

The Integration and Interconnection of Sciences in Pesantren Tafsir: An Analysis of *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* by KH Bisri Mustafa

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Keywords : Bisri Mustafa, integration-interconnection, Javanese interpretation, <i>Tafsir Surah Yāsīn</i> , thematic surah.	Abstract The history of the writing of Qur'anic tafsir in Indonesia is closely tied to the works of Ulama within the Pesantren. The development of Qur'anic tafsir writing in the Pesantren environment has been highly dynamic, characterized by variations in appearance, writing style, language, script, interpretative style, and approach. One distinctive feature of tafsir works produced within the Pesantren is exemplified by the <i>Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn</i> , authored by KH Bisri Mustafa from Pesantren Raudlotut Thalibin Rembang, Central Java. This work showcases a unique interpretation, particularly in its approach to natural science verses. Adopting the integration model introduced by Ian G. Barbour, it can be argued that KH Bisri Mustafa's interpretation of natural verses aligns with the category of natural theology. This perspective asserts that awareness of God can be discerned through natural phenomena, where the existence of God is reflected in the design of nature. The intricate design of nature fosters awareness of God's presence and existence. This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to examine KH Bisri Mustafa's interpretation of scientific verses in surah Yāsīn. The findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on integrating religion and science, particularly within the context of Qur'anic tafsir in Pesantren circles.
Kata Kunci : Bisri Mustafa, integrasi - interkoneksi, tafsir Jawa, <i>Tafsir Surah Yāsīn</i> , tematik surah.	Abstrak Sejarah penulisan Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia tidak bisa dilepaskan dari karya-karya Ulama di kalangan Pesantren. Perkembangan penulisan tafsir Al-Qur'an di lingkungan Pesantren sendiri berlangsung sangat dinamis, bukan hanya dari penampilan, gaya penulisan, bahasa dan aksara yang digunakan, corak dan pendekatan penafsiran maupun dari perspektif penafsirannya. Salah satu keunikan dalam kitab tafsir yang lahir dari rahim pesantren terlihat dalam <i>Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn</i> yang ditulis oleh KH Bisri Mustafa dari Pesantren Raudlotut Thalibin Rembang Jawa Tengah ketika menafsirkan ayat-ayat tentang keilmuan Alam. Kajian ini bersifat deskriptik-analitis untuk menganalisis penafsiran yang dibangun oleh KH Bisri Mustafa terhadap ayat-ayat sains dalam surah Yasin. Mengikuti pola integrasi Agama dan Sains yang diintrodukir oleh Ian G. Barbour bisa ditegaskan bahwa penafsiran yang dikemukakan KH Bisri Mustafa terkait ayat-ayat alam termasuk dalam kategori natural theology, yang menegaskan bahwa kesadaran akan Tuhan bisa ditemukan dalam fenomena alam di mana eksistensi Tuhan termanifestasi dalam desain alam, dan desain alam yang sedemikian rupa akan membuat kesadaran tentang eksistensi Tuhan. Hasil ini menambah kajian yang telah ada sebelumnya mengenai integrasi Agama dan Sains, khususnya di bidang Tafsir Al-Qur'an di kalangan pesantren.
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Introduction

The creation of intellectual products in the field of Qur'anic tafsir within Pesantren has experienced significant development. This development is visible in several areas, including the publication forms, scripts and languages used for publication, writing styles, interpretive methods, and the interpretation of the Qur'an. This change within Pesantren

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tafsir literature means that these institutions are responding to the needs of their readers while also participating in the intellectual discourse emerging within society.¹

To date, studies of Pesantren-related Qur'anic tafsir books can be categorized into several clusters. *First*, studies interested in how interpretation in Pesantren tafsir books is conducted. *Second*, studies focus on examining specific themes in Pesantren's tafsir books. *Third*, studies investigating the use of language and script in Pesantren tafsir. *Fourth*, studies exploring the genealogy of Pesantren tafsir. *Fifth*, studies examining various dynamics in Pesantren tafsir books. This paper aims to contribute to the literature, particularly Pesantren's responses to the relationship between religious and non-religious sciences, a concept increasingly referred to as the 'integration of science and religion.' More specifically, this study examines the intellectual foundation of scientific integration as reflected in KH Bisri Mustafa's *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*, which tends to interpret verses with scientific nuances referred to as the 'integration of science and religion.' More specifically, this study examines the intellectual foundation of scientific integration as reflected in KH Bisri Mustafa's *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*, which tends to interpret verses with scientific nuances.

Before the discourse on the integration-interconnection of sciences gained prominence among academics in recent years, efforts to explore the 'scientific' nuances of the Qur'an were already present in some Qur'anic tafsir works, which later became known as the Tafsir Ilmi approach. Even al-Dhahabī noted debates surrounding this interpretive style, highlighting both support and criticism regarding the 'validity' of Tafsir Ilmi.² In recent times, Indonesia has witnessed a growing trend of Quranic interpretations that incorporate scientific perspectives. These interpretations have emerged from both individual scholars and institutions. Notable examples include the Scientific Tafsir Series published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and books like *Chemistry in the Perspective of the Quran: Tracing the Quranic Miracle on Iron and the Periodic Table in Chemical Science (Ilmu Kimia dalam Kacamata Al-Qur'an: Menelusuri Mu'jizat Al-Qur'an tentang Besi dan Tabel Periodik)* by Dede Suhendar³, *The Verses of the Universe: Forgotten Aspects of the Quran (Ayat-Ayat Semesta: Sisi-Sisi Al-Qur'an yang Terlupakan)* by Agus Purwanto⁴, and *New Facts About Qur'anic Mathematics: The Secrets of Numbers and Letters in Mutashabihat Verses (Fakta Baru Matematika Al-Qur'an: Rahasia Angka dan Huruf dalam Ayat-Ayat Mutasyabihat)* by Ismail Idris Musthafa⁵ and *The Qur'an and Nuclear Energy (Al-Qur'an dan Energi Nuklir)*⁶, and many others.

There is a substantial body of interpretations of surah Yasin in Indonesia. Beyond the well-known commentary by KH Bisri Mustafa, numerous other authors have produced their interpretations. These works include *Detak Nurani al-Qur'an: Tafsir Sufi Surat Yasin* by Abdul

¹ Ahmad Baidowi and Yuni Ma'rufah, "Dinamika Karya Tafsir Al-Qur'an Pesantren Jawa," *Al Itqan: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an* 8, no. 2 (2022): 251–74, <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.47454/itqan.v8i2.814>.

² M. Husayn Dhahabi, *Al-Tafsir Wa al-Mufasssirun*, 1976, 474–96.

³ Nur Efendi, Muhammad Fathurrohman, and Dede Suhendar, *Ilmu Kimia dalam Kaca Mata Al-Qur'an: Menelusuri Mukjizat Al-Qur'an Tentang Besi dan Tabel Periodik dalam Sains Kimia* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ilmu, 2017).

⁴ Agus Purwanto, *Ayat-Ayat Semesta: Sisi-Sisi Al-Qur'an yang Terlupakan* (Bandung: Mizan, 2015).

⁵ Ismail Idris Musthafa, *Fakta Baru Matematika Al-Qur'an: Rahasia Angka dan Huruf dalam Ayat-Ayat Mutasyabihat* (Bandung: Noura Books, 2014).

⁶ Wisnu Arya Wardhana, *Al-Qur'an dan Energi Nuklir* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2009).

Aziz Sukarnawadi⁷, *Jantung Al-Qur'an: Tafsir Surah Yāsīn* by the Team of the Mushaf Al-Qur'an Assessment Council of the Ministry of Religious Affairs⁸, *Misteri Surah Yasin: Mengerti Kekuatan Jantung Al-Qur'an dalam Kehidupan* by Achmad Chodjim⁹, *Menerapkan Kajaiban Surah Yasin dalam Kehidupan Seharian-hari* by Achmad Chodjim¹⁰, *Pesona Surah Yaasiin* by Muhammad Said¹¹, and *Memahami dan Mendalami Makna yang Terkandung dalam Surat Yasin* by Sulaiman al-Kumayi¹².

Various articles discuss the content of Surah Yasin and the interpretations of the chapter. Akhmad Rusydi wrote *Seluk-Beluk Surah Yasin: Kajian Tafsir Maudlu'i*¹³ (*The Intricacies of Surah Yasin: A Thematic Interpretation Study*), which offers alternative interpretations of Surah Yasin thematically. Islah Gusmian and Mustofa Abdullah studied the interpretative methods of Surah Yasin by KH Bisri Mustafa, emphasizing that his interpretation does not fall within the framework of the Islamization of Knowledge as proposed by Ismail Raji' al-Faruqi, nor does it position interpretation as a field for scientific explanation as undertaken by Tantawi Jauhari.¹⁴

Siti Rosidah examines KH Bisri Mustafa's division of Surah Yasin into three themes: the oneness of Allah, the confirmation of prophethood, and the existence of the Day of Resurrection (*yawm al-ba'ath*) and the Day when all creatures will be gathered (*yawm al-hashr*).¹⁵ Other studies related to surah Yasin predominantly fall under the category of Living Qur'an studies, such as those conducted by Mita Herunnisa.¹⁶, Nur Afifah¹⁷, Muhammad Hidayatullah¹⁸, and others. This article complements existing studies by examining KH Bisri Mustafa's interpretation of verses with a natural science nuance and discussing them from the perspective of integrating religion with science. Consequently, this paper reveals the form or type of integration between the Qur'an and science undertaken by KH Bisri Mustafa when explaining the content of Qur'anic verses on natural sciences in his *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*.

⁷ Abdul Aziz Sukarnawadi, *Detak Nurani Al-Qur'an: Tafsir Sufi Surat Yasin* (Yogyakarta: Aswaja Pressindo, 2015).

⁸ Balitbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama RI, *Jantung Al Quran : Tafsir Surah Yasin* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2015).

⁹ Achmad Chodjim, *Misteri Surah Yasin: Mengerti Kekuatan Jantung Al-Qur'an Dalam Kehidupan* (Jakarta: Pustaka Serambi Semesta, 2013).

¹⁰ Achmad Chodjim, *Menerapkan Kajaiban Surah Yasin dalam Kehidupan Seharian-hari* (Jakarta: Serambi, 2011).

¹¹ Muhammad Said, *Pesona Surah Yaasiin* (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2008).

¹² Sulaiman al-Kumayi, *Memahami dan Mendalami Makna yang Terkandung dalam Surat Yasin* (Jakarta: Pustaka Nuun, 2009).

¹³ Akhmad Rusydi, "Seluk Beluk Surah Yasin: Kajian Tafsir Maudlu'i," *Al-Risalah* 15, no. 2 (2019): 131–54.

¹⁴ Islah Gusmian and Mustofa Abdullah, "Scientific Method of The Tafsir Of Pesantren: A Study of Kyai Bisri Mustafa's Tafsir Surah Yasin (1915-1977)," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam dan Filsafat* 19, no. 2 (2022): 151–75, <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v19i2.5358>.

¹⁵ Siti Rosidah, "Surah Yasin dalam Tafsir Al-Ibriz," *Diya Al-Afkar: Jurnal Studi al-Quran dan Hadis* 5, no. 2 (n.d.): 243–60.

¹⁶ Mita Haerunnisa, "Resepsi Masyarakat Desa Mekarsari Terhadap Fadhilah Surah Yasin (Studi Living Qur'an)" (Skripsi, Banten, UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin, 2021), <http://repository.uinbanten.ac.id/id/eprint/7195>.

¹⁷ Nur Afifah, "Tradisi Pembacaan Surah Yasin Setiap Selesai Salat Subuh: Studi Living Quran dalam Sudut Pandang Teori Sosiologi Pengetahuan Karl Mannheim" (Skripsi, Malang, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2022), <http://etheses.uin-malang.ac.id/35945/>.

¹⁸ Muhammad Hidayatullah Muhammad Hidayatullah, "Pembacaan Surah Yasin dalam Tradisi Baantaran Jujuran di Kelurahan Sungai Ulin Banjarbaru" (Skripsi, Banjarmasin, UIN Antasari, 2022), <https://idr.uin-antasari.ac.id/id/eprint/19752>.

This study applied a descriptive-analytical approach to uncover the understanding of pesantren scholars in interpreting and discussing the relationship between the Qur'an and science. The object of this study is *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*, authored by KH Bisri Mustafa, the founder of Pesantren Raudhatut Thalibin in Rembang. It focuses on analyzing KH Bisri Mustafa's interpretation of verses in Surah Yasin that pertain to natural phenomena. His thoughts are analyzed using Ian G. Barbour's theory on the relationship between religion and science to position KH Bisri Mustafa as a figure with a distinct stance regarding integrating religion and science.

Academic Study on the Discourse of the Relationship between the Qur'an and Science

1. Religion and Science

Scholars in various fields, including history, philosophy, theology, and science, have long debated the relationship between religion and science.¹⁹ Discussions on the intersection of 'religion' and 'science' have emerged since ancient and medieval times, although the concepts as understood in modern society²⁰ were not yet articulated during those periods. The terms 'science and religion' or 'religion and science' began appearing in literature in the 19th century.²¹ Scholars such as John Lennox, Thomas Berry, Brian Swimme, and Ken Wilber are prominent figures discussing this relationship. The discourse on religion and science is often categorized by terms such as 'conflict,' 'complexity,' 'harmony,' and 'mutual independence.'²² These frameworks have generated diverse perspectives on the integration and interconnection of knowledge.

In recent years, the discourse on the relationship between religion and science has garnered increasing attention from various circles. Scholars such as Ian G. Barbour, John F. Haught, Armahedi Mahzar, and Amin Abdullah are well-known for their thoughts on this subject. Ian G. Barbour, for instance, categorizes the relationship between religion and science into four types: conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration. The conflict model positions religion and science as two opposing entities. On one hand, science asserts that truth can only be obtained through scientific inquiry. On the other hand, religion contends that science lacks the authority to explain all phenomena due to its inherent limitations.

The independence model holds that religion and science occupy distinct domains that operate separately from each other, thereby negating the necessity for dialogue between them. Conversely, the dialogue model emphasizes a communicative and reciprocal relationship between religion and science. This perspective recognizes shared elements that enable constructive dialogue and mutual support between the two fields. The integration model, on the other hand, stresses the need to systematically incorporate aspects of religion into science and vice versa, thereby contributing to a more coherent worldview that can be

¹⁹ "Relationship Between Religion and Science," Website, The Spiritual Life, n.d., <https://slife.org/relationship-between-religion-and-science/>.

²⁰ Peter Harrison, *The Territories of Science and Religion* (Chicago: University Chicago, 2015), 3.

²¹ Roberts Jon, "Science and Religion," in *Wrestling with Nature: From Omens to Science*, ed. Peter Horrison (Chicago: Chicago University, 2011), 254,258-260.

²² "Relationship Between Religion and Science."

further elaborated within a more comprehensive metaphysical framework.²³ The separation of religion from science is perceived as leading to the emergence of scientists and practitioners devoid of character.²⁴

The integration model has recently gained traction in various discussions, giving rise to increasingly prominent perspectives on the relationship between religion and science. Amin Abdullah is among the scholars deeply engaged with this theme, developing it in numerous writings, including his concepts of multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches in religious studies.²⁵ This concept extends the ideas of integration and interconnection that have been advanced in parallel with the transformation of the State Institute for Islamic Studies (Institut Agama Islam Negeri, IAIN) into the State Islamic University (Universitas Agama Islam Negeri, UIN) over the past two decades. The relationship between religion and science has been developed in various contexts. Yudian Wahyudi, for example, pioneered the Pesantren Nawesea and established Sekolah Sunan Averroes, both of which sought to balance religious knowledge with experimental sciences.²⁶

2. The Qur'an and Science

The discourse on the relationship between religion and science has developed dynamically across various fields of knowledge. Specifically, discussions on the relationship between religion and science within scientific integration and interconnection in Qur'anic exegesis have significantly evolved. The relationship between Islam—particularly the Qur'an—and scientific knowledge has become an engaging subject of study and holds a crucial position among Muslim scholars. The Qur'an presents several key points regarding science. *First*, Muslims are encouraged to 'contemplate the wonders of creation.' *Second*, the Qur'an contains numerous scientific facts and descriptions that align with modern scientific discoveries. *Third*, many Qur'anic verses emphasize the significance of contemporary knowledge and affirm that the Qur'an and science are interconnected. *Fourth*, the Qur'an highlights the importance of acquiring knowledge, as it constitutes humanity's fundamental and ultimate form of wisdom.²⁷

Several aspects of the patterns of interaction between knowledge and the Quran can be highlighted in the context of Qur'anic studies and exegesis. *First*, the relationship between the Qur'an and science emerges as an expression of exegetes' concern for the scientific aspects embedded in certain Qur'anic verses, prompting efforts to uncover their scientific dimensions. This concern has led to interpretations of the Qur'an with a scientific approach

²³ Ian G. Barbour, *Menemukan Tuhan dalam Sains Kontemporer Dan Agama*, trans. Fransiscus Borgias (Bandung: Mizan, 2005); Compare it with John F. Haught, who categorizes the relationship between religion and science into conflict, contrast, contact, and confirmation types. See., John F Haught, *Perjumpaan Sains Dan Agama: Dari Konflik Ke Dialog*, trans. F. Borgias (Bandung: Mizan, 2004).

²⁴ Amin Abdullah, *Islamic Studies Dalam Paradigma Integrasi-Interkoneksi* (Yogyakarta: SUKA Press, 2007), 10–11.

²⁵ Read Amin Abdullah, *Multidisiplin, Interdisiplin dan Transdisiplin: Metode Studi Agama dan Studi Islam di Era Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: IB Pustaka, 2021).

²⁶ Khoirul Anam and B.U. Mubarak, *Pembaruan Islam Yudian Wahyudi: Komparasi dengan Hasbi Ash Shiddieqy, Hazairin, Nurcholish Madjid, dan Quraish Shihab* (Yogyakarta: SUKA Press, 2021).

²⁷ Huda Huda, "What the Quran Says About Science Facts," Website, Learn Religion, September 2019, <https://www.learnreligions.com/quran-and-science-2004547>.

(*al-lawn al-'ilmi fi al-tafsir*). Although this scientific mode of Qur'anic interpretation has sparked debates—especially regarding the alleged “harmonization” (*cocokologi*) of Qur'anic statements with modern scientific findings found in certain exegetical works—such interpretations have nonetheless proliferated. Scholars such as Tantawi Jauhari, Rasyad Khalifa, and Harun Yahya are known for their works and exhibit a strong inclination toward this approach.

Second, the relationship between the Qur'an and science is correlated with efforts to demonstrate the Qur'an's miraculous nature (*i'jāz al-Qur'ān*) as a divine scripture possessing absolute inimitability (inimitability of the Qur'an). Many scholars argue that the Qur'an reveals scientific phenomena that attest to its divine origin. The intersection of this doctrine of inimitability with the growing trend of scientific interpretation of the Qur'an (*tafsir bi al-'ilm*) has fueled extensive discussions on the Qur'an-science relationship.

Maurice Bucaille's work, *The Bible, the Qur'an and Science*,²⁸ played a pivotal role in encouraging certain Muslim scholars to assert that the Qur'an does not contradict scientific knowledge. Bucaille's thesis reinforced the rejection of views—prevalent among some Western scholars—that challenge the authenticity of the Qur'an as the word of God. Several scholars whose works are regarded as heavily influenced by Bucaille's ideas include Abdul-Majeed A. Azzindani (Yemen), Abd al-Rahman Salih 'Abd Allah, Nasir Ahmad Khuwailidih, Muhammad Abdullah al-Samadi (Jordan), Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (India), and Suleiman Qush (Philippines).²⁹ Despite the apologetic undertones often associated with works on the Qur'an and science, a considerable number of scholarly contributions continue to draw upon Maurice Bucaille and other figures to substantiate the perfection of Islam through the lens of scientific discourse.³⁰

Third, strengthening the relationship between religion and science has emerged as a response to the perspective that views a dichotomy between religious knowledge and general knowledge, which is believed to contribute to the stratification of knowledge into superior and inferior categories. The discourse on the integration and interconnection of religion and science, which has recently gained prominence in various academic discussions, is evidence of rejecting this dichotomous view. At the very least, this integrationist approach reflects efforts to bridge the two fields, ensuring that neither stands independently but instead engages in dialogue and mutual interaction. Works such as *Menyatukan Kembali Ilmu-Ilmu Agama dan Umum*³¹, *Integrasi Sains-Islam: Mempertemukan Epistemologi Islam dan Sains*,³² *Integrasi Ilmu: Sebuah Rekonstruksi Holistik*,³³ *Integrasi Ilmu dan Agama:*

²⁸ Maurice Bucaille, *Asal-Usul Manusia Menurut Bibel, Al-Qur'an dan Sains*, trans. Rahmani Astuti (Bandung: Mizan, 1990).

²⁹ Majid Daneshgar, *Studying the Qur'an in the Muslim Academy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 52–54.

³⁰ Daneshgar, 134–35.

³¹ Jarot Wahyudi, *Menyatukan Kembali Ilmu-Ilmu Agama dan Umum* (Yogyakarta: SUKA Press, 2003).

³² Amin Abdullah, *Integrasi Sains-Islam: Mempertemukan Epistemologi Islam dan Sains* (Yogyakarta: Pilar Religia, 2004).

³³ Mulyadi Kertanegara, *Integrasi Ilmu: Sebuah Rekonstruksi Holistik* (Bandung-Jakarta: Arazy berkerjasama dengan UIN Jakarta Press, 2005).

Interpretasi dan Aksi,³⁴ are just a few examples of studies that discuss the discourse on integrating religious and general scientific knowledge in Indonesia.

KH Bisri Mustafa: A Prominent Scholar and Writer

KH Bisri Mustafa was a well-known Islamic scholar, a highly productive writer, and the head (*pengasuh*) of Pesantren Raudhatut Thalibin in Rembang, Central Java. Achmad Zainal Huda recorded that KH Bisri Mustafa authored no fewer than 176 works across various fields of Islamic knowledge, both original writings and translations, most of which were written in Javanese using the *pégon* script.³⁵ KH Bisri Mustafa was born in Sawahan Village, Palen Alley, Rembang, Central Java, in 1334 H / 1915 CE under the name Masjhadi. He was named Bisri after returning from the Hajj pilgrimage with his family in 1923 at the age of eight. His full name later became Bisri Mustafa, incorporating his father's name. He was the son of H. Zaenal Mustafa and Siti Chotijah, who hailed from Makassar.

He was the eldest of four siblings, with his younger siblings named Salamah (Aminah), Misbah, and Ma'sum. His brother Misbah later became a renowned Islamic scholar and a prolific writer, producing around 200 works, including his notable 30-juz Qur'anic exegesis *al-Iklil fi Ma'ānī al-Tanzīl* and *Tāj al-Muslimīn*, the latter of which remained incomplete at only four juz before his passing. KH Bisri Mustafa and Siti Chotijah also had stepchildren from their previous marriages. Before marrying Chotijah, KH Bisri had been married to Dakilah, with whom he had two children: H. Zuhdi and H. Maskanah. Meanwhile, Chotijah had been married to Dalimin, with whom she had two children: Achmad and Tasmin.

After the passing of his father, the responsibility for the family fell on H. Zuhdi, his stepbrother. It was H. Zuhdi who enrolled Bisri in Holland Indische School (HIS) Rembang, a school run by the Dutch colonial government since their family was officially recognized as part of Raden Sudjana's lineage. The family lived in Sawahan, Rembang, alongside HIS teacher Mantri Guru, their neighbor. However, when Kyai Cholil of Kasingan learned that Bisri was attending HIS, he insisted that Bisri leave the school, arguing that it was a Dutch institution that might instill colonialist ideologies in him. As a result, Bisri transferred to Ongko 2 School, where he graduated in 1926 with a three-year education certificate.

In 1925, at the age of ten, he continued his education at Pesantren Pati under the guidance of KH Hasbullah. In 1930, he moved to Pesantren Kasingan, where he studied under Kyai Cholil, the scholar who had once urged him to leave HIS. During his time in the pesantren, he studied numerous classical Islamic texts across various fields of religious knowledge. KH Bisri Mustafa was regarded as an exceptionally intelligent student, often excelling beyond his peers. In July 1935 (17 Rajab 1354 H), he married Ma'rufah, the daughter of Kyai Cholil, thus becoming his son-in-law. From this marriage, they had eight children: Muhammad Cholil Bisri (1941), Ahmad Mustafa Bisri (1943), Muhammad Adib Bisri (1950), Faridah (1952), Najichah (1955), Labib (1956, passed away at age four),

³⁴ Zainal Abidin Bagir, *Integrasi Ilmu dan Agama: Interpretasi dan Aksi* (Bandung: Mizan, 2005).

³⁵ Achmad Zainal Huda, *Mutiara Pesantren: Perjalanan Hikmah KH Bisri Mustofa* (Yogyakarta: LKIS, 2005), 73.

Nihayah (1958, passed away at birth), and Atikah (1964). After marrying into the family, KH Bisri Mustafa actively taught at the pesantren. His learning continued through the *candak kulak* method (learning while teaching), particularly under the guidance of Kiai Kamil Karanggeneng.

In 1936, KH Bisri Mustafa undertook his second Hajj pilgrimage. While in Makkah, he resided in the home of Sheikh Hamid Said, where he served as a *khadam* (assistant). When the Indonesian Hajj delegation returned home, KH Bisri Mustafa and his companion Suyuti chose to remain in Makkah, returning only in the following Hajj season. During this period, KH Bisri Mustafa deepened his knowledge in various Islamic sciences, including tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis), hadith, and fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), under the guidance of scholars, some of whom hailed from Indonesia. He studied *Lubb al-Uṣūl* by Syaikh al-Islam Abi Yahya Zarkasyī, *Umdah al-Abrār* by Muhammad bin Ayyūb and *Tafsir al-Kashshāf* by al-Zamakhsharī under KH. Bakir from Yogyakarta. He also studied *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* under Syaikh Umar Ham and al-Maghriby, *al-Asybah wa al-Nazāir*, *al-Sunan al-Sittah* and *al-Hajāj al-Qusyairī* by Nisabury under Syaikh Ali Maliki, *Alfiyah Ibn Aqīl* by Ibn Mālik by Sayyid Amin, *Manhaj Żawī al-Nazar* by Syaikh Mahfudz Al-Tirmasi under Syaikh Ḥasan Masysyāt, *Tafsir Jalālayn* under Sayyid Alwi al-Mālikī, and *Jam'u al-Jawāmi* under KH Abdul Muhaimin.

Upon returning from Makkah, KH Bisri Mustafa actively taught at Pesantren Kasingan. In 1939, he became the successor (*badal*) of KH Cholil, who had passed away. During the Japanese occupation, the pesantren was destroyed, but KH Bisri Mustafa continued his teacher's legacy by establishing a new pesantren in Leteh, Rembang, in 1950, named Pesantren Raudhatut Thalibin. The pesantren has since grown significantly and remains a prominent institution. KH Bisri Mustafa had many students, some of whom later became influential figures, including KH. Saefullah (head of a pesantren in Cilacap, Central Java), KH. M. Anshari (Surabaya), KH. Wildan Abdul Hamid (head of a pesantren in Kendal), KH. Basrul Khafi, KH. Jauhar, Drs. Umar Faruq SH., Drs. Fathul Qarib (lecturer at IAIN Medan), and H. Rayani (head of Pesantren al-Falah, Bogor). Currently, KH Mustafa Bisri, the son of KH Bisri Mustafa, serves as the head of Pesantren Raudhatut Thalibin.

Despite his demanding roles as a teacher, preacher, and even politician, KH Bisri Mustafa remained highly productive as a writer. He utilized every available moment for writing, even while traveling. His works were intended not only as study materials for his pesantren students but also for the broader rural community, which actively engaged in religious study sessions (*pengajian*) in mosques and prayer halls, where he often delivered sermons.

KH Bisri Mustafa was known for his gentle approach to Islamic thought, which stemmed from his application of *uṣūl al-fiqh* (Islamic legal principles), prioritizing the welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) of the Muslim community while adapting to contemporary societal conditions. In 1968, when many Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) scholars opposed family planning (KB), KH Bisri Mustafa supported it, emphasizing the principle of *maṣlaḥah*. He even authored a book titled *Islam dan Keluarga Berencana (Islam and Family Planning)*,

published by BKKBN Central Java in 1970, in both Javanese and Indonesian. In 1965, during the political turmoil of the G30S/PKI rebellion, many pesantren students used drum bands to boost morale and demonstrate solidarity against the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). While most scholars at the time condemned drum bands as a religious innovation (*bid'ah*), KH Bisri Mustafa permitted their use. Beyond his moderate stance, KH Bisri Mustafa was a staunch defender of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah (Sunni Islam) in all aspects of life. His approach, rooted in *uṣūl al-fiqh*, consistently emphasized the welfare and benefit of the Muslim community, ensuring that religious rulings aligned with the needs of the era and society.

On the Tafsir of Surah Yāsīn

KH Bisri Mustafa is widely recognized for his masterpiece in Qur'anic exegesis, namely *Al-Ibrīz li Ma'rifat Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīz*, a complete 30-juz tafsir (Qur'anic commentary). This work was published in two formats: three volumes, each covering 10 juz, and 30 volumes, each containing one juz. Based on available research, there is no specific information on when KH Bisri Mustafa began writing *Tafsir al-Ibrīz*; however, it was completed on 29 Rajab 1379 (equivalent to January 28, 1960)³⁶. In addition to *Tafsir al-Ibrīz*, KH Bisri Mustafa also authored a separate exegesis titled *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*, which spans 38 pages and is published in a 12 × 15.5 cm book format. Menara Kudus published this work, though the publication year is not indicated. *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* follows the same exegetical methodology as *Tafsir al-Ibrīz*. KH Bisri Mustafa outlined the systematic structure of this work as follows³⁷: Qur'anic verses are written based on verse numbers and waqf (pause) markers. The verse number is placed at the end of the verse, literal (*lafẓi*) interpretation is written directly below the corresponding words in a hanging format (Gandhi), and additional explanations and commentary (*shariah*) are placed below a dividing line, numbered according to the relevant verse.

Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn is written in Javanese using the *Pegon* script. The author explicitly states that his interpretations are based on authoritative classical tafsir works, including: *Tafsir Jalālayn*, *Tafsir al-Munir*, *Tafsir al-Baidāwī*, *Tafsir al-Khāzin*, and *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* by Hamami Zadah. Among the specialized terminologies used in this work are '*tanbīh*' and '*muhimmah*': *Tanbīh* refers to notes that require special attention, such as variations in Qur'anic recitations (*qirā'āt*). The tafsir also includes *asbāb al-nuzūl* (context of revelation), hadith citations, and historical narratives from earlier Muslim communities.

KH Bisri Mustafa outlined several reasons for publishing *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*, which may have influenced its composition. First, he cited a hadith stating, "Every entity has a 'heart,' and the 'heart' of the Qur'an is surah Yāsīn". Second, he referenced a narration attributed to the Prophet:

"Wong Islam lanang utawa wadon iku yen nalikane sakaratul maut diwacaake surah Yasin iku banjur para malaikat kang jumlahe saben-saben sak huruf ana"

³⁶ Ahmad Baidowi, "Fenomena Aksara Pégon dalam Tradisi Penulisan Tafsir Pesantren (Pégon Script Phenomena in the Tradition of Pesantren's Qur'anic Commentaries Writing)," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Quran dan Hadis* 21, no. 2 (2020): 469–90, <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2020.2102-12>.

³⁷ KH Bisri Mustafa, *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* (Kudus: Menara Kudus, n.d.), 2.

sepuluh malaikat pada tumurun, pada baris ana ngarepe wongkang diwacaake (Sūrah Yāsīn) mau perlu nyuwunake pangapunten lan pada hadir nalika wong mahu didusi lan pada melu ngiringake nalika wong mahu kagawa menyang kubur.” (When a Muslim—whether male or female—is on the verge of death, and surah Yāsīn is recited for them, ten angels for each letter will descend, standing in rows before the dying person, seeking forgiveness on their behalf, attending their ritual purification (*ghusl*), and accompanying them to their burial).³⁸

KH Bisri Mustafa's interpretative approach in *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* closely resembles his methodology in *Tafsir al-Ibrīz*, with similar verse-by-verse explanations. It is possible that *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* was extracted from *Tafsir al-Ibrīz* and later published separately by the same publisher. However, KH Bisri Mustafa provided a special preface for the publication of *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*, as previously mentioned.

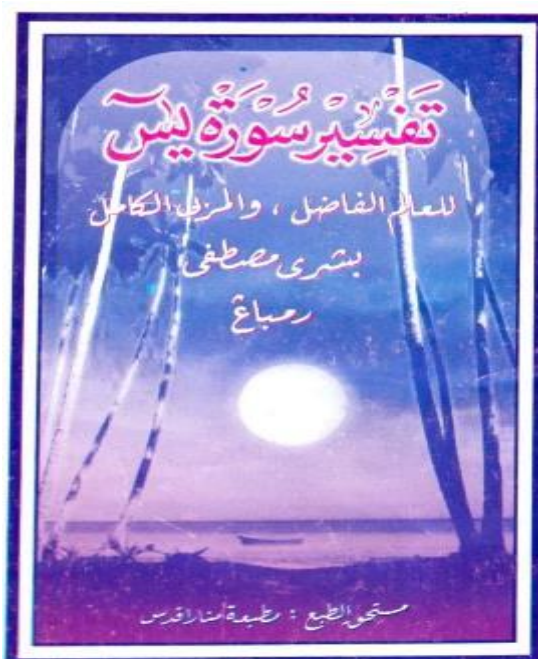


Figure 1. The Front Cover of *Tafsir Surah Yāsīn*

The Concept of “Scientific Integration” in KH Bisri Mustafa’s Interpretation of Natural Verses

As previously mentioned, some *mufassirūn* (Qur’anic exegetes) have responded to Qur’anic verses by offering interpretations that incorporate a scientific perspective, a methodology known as *al-laun al-‘ilmī fī al-tafsīr* or “scientific exegesis” (*Tafsir ‘Ilmī*). This exegetical approach has resulted in numerous works exploring the interpretation and understanding of Qur’anic verses, including in Indonesia, as previously noted.

Among the Qur’anic verses in surah Yāsīn that discuss natural phenomena are verses 33–36, which state:

³⁸ KH Bisri Mustafa, *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* (Kudus: Menara Kudus, n.d.), 3.

وَأَيَّةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَرْضُ الْمَيِّتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَاهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ (33) وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا
جَنَّاتٍ مِنْ نَخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ وَفَجَّرْنَا فِيهَا مِنَ الْعُيُونِ (34) لِيَأْكُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ
أَيْدِيهِمْ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ (35) سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ
أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (36)

33. And a sign for them is the dead earth: We bring it to life and bring forth from it grain, from which they eat. 34. And We have placed therein gardens of date palms and grapevines and caused springs to gush forth within it. 35. That they may eat of its fruit—and their hands did not produce it. Will they not then be thankful? 36. Exalted is He who created all pairs—of what the earth grows, of themselves, and of that which they do not know. (Kemenag Translation, 2019)

When interpreting verse 33, particularly the concept of reviving the earth, KH Bisri Mustafa states:

“Manusa iku yen gelem mikir-mikir kanthi tenang lan Ikhlas marang tanda-tanda bukti tumeraping kekuasaaning pengeran mesti ora bakal ingkar marang anane dina ba’as. Coba jajal, tanda mahu dipikir! Bumi kang wus mati, garing ngelinthing iku yen pangeran wus ngersaake banjur biso dadi urip kanthi sebab diturunake udan, yen wus teles banjur diecer jagung upamane jagung kang sauntu mahu yen wus dipendem ana ing lemah ora antara suwe nuli thukul metu godhonge sithik-sithik, tambah dina tambah gedhe nganti setengah dedek nuli metu kathik. Kathik mundhak-mundhak gedhe, tambah dino tambah gadhe nganti sampurna dadi jagung kang tuwo, yen wus dadi jagung tuwo banjur dipangan manusa kejaba kang sethitik banget perlu dipendhem maneh supaya bisa thukul maneh. Koyo mengkono sakbanjure. Saben jagung sak untu bisa dadi sak janggal, jagung kang pirang-pirang untu sak janggal pisan. Iku kabeh metune saking jagung kang namung sak untu. Coba, sak durunge jagung sak janggal mahu dadi, iku manggone ono ing endi? Durung diitung oyote lan tebune. Coba saiki kiyasake, pari kang ambyah-ambyah iku namung metu saking gabah siji, kates kang pating grubyung iku metune iyo saking wiji siji, wit asem kang sakmono gedhene iku iyo namung metu saking klungsu siji. Terusake anggone kita mikir, manusa kang gagah perkasa, atos balunge, kethak-kethak siraha, alot otote, methekel sepire, anjekethet brengose, bisa ngeluk wesi, bisa ngejur timah lan tembaga, bisa mabur ana ing angkasa, bisa silem ing samudra, kabeh mahu wijine mung banyu sak tetes kang anggegokake. Nalika isih rupa banyu sak tetes kang anggegokake mahu, balunge ana ing endi? Kukune, brengose, sepire lan liya-liyane, kabeh mahu ana ing endi? Yen Gusti Allah bisa nitahake manusa kang kaya mengkono gagahe saking bahan banyu sak tetes, ya gene kok ora kuasa nguripake manusa kang wus mati lan bosok ajur?”³⁹

Translated Version:

“If humans sincerely and attentively reflect on the signs that serve as evidence of God’s power, they will never deny the reality of resurrection (ba’th). Just think

³⁹ Mustafa, 20–22.

about this sign! The earth, once lifeless and dry, can come back to life when God wills it—by sending down rain. Once it becomes moist, planting a single grain of corn, for instance, and burying it in the soil will sprout tiny leaves in no time. As the days pass, it continues to grow, reaching a stage where it produces a cob. The cob grows larger and, with time, fully matures into a ripe ear of corn. Once mature, humans consume it, except for a small portion that is planted again to produce a new crop. This process continues indefinitely. From a single grain of corn, an entire cob emerges, each cob containing multiple grains. Where was all this corn before it existed? Not to mention the roots and stalks that accompany it. Now, compare this with rice, which grows in abundance from a single grain, or a papaya tree, which emerges from just one seed. Even a massive tamarind tree originates from a tiny seed. Let's take this reflection further. Consider a strong human being—with firm bones, a sturdy skull, resilient muscles, and thick eyebrows. Humans can bend iron, melt lead and copper, fly through the sky, and dive into the ocean—all of this originates from just a single drop of fluid. When a person is still in that initial form, where are their bones, fingernails, hair, and muscles? If Allah can create such a powerful human being from a mere drop of fluid, then why would He not have the power to bring the dead back to life, even after they have decayed into dust?"

The above quoted lengthy paragraph indicates that KH Bisri Mustafa is to explain verse 33 of Surah Yāsīn, which is highly relevant to natural phenomena, namely, the natural process of plant growth that benefits human beings. In the interpretation, KH Bisri invites the readers to contemplate nature's role in plant growth through scientific thinking. His explanation exemplifies how a pesantren scholar interprets the sacred text sharply to introduce "rationality" into the relationship between science and the Qur'an. Explaining by giving examples in a practical and sociological manner allowed the reader to understand more about the scientific elements within the Qur'an.

Meanwhile, the scientific explanation by KH Bisri Mustafa has its religious connotation in the fact that he tried to use this interpretation to let readers develop this sense of spiritual reality behind such religious beliefs as the falling of the Day of Judgment or the Omnipotence of Allah (Swt), which could be testified by at least two of his statements. First,

"Manusa iku yen gelem mikir-mikir kanthi tenang lan Ikhlas marang tanda-tanda bukti tumeraping kekuasaaning pengeran mesti ora bakal ingkar marang anane dina ba'as" (Kalau manusia mau berpikir dengan tenang dan ikhlas tentang bukti kekuasaan Tuhan, maka ia tidak akan mengingkari adanya hari kiamat). Kedua, kalimat "Yen Gusti Allah bisa nitahake manusa kang kaya mengkono gagahe saking bahan banyu sak tetes, ya gene kok ora kuasa nguripake manusa kang wus mati lan bosok ajur?" (Jika Tuhan bisa menciptakan manusia yang demikian dari setetes air, bagaimana dia tidak bisa menghidupkan kembali manusia yang sudah mati dan membusuk?)

In the subsequent verses, namely verses 34 and 35 of Surah Yāsīn, which discuss the importance of expressing gratitude to Allah for the blessings of "earth's produce" granted to humankind, KH Bisri Mustafa elaborates on the process of plant development:

“Coba para sedulur kepingin tadbire pengeran dak aturi pemandangan kanthi ringkes. Sekabehaning dumadi kang urip iku dumadine saking unsur papat: lemah, banyu, panas lan hawa. Supaya dumadi kang urip mahu bisa nerusake uripe, dheweke kudu tansah digulawintah kanti unsur papat mahu uga. Semangsa ora kaya mengkonono, dumadi kang urip mahu iyo nuli mati. Mula tanduran iku ora bisa urip tanpa lemah lan banyu semono ugo. Senajan wis ana lemahe lan banyune, ananging yen ora entuk labete panas lan haw aiyo ora bisa urip. Tanduran kang ditandur ana ing lemah kang eloh kanthi kagulowenthah banyu sak cukupe mesko ora bisa urip yen ditutupi rapet nganti ora entuk hawa. Tanduran kang ditandur ana ing sak jerone setoples kang ditutup rapet kaya mengkene iki mesti ora bisa urip. Semono uga hayawan kang diombeni wareg lan dipakani wareg nanging yen dikurung rapet kaya mengkene iki iya ora bisa urip”⁴⁰

Translation:

“All living beings are composed of four elements: soil, water, heat, and air. For any living entity to continue, it must constantly be nurtured with these four elements. If this does not happen, life will cease. Therefore, plants cannot survive without soil and water. Even if they have soil and water, without adequate heat and air, they cannot thrive. A plant grown in well-drained soil with sufficient water will not survive if it is completely enclosed and deprived of air. Similarly, a plant placed inside a tightly sealed jar will inevitably perish. Likewise, an animal provided with sufficient food and drink will not survive if confined in such a manner.”

To enhance the scientific explanation and improve comprehension, KH Bisri Mustafa supplements his discussion with an illustration:



Figure 2. Illustration of the Plant Growth Process in the Interpretation of QS Yāsīn: 34-35 in *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*

Although KH Bisri Mustafa does not explicitly adopt the *bi al-`ilmi* approach, his interpretation of nature-related verses in *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* reflects an inherent sense of “scientific integration,” particularly when discussing verses connected to natural knowledge. His “scientific” exegesis demonstrates KH Bisri Mustafa’s extensive reading and engagement with various relevant materials and drawing upon his own experiences.

His Qur’anic commentary’s scientific explanations and illustrations reveal an interdisciplinary awareness of KH Bisri Mustafa’s approach to interpreting verses related to

⁴⁰ Mustafa, 22–23.

non-religious subjects. Indeed, this interdisciplinary approach can also be found in earlier exegetical works, such as *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* by Hamami Zadah, which discusses agricultural cycles. Zadah explains these cycles about human life, death, and resurrection.⁴¹ Similarly, KH Bisri Mustafa interprets these verses within the broader discourse on Allah's role in sustaining life, emphasizing the necessity of gratitude toward Him. Allah brings forth heat through the sun, which He has tasked with illuminating the oceans, thereby generating vapor that forms clouds, which subsequently turn into rain that nourishes the earth, fields, and other elements essential for human survival.⁴²

KH Bisri Mustafa also did it in his interpretation of verse 36 of Surah Yāsīn, explicitly mentioning natural phenomena to accentuate religious consciousness. Regarding plants, he explained that Allah (Swt) "creates diverse agricultural yields despite the uniformity of the land, water, sunlight, and air, yet producing crops of varying colors—some sweet, some bitter, some sour, astringent; some are white, black, red, green, blue, purple, and others." Similarly, in the creation of humankind, he noted that "although formed from the same material, there exist, males and females, people with white, black, and yellow skin, and individuals with varying temperaments—some harsh, some gentle, and so forth." Likewise, in the animal kingdom, despite being made of the same substance, there are small and large creatures, some with four legs, two legs, six legs, or even more. Concerning this verse, KH Bisri Mustafa reiterated the necessity for humankind to glorify and sanctify Allah (Swt), who creates His creatures with absolute power.⁴³

Similarly, in interpreting of QS. Yāsīn: 37-40, KH Bisri Mustafa elaborated on various aspects of natural phenomena, including astronomy, the Earth, the moon, the sun, stars, and other planets, which he described as demonstrating magnetic relationships. To underscore the main message of these verses, he distinguished between the magnetic relationships observed in nature and the mechanical relationships among the components of a watch. Unlike a watch, he emphasized that natural phenomena contain religious values that manifest Allah's (Swt) power in orchestrating everything. In short, KH Bisri Mustafa's exegesis of natural verses in Surah Yāsīn is oriented toward instilling religious awareness of Allah's (Swt) existence.

Following Ian G. Barbour's model of integrating religion and science, KH Bisri Mustafa's explanation falls into the category of natural theology, which asserts that awareness of God can be derived from evidence found in natural phenomena.⁴⁴ Barbour categorizes integration models concerning the relationship between religion and science into three types: first, natural theology, in which God's existence is manifested in the design of nature, and the intricacies of nature lead to an awareness of God's existence; second, the theology of nature, in which religious doctrines are reformulated to align with established scientific understandings; and third, systematic synthesis, a more structured form of

⁴¹ Hamami Zadah, *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* (Al-Haramain, 2005), 10–11.

⁴² Mustafa, *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn*, 33.

⁴³ Mustafa, 23–24.

⁴⁴ Ian G. Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion: Enemies, Strangers or Partners?* (New York: Harper San Francisco, 2005), 26–27; Compare to Andrew Chignell and Derk Pereboom, "Natural Theology and Natural Religion," Website, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Archive, July 6, 2015, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/natural-theology/>.

integration where science and religion contribute to a more coherent worldview, elaborated within a more comprehensive metaphysical framework.

Conclusion

The discourse on the integration and interconnection between religion and science has been an ongoing discussion among religious communities. The emergence of diverse perspectives on the relationship between religion and science demonstrates that humankind acknowledges the existence of two “realms” that warrant attention in their interrelation. Interestingly, this subject has also garnered the attention of Quranic exegetes, who incorporate their knowledge of the relationship between religion and science when interpreting Quranic verses, particularly those containing scientific knowledge. KH Bisri Mustafa’s interpretation of natural verses in *Tafsir Sūrah Yāsīn* illustrates an interdisciplinary awareness in explaining these verses. The primary objective of KH Bisri Mustafa’s exegesis is to instill religious values, particularly those found in surah Yāsīn. According to him, surah Yāsīn emphasizes three main points: the oneness of Allah (Swt), the existence of His message, and the certainty of the Day of Judgment and Resurrection. This interpretation reflects the pesantren’s ability to adapt to scientific advancements, thereby facilitating modern audiences in comprehending the teachings of the Qur’an.

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