

Understanding Strong Human Character in the Qur'an: An Analysis of M. Quraish Shihab's Interpretation in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*

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Keywords: Al-Qur'an, Strong character, Human, M. Quraish Shihab, <i>Tafsir al-Mishbah</i>	Abstract Strong character is the moral and spiritual foundation needed for humans to face the challenges of life. The Qur'an as a guide to life contains many verses that describe the ideal human character. One of the contemporary commentaries that examines human strong character in the Qur'an is <i>Tafsir al-Mishbah</i> by M. Quraish Shihab. This study aims to analyze how Quraish Shihab interprets the concept of strong character in the Qur'an and its relevance to modern life. The method used is a literature study with a descriptive-analytical approach to the verses related to human strong character. The results showed that according to Quraish Shihab, strong character in the Qur'an includes piety, patience, honesty, and courage in upholding the truth. Quraish Shihab's interpretation provides an understanding that the strength of human character is not only physical, but also includes spiritual and moral aspects that shape a person's personality. Of course, this can foster the spirit in the soul of each individual to worship Allah. This finding reinforces the importance of strong human character as the main capital in building a better individual and society. This study is expected to provide deeper insights into the concept of strong human character in the Qur'an and contribute to the insight of contemporary tafsir by applying Islamic values comprehensively.
Kata Kunci: Al-Qur'an, Karakter kuat, Manusia, M. Quraish Shihab, <i>Tafsir al-Mishbah</i>	Abstrak Karakter yang kuat merupakan landasan moral dan spiritual yang diperlukan manusia dalam menghadapi berbagai tantangan kehidupan. Al-Qur'an sebagai pedoman hidup mengandung banyak ayat yang menggambarkan karakter manusia yang ideal. Salah satu tafsir kontemporer yang mengkaji karakter kuat manusia dalam al-Qur'an adalah <i>Tafsir al-Mishbah</i> karya M. Quraish Shihab. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana Quraish Shihab menafsirkan konsep karakter kuat dalam Al-Qur'an serta relevansinya dengan kehidupan modern. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi kepustakaan dengan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis terhadap ayat-ayat yang berkaitan dengan karakter kuat manusia. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa menurut Quraish Shihab, karakter kuat dalam al-Qur'an mencakup ketakwaan, kesabaran, kejujuran, dan keberanian dalam menegakkan kebenaran. Tafsir Quraish Shihab memberikan pemahaman bahwa kekuatan karakter manusia tidak hanya bersifat fisik, tetapi juga meliputi aspek spiritual dan moral yang membentuk kepribadian seseorang. Tentu saja, hal ini dapat menumbuhkan spirit dalam jiwa setiap individu untuk beribadah kepada Allah. Temuan ini memperkuat pentingnya karakter kuat manusia sebagai modal utama dalam membangun individu dan masyarakat yang lebih baik. Kajian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan wawasan lebih dalam mengenai konsep karakter kuat manusia dalam al-Qur'an serta berkontribusi dalam menambah wawasan tafsir kontemporer dengan menerapkan nilai-nilai Islam secara komprehensif.

Article History: Received: 31-07-2024 Accepted: 30-05-2025 Published: 20-04-2024

INTRODUCTION

In a modern era full of challenges and rapid changes, the need for strong character is becoming increasingly important.¹ Strong character not only serves as an individual's moral and spiritual foundation, but also as a pillar that sustains the integrity and stability of society. A person with a strong character is able to face various difficulties with resilience, fortitude, and solid principles.² In Islam, strong character is not just physical endurance or intellectual intelligence, but also includes spiritual, moral and social aspects. Therefore, understanding the concept of strong character in the Qur'anic perspective becomes very important as a guide for Muslims in living life.³

The Qur'an as the main source of Islamic teachings has discussed many concepts of human character, both positive and negative.⁴ To understand more deeply the Qur'anic message about strong character, interpretation from competent scholars is needed. One of the commentaries that provides in-depth analysis of the Qur'anic verses is *Tafsir al-Mishbah* by M. Quraish Shihab. This interpretation is famous for its contextual approach and analysis that is relevant to modern life, so it can be the main reference in studying human strong character based on the teachings of the Qur'an.⁵

The study of character in the Qur'an has been carried out by many researchers. Some previous studies that have similar themes include: "*Character Education in Qur'anic Perspective*" by Ikhwan.⁶ This study examines the concept of character education in the Qur'an with a focus on the moral and ethical values contained in divine revelation. Ikhwan identifies various verses that emphasize the importance of individual character building through education based on Qur'anic teachings. He analyzes how the Qur'ān provides practical guidance in shaping good character, such as the traits of patience, honesty, and humility. This research contributes to the understanding of character education in the Islamic context, as well as emphasizing the importance of the implementation of Qur'anic teachings in the formation of a strong and noble personality.

Furthermore, "*Character Education Values in Perspective of Tafsir al-Mishbah by Muhammad Quraish Shihab*" by Muh Mawangir.⁷ This research examines the values of character education in Al-Mishbah interpretation by M. Quraish Shihab. Mawangir analyzes how Shihab views character education based on Qur'anic verses in his tafsir,

¹ Margi Wahono, "Pendidikan Karakter: Suatu Kebutuhan Bagi Mahasiswa Di Era Milenial", *Integralistik* 29, no. 2 (2018): 145-151. <https://doi.org/10.15294/integralistik.v29i2.16696>.

² Syaridawati, et al., "Al-Sabr dalam Al-Qur'an sebagai Pilar Pendidikan Karakter", *Jurnal Tafsere* 12, no. 2 (2024): 141-154. <https://doi.org/10.24252/jt.v12i2.54353>.

³ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), 215.

⁴ Abd. Mukhid, "Konsep Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Al-Qur'an", *Nuansa: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Sosial dan Keagamaan Islam* 13, no. 2 (2016): 309-328. <https://doi.org/10.19105/nuansa.v13i2.1102>.

⁵ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, 220.

⁶ Ikhwan, "Pendidikan Karakter dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an", *Jurnal Mumtaz* 4, no. 1 (2021), 45.

⁷ Muh Mawangir, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Perspektif *Tafsir al-Mishbah* Karya Muhammad Quraish Shihab", *Jurnal Tadrib* 5, no. 2 (2022), 87.

highlighting aspects such as patience, honesty, and social responsibility. Through an in-depth tafsir approach, Mawangir reveals how Shihab explains these character concepts in the context of education, and how these values can be applied in everyday life to create individuals with good character and noble character.

The research "*Islamic Character Development Through Tafsir al-Mishbah*" by Hidayatullah.⁸ This research focuses on the development of Islamic character through *Tafsir al-Mishbah* by M. Quraish Shihab. Hidayatullah examines how this tafsir can be used as a source in character development in accordance with Islamic values. He investigates various verses that become the foundation of Islamic character building, such as honesty, responsibility, and compassion. This research also provides insight into how Shihab's tafsir can be implemented in the context of education to produce a young generation that has good morals and is able to face the challenges of the times with a wise and peaceful attitude. This research is almost the same as that conducted by Mochamad Luftan Sofa,⁹ Mumtazah Al 'Ilmah, et al.,¹⁰ Musa Thahir,¹¹ Siti Fatimah, and Suparno.¹²

In contrast to previous studies, this research has a more specific focus, namely analyzing how M. Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir al-Mishbah* explains the concept of strong human character in the Qur'an and its relevance to contemporary life. The main focus of this research is: How is the strong human character described and explained in *Tafsir al-Mishbah* by M. Quraish Shihab? What values form a strong character according to *Tafsir al-Mishbah*? and how is its relevance to modern life.

In an initial search, M. Quraish Shihab emphasized that strong character is not only about physical or mental endurance, but also about the quality of solid faith, steadfastness in the face of trials, justice in behavior, social responsibility, and commitment to the values of truth.¹³ Thus, this study is expected to provide practical and theoretical guidance for those who want to understand and develop strong character based on the teachings of the Qur'an, especially through the interpretation presented in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

⁸ Hidayatullah, "Pengembangan Karakter Islami Melalui *Tafsir al-Mishbah*," *Jurnal Al-Bayan* 6, no. 3 (2023), 132.

⁹ Mochamad Luftan Sofa, *Model Pendidikan Karakter Qur'ani Dalam Surah Luqman Ayat 12-19 Dan Cara Penerapannya Di Era Disrupsi (Telaah Tafsir Al Mishbah)*, Tesis, UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, 2023.

¹⁰ Mumtazah Al 'Ilmah, Salamah Noorhidayati, Ahmad Saddam, Siti Marpuah, and Husnul Amira, "Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Surah Al-Hujurat: Telaah Penafsiran Mahmud Yunus Dalam Tafsir Al-Karim", *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 3, no. 2 (2023): 256-272. <https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v3i2.23189>.

¹¹ Musa Thahir, Telaah Surat Lukman Menurut Quraish Shihab: Memahami Konsep Pendidikan Karakter dalam Islam", *Al-Fikra: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman* 22, no. 2 (2023). <http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/af.v22i2.28765>.

¹² Siti Fatimah, Suparno, "Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Surat Al-Ahzab Ayat 21 Perspektif Tafsir Al-Mishbah Karya Muhammad Quraish Shihab", *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Miazhar* 1, no. 1 (2022).

¹³ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, 310.

In addition, the importance of the research lies in several key aspects: *first*, the relevance to modern challenges. The research highlights how strong character is an urgent need in the face of challenges and rapid changes in the modern era. With the world constantly evolving, individuals need to have moral, spiritual, and intellectual resilience to maintain social integrity and stability. *Second*, Significance in the Islamic Context. Strong character is not just about physical endurance, but also includes the moral and spiritual aspects described in the Qur'an. Therefore, understanding character values in Islam, especially through *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, becomes very important to form individuals who are strong in personality and religious values.

Third, Contribution to Islamic Studies. By focusing on *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, this research contributes to enriching contemporary interpretive studies. This interpretation is known for its contextual approach that not only explains the meaning of the verse textually, but also relates it to the reality of life today. Fourth, the impact on character education. This research also has implications in the world of education, especially in building a character-based learning system. By understanding how the Qur'an teaches about strong character, the results of this research can be used in various fields, including education, da'wah, and self-development.

Overall, this research is important because it seeks to explore strong character values from an Islamic perspective, provide insights that can be applied in everyday life, and enrich modern tafsir studies. This research is expected to make a significant contribution to the study of Qur'anic interpretation and the moral-spiritual development of Muslims in the modern era. By understanding the strong character described in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, individuals are expected to develop a better character, so that they can become a more resilient person in facing the challenges of life. In addition, this study also emphasizes the importance of integration between faith and righteous deeds as the main foundation in the formation of strong character.¹⁴

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this research is a qualitative method with the type of *library research*.¹⁵ The descriptive analytical technique is used with the aim of providing a comprehensive picture and in-depth analysis of the theme under study. Some of the research steps used are: Determining the research theme based on the urgency and relevance in modern life, Collecting data from primary data sources, namely the Book of *Tafsir al-Mishbah* by M. Quraish Shihab, as well as secondary data sources in the form of supporting literature, books, and relevant journals, Analyzing data using an analytical descriptive approach to understand the concept of strong

¹⁴ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah...*, 305.

¹⁵ Annisaa Tusakdia, Lukman Nul Hakim, Eko Zulfikar, "The Relevance Of Hifdzun Nafs With The Law of Qishash: An Analysis Of Ibnu 'Ashur's Interpretation In Tafsir al-Tahrir Wa al-Tanwir", *Al-Shamela : Journal of Quranic and Hadith Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 64-78. <https://doi.org/10.61994/alshamela.v2i1.402>.

character based on Qur'anic verses interpreted in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, Using the thematic method of figures, namely tracing the thoughts and methodology of M. Quraish Shihab. Using the thematic method of figures, namely tracing the thoughts and methodology of M. Quraish Shihab in interpreting verses related to human strong character, and drawing conclusions from the results of the analysis to provide a comprehensive picture of the interpretation of human strong character in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.¹⁶

With this method, the research will not only describe the concept of strong character in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, but also examine how M. Quraish Shihab's thoughts in understanding, interpreting, and applying character values in modern life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of M. Quraish Shihab and *Tafsir al-Mishbah*

His full name is Muhammad Quraish Shihab. He was born in Rappang, Sidrap district (Sidenereng, Rappang), South Sulawesi, on February 16, 1944.¹⁷ name of the fourth child of Prof. KH. Abdurrahman Sihab, a scholar and expert in tafsir who once served as Rector of UMI and IAIN Alauddin Makassar.¹⁸ Quraish Shihab has experienced difficulties and love for the Koran since childhood. At the age of six to seven, he was required by his father to attend Quran recitations held by himself. His father not only told him to read the Quran, but also told him briefly about the stories in the Quran. According to Quraish Shihab, this is where his love for the Quran began to develop.¹⁹

His formal education started from elementary school in Makassar. After that, he continued his secondary education in Malang while attending the Darul Hadith al-Falahiqiyah Islamic Boarding School in the same city. To deepen his Islamic studies, Quraysh was sent by his father to al-Azhar, Cairo in 1958 and was admitted to the second grade of Tsanawiyah. Then he continued his studies at al-Azhar University at the Faculty of Ushuluddin majoring in Tafsir and Hadith. in 1967 he earned an Lc degree (equivalent to a bachelor's degree). Two years later, 1969, Quraish succeeded in obtaining a degree so that M. Quraish Shihab would further explore Islamic studies. He earned an "M.A" degree in the same department with a thesis entitled "*al-I'jaz Tasyri'i li al- Qur'an al-karim*" (the miracle of the Qur'an al-Karim from the Legal Sector).²⁰

¹⁶ Azizurrochim, Muh. Imam Sanusi Al Khanafi, "Kerangka Dasar Agama Dalam Buku Wawasan Al-Qur'an Karya M. Quraish Shihab (Kajian Al-Qur'an Dengan Pendekatan Sosiologi Agama)", *Al-Shamela : Journal of Quranic and Hadith Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023): 54-69. <https://doi.org/10.61994/alshamela.v1i1.37>.

¹⁷ Mauluddin Anwar, Latief Siregar, dan Hadi Mustofa, *Cahaya Cinta Dan Canda M. Quraish Shihab*, (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2015), 3.

¹⁸ Bibit Suprpto, *Ensiklopedia Ulama Nusantara: Riwayat Hidup, Karya dan Sejarah Perjuangan 157 Ulama Nusantara*, (Jakarta: Galeri Media Indonesia, 2009), 668.

¹⁹ Islah Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Teraju, 2003), 80.

²⁰ Siti Maryam, *Konsep Syukur Dalam Al-Qur'an (Studi Komperasi Tafsir Al-Azhar dan Tafsir al-Mishbah)*, Skripsi, Fakultas Ushuluddin Adab Dan Dakwah, IAIN Tulungagung, 2018, 85.

M. Quraish Shihab is a prolific contemporary writer and mufassir who has written many books. His works, especially those related to Quranic studies, include: *Tafsir Al-Manar: Keistimewaan dan Kelemahannya* (1984), *Filsafat Hukum Islam* (1987), *Mahkota Tuntunan Illahi: Tafsir Surat Al-Fatihah* (1988), *Membumikan Alquran: Fungsi dan Peranan Wahyu dalam Kehidupan Umat* (1994), *Studi Kritik Tafsir Al-Manar* (1994), *Lentera Hati: Kisah dan Hikmah Kehidupan* (1994), *Wawasan Alquran: Tafsir Maudhu'i atas Berbagai Persoalan Umat* (1996), *Hidangan Ayat-Ayat Tahlil* (1997), *Tafsir Alquran Al-Karim: Tafsir Surat-Surat Pendek Berdasarkan Urutan Turun Wahyu* (1997), *Mukjizat Alquran Ditinjau dari Berbagai Aspek Kebahasaan, Isyarat Ilmiah, dan Pemberitaan Ghaib* (1997), *Sahur Bersama M. Quraish Shihab di RCTI* (1997), *Menyingkap Ta'bir Illahi: al-Asma' al-Husna dalam Perspektif Alquran* (1998), *Fatwa-Fatwa Seputar Alquran dan Hadist* (1999) and others.²¹

M. Quraish Shihab's works mentioned above show his significant role in the advancement of science in Indonesia, especially in the field of the Quran. *Tafsir Al Mishbah: The Message, Impression, and Harmony of the Quran* is his best work of his many works. It was this interpretation that made his name one of the best mufasirs in Indonesia. He can write interpretations of 30 Juz of the Quran from Volume 1 to 15.²²

The *Tafsir al-Mishbah* used by Quraish Shihab for the name of his tafsir book has a deep purpose and meaning. In his preface, it is explained that al-Mishbah means lamp, lamp, lantern or object that serves to provide light for those who are in darkness. The choice of this name reflects Quraish Shihab's hope that his tafsir can be a light, helping readers find guidance and life guidance. Especially, this book is expected to facilitate those who have difficulty understanding the Qur'an directly due to language barriers.²³ *Tafsir al-Mishbah* by Quraish Shihab is written in Indonesian which contains 30 juz of verses of the Qur'an divided into 15 large volumes.

Each volume contains one, two or three juz. *Tafsir al-Mishbah* was printed for the first time in the month of Sha'ban 1421 H / November 2000 M published by the publisher Lentera Hati. The arrangement of the verse is adjusted to the existing arrangement in the Uthmani Mushaf arrangement. *Tafsir al-Mishbah* is the first complete 30 Juz Quranic commentary in the last 30 years written by a leading Indonesian commentator. The author's Indonesian color gives an interesting and

²¹ Rabiatal Adawiyah, Muhammad Albadar Adren, Ridwan Sholeh, Putri Ramadani, and Sukiyat Sukiyat, "Mengatasi Stres Dan Kecemasan Perspektif QS. An-Nazi'at Ayat 40: Analisis Penafsiran Quraish Shihab Dalam *Tafsir al-Mishbah*", *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 4, no. 2 (2024): 869. <https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v4i2.25109>.

²² Akhmad Khoirul Anwar, Jaka Ghianovan, and Ida Kurnia Shofa, "Understanding the Concept of Gender in Qur'anic Interpretation (A Feminist Study of the Thought of M. Quraish Shihab)", *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 4, no. 1 (2024): 206-221. <https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v4i1.22717>.

²³ Hamdani Anwar, *Telaah Kritis Terhadap Tafsir al-Mishbah, Mimbar agama dan Budaya* (Tt.k: Februari, 2002), 176-177.

distinctive color and is very relevant to enrich the treasure of understanding and appreciation of Muslims for the secret meaning of the verse of Allah SWT.²⁴

In *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, the method used by Quraish Shihab is not much different from Hamka, namely by using the *tahlili* (analytical) method, which is one of the methods of interpretation that intends to explain the content of the Qur'anic verses from all aspects. Quraish Shihab gives the meaning of the vocabulary of each verse then explains the meaning of the verse seen from all its aspects, describes the *asbab al-nuzul*, explains the munasabah between verses and even between letters. However, he still stands on the assumption that the verses interpreted are integrated in one theme. This is what distinguishes the *tahlili* method used by Shihab from the *tahlili* method used by previous mufassirs, who tended to explain all verses without categorizing them into certain themes. Furthermore, by providing explanations about vocabulary, global meaning of verses, correlations, *asbab al-nuzul* and other things that are considered to be helpful for understanding the Qur'an.²⁵

While in terms of style *Tafsir al-Mishbah* is more inclined to the style of cultural literature and society (*al-adabi ijtimai*), which is a style of interpretation that seeks to understand the nash-nash al-Qur'an in the first and main way that announces the expressions of the Qur'an carefully, then explains the meanings intended by the Qur'an with beautiful and interesting language, then a mufassir trying to connect the nash nash al-Qur'an studied with social reality and cultural systems that exist.²⁶ This style of interpretation is a new style that attracts readers and fosters love for the Qur'an and motivation to explore the meanings and secrets of the Qur'an.

There are at least three characters that must be owned by a literary and cultural tafsir work and society. *First*, it is able to explain the guidance of the Qur'anic verses that are relevant to people's lives while showing that the Qur'an is a holy book that applies throughout the ages. *Second*, it focuses on solution-oriented explanations of social ills and issues facing society. *Third*, it is delivered in simple language, easy to understand, and pleasing to the ear.²⁷

Strong Character According to Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*

In *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, M. Quraish Shihab explains that strong character is not only related to physical strength, but rather to firmness of faith, patience, justice, social responsibility, and commitment to truth. Strong character is a reflection of the moral and spiritual values taught in the Qur'an, which must be possessed by every individual in order to be able to face the various challenges of life. According to Quraish Shihab, someone who has a strong character is an individual who has mental and spiritual resilience in facing trials and has a commitment to always be on the path of goodness.

²⁴ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), Vol. 1, 7.

²⁵ Nashruddin Baidan, *Metodologi Penafsiran Al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2009), 57.

²⁶ Samsurrohman, *Pengantar Ilmu Tafsir* (Jakarta: AMZAH, 2014), 193-194.

²⁷ Samsurrohman, *Pengantar Ilmu Tafsir*, 194.

This character also involves self-control, patience, and the ability to be fair and responsible towards others.

The values that form a strong character according to *Tafsir al-Mishbah* include:

1. Strong faith

This point is clearly stated in the word of Allah in QS. al-Baqarah verse 176 as follows:

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ
وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي
الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ
أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

"It is not virtue to turn your face towards the east and the west, but it is to believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the books, and the prophets; and to give away one's beloved wealth to one's relatives, orphans, the poor, the wayfarer (in need of help) and the beggar; and (to free) slaves, and to establish prayer, and to pay the zakat; and those who keep their word when they make a promise, and those who are patient in adversity, in suffering, and in battle. They are the true believers; and they are the pious."

Judging from the interpretation of the previous verse QS. al-Baqarah: 176, it is explained that they, namely the disbelievers, say, namely believe that Allah has or raises children. The Jews said, "Uzair is the son of Allah," the Christians said, "Jesus is the son of Allah," even the polytheists said, "Angels are the sons of Allah." This belief is refuted by His words: Glory be to Allah. Most Holy is Allah from any shortcoming, likeness, and need, even a little. If He has children, then it means that there is a resemblance to Him. For, no matter how different the son is from the father, there must be some resemblance between the two, however slight. If Allah had, or adopted children, then it would mean that He has shortcomings and needs. This is impossible, for He belongs to the eyes, not to others, and is the creation and under His management of what is in the heavens and the earth, all of which are subject to Him. Children are needed, among other things, to help parents, whereas Allah does not need anything because everything is subject to Him.²⁸

That's where the interpretation of QS. al-Baqarah: 177, this verse immediately refutes the misguided beliefs of the people, before continuing to criticize the attitudes and speech of the People of the Book. This immediacy is necessary, because the belief in the oneness of Allah swt. is the main principle of Islamic teachings, and is the basis for all Muslim activities, physically and mentally, passive and active. Quraish Shihab explains that true faith not only limited to the belief of the heart but must also be realized in deeds.²⁹

²⁸ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

²⁹ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW also teaches the importance of strong faith in the hadith about the virtues of faith, as narrated by the hadith of Bukhari and Muslim:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: الْإِيمَانُ بِضْعٌ وَسِتُّونَ شُعْبَةً، فَأَفْضَلُهَا قَوْلُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَذْنَاهَا إِمَاطَةُ الْأَذَى عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ، وَالْحَيَاءُ شُعْبَةٌ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ

*"Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: 'Faith has seventy or sixty branches. The greatest of these is the utterance of 'Laa ilaaha illallah' and the least is the removal of a nuisance from the path. And shame is one of the branches of faith.'"*³⁰

Strong faith is the main foundation in the formation of strong character. Quraish Shihab emphasizes that strong faith is the key to facing the various challenges of life. In the contemporary context, a strong faith can help individuals face modern challenges such as job pressures, personal crises, and rapid social changes.³¹

2. Fortitude in the face of trials

Steadfastness or patience in the face of trials is another hallmark of strong character. Allah says in QS. al-Baqarah: 155-157 which reads,

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالتَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِيرِ الصَّابِرِينَ. الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ. أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

"And indeed We shall try you with fear, hunger, want of wealth, souls and fruits. And give glad tidings to the patient, (those) who, when afflicted with calamity, say, 'Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji'ūn' (Surely we belong to Allah and to Him is our Return), Those are the ones who receive complete blessings and mercy from their Lord, and those are the ones who are guided."

In the interpretation of Quraish Shihab, the verse above states that the nature of world life, among others, is characterized by the inevitability of various trials. The tests or trials faced are essentially small, so that no matter how big, they are small when compared to the rewards and rewards that will be received. The tests given by Allah are few. They are small compared to the potential that Allah has bestowed upon man. It is only a little, so that everyone who is tested will be able to bear it if he uses the potentials that God has given him. It should be noted that the preceding verse teaches prayer and patience. If so, they should be practiced before this test comes. The same applies during the test.

What is the form of the test? A little bit of fear, which is unrest in the heart. And Allah does not explain when and in what form fear takes - therein lies the test. Fear of trials is the gateway to failure; so are Divine trials. To face something one fears is to

³⁰ Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin al-Mughirah al-Bukhari, *Shahih al-Bukhari* (CD: al-Maktabah al-Syamilah, Digital), Juz 1, hadis no: 9.

³¹ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

fortify oneself against its harassment. Hunger is no different. If you are being tested in the form of hunger, Allah has provided the potential.

Man must fight, because life is a struggle between truth and falsehood, a battle between good and evil and in his life must face Satan and his followers. Allah commands us to fight against them. Of course, in struggles and battles there must be victims, the right or the wrong side. If so, do not grumble in the face of the test, it must be faced with patience and trust in Allah. This steadfastness is not only passive but also active, i.e. trying to find the best solution while remaining patient. Those who say the phrase *Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un* by appreciating its meanings, they are the ones who get a lot of blessings, Grace and guidance towards the path of worldly and *ukhrawi* happiness.³²

The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW also teaches about the importance of patience in facing trials, as narrated by the hadith of Bukhari & Muslim:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ يَصْبِرْ يُصْبِرْهُ اللَّهُ، وَمَا أُعْطِيَ أَحَدٌ عَطَاءً خَيْرًا وَأَوْسَعَ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ

"Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever is patient, Allah will make him patient, and no one has been given a better and more extensive gift than patience." ³³

Steadfastness in facing trials is an important value taught in the Qur'an and emphasized by Quraish Shihab. In the modern era, steadfastness can be translated as resilience, which is indispensable in dealing with the stress and challenges of daily life.

3. Fairness in behavior

Justice is one of the main pillars in Islamic teachings and characterizes a strong character, as Allah says in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

"Verily, Allah enjoins you to deliver the trust to those to whom it is due, and (enjoins you) when you set a law among men to set it justly. Verily, Allah gives you the best of teaching. Verily, Allah is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing."

In the interpretation of QS. an-Nisa': 58, Quraish Shihab explains that in the previous verse because of the temporary badness of the Jews, such as not fulfilling the mandate that Allah entrusted to them, namely the mandate to practice the holy book and not hide its contents, now the Qur'an again guides Muslims not to follow in their footsteps. The guidance this time is really emphasized, because this verse directly mentions the name of Allah as the one who guides and commands. Verily, Allah, the

³² Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

³³ Al-Bukhari, *Shahih al-Bukhari*, Juz 2, hadis no: 1469.

Exalted, enjoins you to fulfill your trusts completely and on time, to their owners, that is, to those who are entitled to receive them, whether the trust of Allah to you or the trust of man, no matter how much is handed over, when determining the law between people, whether they are in dispute or not, Allah enjoins that you must determine the decision fairly in accordance with what Allah teaches, not taking sides except for the truth and not imposing sanctions except for the offender, not persecuting even your opponent and not favoring your friend. Quraish Shihab also emphasizes that justice must be applied in all aspects of life, both in personal and social contexts. Justice is not only in legal decisions but also in daily attitudes and behavior.³⁴

The Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW also emphasizes the importance of justice, as in the Hadith about the need to be fair to all people:

عَنْ النُّعْمَانِ بْنِ بَشِيرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ أَوْلَادِكُمْ

*"Nu'man ibn Bashir (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Fear Allah and be just among your children.""*³⁵

Fairness in conduct is the ability to behave fairly and impartially, both towards oneself and others. In contemporary life, this value is relevant in social and professional contexts, where fairness is necessary to create a harmonious society and a healthy workplace.³⁶

4. Social responsibility

Quraish Shihab also highlights the importance of social responsibility as part of a strong character. God says:

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ. فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ. وَلَا يُحِضُّ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ. فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ. وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ

"Do you know those who deny the religion?. Those are the ones who rebuke the orphans, and do not encourage the feeding of the poor, So woe to those who pray, (i.e.) those who neglect their prayers, and those who do riya, and are reluctant (to help with) useful things."

In the interpretation of QS. al-Ma'un: 1-7, Quraish Shihab explains that someone who has a strong character will always be sensitive to the social circumstances around him and try to help people in need. This includes charity and other good deeds that benefit others. In surah al-Ma'un Allah also criticizes those who have the ability, but are reluctant, let alone giving, not even suggesting. There are no less than ten opinions on the meaning of the word *al-ma'un*/help (that little), among others: Zakat, Property,

³⁴ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

³⁵ Abu al-Husain Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, *Shahih Muslim*, (CD: al-Maktabah al-Syamilah, Digital), Juz 5, hadis no: 4267.

³⁶ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

Household appliances, Water, and Daily necessities such as pots, plates, hoes, and so on.³⁷

Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad SAW that mention social responsibility, such as in Hadiths that teach the importance of helping others:

عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: وَاللَّهِ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ

*"Ibn 'Umar (radhiyallahu 'anhuma) reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Allah will always help a servant as long as that servant helps his brother.""*³⁸

Quraish Shihab emphasizes the importance of social responsibility, which means making a positive contribution to society. In the era of globalization, social responsibility is becoming increasingly important, both in environmental, social, and economic contexts.³⁹

5. Commitment to truth values

Commitment to the values of truth is another important aspect raised in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*. God says:

وَالْعَصْرُ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

"By the times. Indeed, mankind is truly in loss, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds and exhort one another to righteousness and exhort one another to patience."

In this surah Allah warns people who make all their activities only a race to accumulate wealth and spend their time only for this purpose, so that they neglect the main purpose of this life. Quraish Shihab's interpretation emphasizes the importance of holding fast to the truth and advising one another in patience and righteousness. This includes the courage to uphold the truth despite facing risks or challenges.⁴⁰

Prophet Muhammad's hadith on the importance of telling the truth and adhering to the truth is also relevant to this topic:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصِّدْقِ، فَإِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ، وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَا يَزَالُ الرَّجُلُ يَصْدُقُ وَيَتَحَرَّى الصِّدْقَ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ صِدْقًا، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْكَذِبَ، فَإِنَّ الْكَذِبَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ، وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ، وَمَا يَزَالُ الرَّجُلُ يَكْذِبُ وَيَتَحَرَّى الْكَذِبَ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَذَابًا.

³⁷ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

³⁸ Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, *Shahih Muslim*, Juz 8, hadis no: 7028. Abu Dawud Sulaiman al-Sijistasni, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, (CD: al-Maktabah al-Syamilah, Digital), Juz 4, hadis no: 4948. Muhammad Isa bin Isa al-Tirmidzi, *Sunan al-Tirmidzi*, (CD: al-Maktabah al-Syamilah, Digital), Juz 4, hadis no: 1425.

³⁹ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

⁴⁰ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

*"Abdullāh ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Speak the truth, for speaking the truth leads to good, and good leads to Paradise. A person always speaks the truth and strives to speak the truth so that he will be written in the sight of Allah as a very truthful person. And avoid lying, for lying leads to evil, and evil leads to hell. A person lies and strives to lie so that he will be written with Allah as a liar."*⁴¹

Holding fast to truthful values is part of a strong character. In a world that is often overwhelmed by misleading information and uncertainty, a commitment to truth is an important moral guide. The relevance of these values to contemporary life is obvious. In an increasingly complex and challenging world, a strong character based on these values can help individuals to remain resilient, have integrity and be able to make positive contributions to society. Understanding and applying these values, as outlined in *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, can be a practical guide for Muslims in living their daily lives more wisely and resolutely.⁴²

CONCLUSIONS

In *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, M. Quraish Shihab explains that strong character is not only related to physical strength, but rather to firmness of faith, patience, justice, social responsibility, and commitment to truth. Strong character is a reflection of the moral and spiritual values taught in the Qur'an, which must be possessed by every individual in order to be able to face the various challenges of life. According to Quraish Shihab, someone who has a strong character is an individual who has mental and spiritual resilience in facing trials and has a commitment to always be on the path of goodness. This character also involves self-control, patience, and the ability to be fair and responsible towards others.

Strong Character Building Values and Their Relevance to Contemporary Life: *first*, Strong faith is the main foundation of strong character. In the modern context, strong faith helps individuals deal with work pressures, personal crises, and rapid social changes. *Second*, resilience is important in dealing with the stress and challenges of daily life. *Third*, fairness in behavior is necessary to create a harmonious society and a healthy workplace. *Fourth*, Social responsibility involves making a positive contribution to society and is particularly relevant in the environmental, social and economic context of globalization. *Fifth*, Commitment to truth is an important moral guide in a world that is often filled with misleading information and uncertainty. The relevance of these values to contemporary life is significant. The values outlined in *Tafsir al-Mishbah* by Quraish Shihab provide both practical and theoretical guidance

⁴¹ Al-Bukhari, *Shahih Muslim*, Juz 8, hadis no: 6094. Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, *Shahih Muslim*, Juz 8, hadis no: 6803. Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Juz 4, hadis no: 4991. al-Tirmidzi, *Sunan al-Tirmidzi*, Juz 4, hadis no: 1971. Ibnu Majah Abu Abdullah al-Qazwini, *Sunan Ibnu Majah*, (CD: al-Maktabah al-Syamilah, Digital), Juz 1, hadis no: 46.

⁴² Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbah*.

for individuals in developing strong character traits that not only help them live their lives more wisely and resolutely, but also make positive contributions to society at large. Understanding and applying these values can be a strong foundation in building a solid moral and spirituality in the modern era.

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