to them the doors of favor, the goodness of the world, so that they became haughtier and prouder, and always did mischief and went beyond the limits. Then God tortured them unexpectedly (Hartini et al., 2022).

2. Surah Al-Qalam ayat 44:

So, leave (O Muhammad) to Me (the business of) those who lie about these words (the Qur'an). Later We will withdraw them gradually (in the direction of perdition) from a direction they do not know (Kartel et al., 2022).

In his interpretation Al-Razi quoted Abu Rauq's words about the meaning of *istidraj* i.e. when they sin, we will renew the gift of favors for them. From the gift of favors We make them forget to be faithful of their deeds. Abu Rauq also stated that most of the *istidraj* happened to the rich and they did not feel that the gift of favors was the cause of their woe (Assoah, 2007).

3. Surah Ali-'Imran ayat 178

and let the unbelievers not think that Our resilient gift to them is better for them. We have given them mercy only to increase their sins, and for them a degrading punishment (Nopiana et al., 2022).

In this verse there are two explanations, the first is the suspension of eternity for those who have killed in the uhud war, but the eternity never contains good because indeed the suspension of time will only be a path of humiliation for them in the world and eternal torment in the doomsday. The second explanation, this verse explains that those who are killed in the uhud war will be his praiseworthy path for them in the world and they will also gain abundant rewards in the hereafter (Amrina et al., 2022).

4. Surah Al-An'am ayat 44

So when they forgot the warning that had been given to them, We opened all the doors of pleasure to them, so that they rejoiced in what had been given to them, We tormented them with all the grace, and then they fell silent in despair (Demina et al., 2022).

In lafaz فتحنا عليهم أبواب كل شيء Al-Razi explains in his interpretation that Allah opened all the doors of pleasure closed to them, so that when they rejoiced, they thought that the tribulations and tribulations passed down to them were torments from Allah. And when God opened all the doors of pleasure for them, they thought that it was their right (Mudinillah, 2019). Thus, it shows that their hearts are hard and dead. Hasan said that this verse was a deceit for the wicked, and Rasulullah said (Keshav et al., 2022):

When you see that Allah has given a favor to the wrongdoer, then it is *istidraj* from Allah swt.

5. Surah Al-Mu'minun ayat 55-56.

Do they think that the treasures and children that We gave them, that We were quick to give them goodness? No, in fact they are unconscious (Qureshi et al., 2022). In relation to the above verse, Al-Razi explained in his commentary, the blessing that Allah has given is not a blessing but *an istidraj* for them yang sin. It can drag them to sin, so that they think that it is a form of goodness from Him. In fact, they are likened to animals with no sense and feelings so as not to think about the blessings whether they include *istidraj* or goodness hastened by Allah, as stated in surah al-Taubah verse 85 as follows (Afif et al., 2022):

and let not their possessions and their children draw your hearts.

Narrated from Zaid bin Maisaroh: Allah revealed to the Prophets: "Will my servants be happy when I present the world to them but they are far from me. And whether they will be anxious when I keep the world away from them but they are near to me (Mahmoud, 2022).

## **CONCLUSION**

Verses about *istidraj* in the Qur'an are for two things, lafzi and *ma'nawi*. *Istidraj lafzi* is found in 2 verses, which is the letter al-A'raf verse 182 and Al-Qalam verse 44.

While *istidraj* ma'nawi is found in the letters Ali-'Imran 178, Al-An'am 44 and Al-Mu'minun verses 55-56.

Analysis of al-Razi's interpretation of the verses *istidraj* in tafsir *Mafatih al-Ghaib* as follows:

- 1. Surah *al-A'ra f* verse 182 indicates *Istidraj* ushered in perdition
- 2. Surah al-Qalam verse 44 indicates the cause of istidraj
- 3. Surah Ali-'Imran verse 178 explains *istidraj* for the unbelievers
- 4. Surah al-An'am verse 44 explains the torment after pleasure
- 5. Surah Al-Mu'minun verses 55-56 explain Treasures and children do not always mean goodness

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