

The Concept of Water as the Origin of Life in Surah Al-Anbiya Verse 30: A Tahlili and Natural Science Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine water as the primary source of life for all living beings from the perspective of Surah Al-Anbiya verse 30 and to analyze the verse through the Tahlili method by relating it to findings in modern science. A qualitative library-research approach was employed, drawing data from the Qur'an, classical commentaries, and relevant scientific literature on the role of water in sustaining life. The findings indicate that Surah Al-Anbiya verse 30 identifies water as indispensable to the existence of humans, animals, and plants, a claim that corresponds with contemporary findings in biology, ecology, and hydrology. Beyond sustaining biological processes at the organismal level, water is shown to underpin the broader stability of Earth's ecosystem. The study further reveals that the Qur'anic conception of water carries philosophical and spiritual dimensions, underscoring humanity's ethical responsibility to safeguard water resources. These findings suggest that reading water through both Qur'anic and scientific lenses offers a particularly relevant framework for confronting contemporary environmental challenges and cultivating ecological awareness for the sustainability of life on Earth.

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INTRODUCTION

Research into the origins of the universe has long been a concern of scientists and philosophers since ancient times. Several early scientists proposed and explained the origins of nature through philosophical approaches and natural phenomena. One figure often associated with this is Thales, who argued that water is the fundamental element of everything in the universe. (Nadhor, 2024). With the advancement of science and technology, knowledge about the formation of the universe continues to develop through various scientific theories, including the Big Bang theory, the nebular theory, and the steady-state theory. These theories demonstrate that understanding the origins of life and its constituent elements is a crucial part of the development of modern science.

Water is the most important element for life on Earth, playing a vital role in various processes, including climate regulation, ecosystem maintenance, and meeting domestic, agricultural, and industrial needs. (Aranguren-Díaz et al., 2024) more than 70% of the Earth's surface is covered by water, demonstrate that it plays a vital role in maintaining the continuity of life. In addition, water plays a vital role in the hydrological cycle, which supports environmental stability and the global ecosystem.

However, evidence from various global reports indicates that the clean water crisis has become a serious challenge in the modern era. This is due to climate change, water pollution from industrial, agricultural, and domestic waste, and rapid global pressure on the availability of water resources in various regions. This situation affects various aspects of life, including public health and economic activity, as well as the potential for social conflict due to limited water resources. Therefore, current modern phenomena

demonstrate that human awareness of the importance of maintaining the sustainability of water resources still needs to be continuously improved. (Fransiska et al., 2024).

In addition to its ecological and scientific functions, water also holds profound significance from a religious and spiritual perspective. The Qur'an, as a guide for Muslims, emphasizes the importance of water as a primary element in life. One verse that explains this is Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, which states that all living things were created from water. In addition to explaining the origins of life from a theological perspective, this verse also conveys a message about the natural order and God's greatness in creating life. Several exegetical studies have stated that this verse indicates a relationship between the element of water and the continuation of life on earth. (Kareem Jurnal Ilmu Al Qur et al., 2024).

Classical and contemporary exegetes have explained the meaning of water in Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30. Ibn Kathir, in his Tafsir Al-Qur'an, explains that water is the basic element that is the origin of all living things and evidence of Allah Swt's power in creating and maintaining life. Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab, in the tafsir Al-Misbah, examines water not only as a biological need for living things but also as a manifestation of Allah's mercy and wisdom for all of His creation. Thus, this interpretation emphasizes the ecological dimension that reminds humans of their responsibility to maintain the sustainability of the environment and natural resources. Therefore, the concept of water in the Qur'an encompasses not only the theological aspect but also the biological and ecological aspects that are relevant to various current environmental problems. (Kathir, 2000; Shihab, 2002).

These classical and contemporary interpretations serve as an important foundation for applying the Tahlili interpretation method to a more in-depth study of Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30. Through this approach, the meaning of water as a source of life can be understood more comprehensively, not only from a theological perspective but also from an ecological and scientific perspective that is relevant to the development of modern knowledge.

To better understand existing research on water in the Quran, several relevant studies were reviewed. These studies examine various dimensions of water, including its biosemiotic meaning, scientific interpretation, hydrological significance, and ecological implications. A summary of these previous studies is presented in Table 1.

No	Author Research	Title Main	Results
1	(Chaer et al., 2023)	Biosemiotics of Water in the Quran, Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30.	The research findings discuss water based on Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, not only as a physical element of life but also as a biosemiotic sign that indicates the existence and continuity of life.
2	(Mohd Ghazali & Sabjan, 2025)	The Hydrological Cycle of Water: An Interdisciplinary Study of Philosophy, Science, and the Quran	The research findings examine the water cycle in the Quran, which aligns with modern hydrological concepts. This is complemented by interrelated processes, such as evaporation, cloud formation, rain, and water flow, which are explained as part of nature, demonstrating the creation of Allah Swt.
3	(Zakariya, 2025)	And We Made From Water Every Living Thing: The Quran and the Primacy of Water in Biology	This study examines the Qur'an as a guide to life, depicting water as a divine gift, a source of life, and a resource that must be well managed. These findings indicate that Qur'anic teachings support water conservation, environmental preservation, and sustainable water resource management. The study also highlights the relevance of the Qur'anic perspective to contemporary environmental challenges and water sustainability.
4	(Alvin, 2024)	The Ecological Benefits of Water From the Perspective of the Qur'an and Science in an Ecological Interpretation Study	This research examines water not only as a physical source of life but also as a manifestation of God's grace and power. Water plays a vital role in maintaining ecosystem sustainability, human health, and environmental balance. The study also highlights the application of Qur'anic sustainability principles to water management technologies, such as desalination and wastewater treatment, to ensure the preservation of water resources for future generations.

5	(Febriani et al., 2023)	Eco-Sufism in the Light of the Qur'ān: A Thematic Study of Tafsir Al-Misbah by Muhammad Quraish Shihab	This research examines humanity's moral and spiritual responsibility to protect the environment. This is closely related to water and natural resources, which are seen as a trust that must be managed wisely and appropriately for sustainability.
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Based on the above studies that have examined water from various perspectives, such as biosemiotics, scientific, hydrological, interpretive, and ecological, it was found that studies that examine water as a source of life in Surah Al-Anbiya verse 30 using the Tahlili interpretation method and connecting it comprehensively with modern natural science are still quite limited. The integration of the Qur'an and science adds a more complete and comprehensive understanding of natural phenomena and reflects a broader effort to align scientific knowledge with natural Islamic teachings. (Sholeh, 2017). Furthermore, ecological interpretation studies emphasize that water has a vital role in sustaining life and environmental systems; therefore, its management must be carried out properly and sustainably. (Kareem Jurnal Ilmu Al Qur et al., 2024). Therefore, this study examines Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, through the tafsir Tahlili method, connecting it with the perspective of modern natural science to demonstrate the relevance of the Qur'an's message to environmental challenges in the modern era.

This study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing library resources. This approach is used to examine the concept of water as a source of life in Surah Al-Anbiya verse 30 through analysis of various relevant literature sources. In its analysis, this study employs the tafsir Tahlili method to systematically interpret the verse and then connect it with developments in modern natural science to understand the meaning of water as a concept of life.

This background shows the importance of re-examining the concept of water in the Qur'an in relation to contemporary scientific knowledge. Therefore, this study aims to: (1) examine water as a concept of life from the perspective of the Qur'an, (2) analyze the meaning of Surah Al-Anbiya verse 30 related to the concept of life, and (3) examine its relevance to the perspective of modern natural science. This study is expected to contribute to enriching the study of the integration between the interpretation of the Qur'an and natural science, while increasing human awareness of the importance of maintaining the sustainability of water resources as a support for life on earth. This is in line with the findings of **Mohd Ghazali & Sabjan (2025)**, who stated that the description of the water cycle in the Qur'an is considered to be in accordance with modern scientific knowledge.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used a library research method. Library research relies on library materials as its primary data source. These materials are obtained through exploration of various literature, such as books, documents, and other written sources, which are then systematically analyzed according to the research framework. (Magdalena., 2021). This approach is used to examine the concept of water as a source of life in Surah Al-Anbiya verse 30, by analyzing various literature related to Qur'an interpretation and scientific perspectives.

The focus of this research is the interpretation of Surah Al-Anbiya verse 30, specifically the phrase *حَيِّ شَيْءٍ كُلَّ الْمَاءِ مِنْ وَجَعَلْنَا* which means "And we made every living thing from water". This phrase emphasizes understanding the concept of water as the origin of life from a Quranic perspective and analyzing the relationships between findings in modern natural science related to the role of water in sustaining life and maintaining ecosystem balance.

The Qur'an serves as the primary data, specifically Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30. In addition to primary data, secondary data is also used, including classical and contemporary Quranic commentaries such as Tafsir Al-Jalalayn, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, and Tafsir Al-Misbah, as well as scientific books, journal articles, and other academic literature discussing the natural sciences. Several sources were selected because of their relevance to the research topic and their relationship to Quranic interpretation and scientific knowledge.

The data collection method used in this study is documentation, which involved the process of identifying, selecting, and reviewing various literature related to the concept of water in the Quran and scientific literature. The collected data were then classified, interpreted, and analyzed systematically according to the objectives of the study.

The data analysis technique used in this study is the Tafsir Tahlili method. The Tahlili Tafsir method is used by interpreting the verses of the Quran sequentially, explaining the meaning of words and phrases in detail, interpreting their context, and considering the interpretations presented in various tafsir sources. (Rokim et al., 2017). In this research, the keywords used are the terms “al-ma” (water) and “kullu shay’in hayy” (all living things). These terms will then be linked to findings in modern natural science that demonstrate that water is a vital element for sustaining life.

This research was conducted over approximately three months, beginning with identifying the research object, collecting relevant literature, and analyzing the data using the Tafsir Tahlili method to understand the relationship between the concept of water in the Qur’an and modern scientific perspectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Surah Al-Anbiya Verse 30

Earth is a familiar term, understood as the habitat and place of existence and development for all living creatures, including humans, animals, and plants. Etymologically, the word “al-ardh” refers to Earth, one of the planets in the solar system. (Fauzan et al., 2020) The word ardh in the Qur’an mentioned 351 times, not all of which are interpreted in this way, because some also describe the creation of the universe, including the solar system, as referenced in Surah Al-Anbiya [21] verse 30.

أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

Meaning: “Have not the disbelievers seen that the heavens and the earth were of one piece, then we parted them. And we made every living thing from water. What is it then that they will not believe?” Q.S. Al-Anbiya/21:30.

Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, explains that unbelievers are invited to use their reason and observe the universe as evidence of God’s power. The verse explains that the heavens and the earth were originally a single, unified entity, and God separated them. Furthermore, it states that all living things were created from water, thus proving God’s power in creating life in the universe. Linguistically, the word “ratqan” means something united or integrated, while “fataqnahuma” means to separate or divide. Scholars have various interpretations of the meaning of this verse. Some argue that initially, the heavens and the earth were one inseparable entity; then, Allah separated them by placing the heavens above and the earth below. Another opinion states that previously, no rain fell from the sky and no plants grew on the earth.

According to Thabathaba’i’s interpretation, this verse refutes the polytheist belief that separates creation from the organization of nature. They believe that Allah is solely the creator, while the organization of nature is carried out by other gods whom they worship. This verse emphasizes that both creation and the organization of the universe are completely under Allah’s control. The phenomenon of separation that occurs in nature, such as the differentiation of various types of living organisms, including plants, animals, and humans, demonstrates the existence of a systematic process of creation under Allah’s will. Some scientists also view this verse as a scientific clue in the Qur’an regarding the formation of the universe. Several scientific theories explain that initially, celestial bodies were a single mass or clump that later separated, forming the various planets, including Earth. Although the Qur’an does not directly establish a specific scientific theory, this scientific explanation can help enrich human understanding of the verse’s meaning. (Irhas, 2016)

Another opinion, found in Tafsir AL-Muntakhab, explains two theories. related to the formation of the universe. The first theory explains that the solar system formed from a gaseous cloud around the sun, which then underwent a process of coagulation and planet formation due to collisions and the accumulation

of matter. Over time, the planets, including Earth, formed, which then underwent various geological processes to produce water vapor, carbon dioxide, and an atmosphere that supports life. The second theory states that initially, all celestial bodies were in a single, extremely dense mass under immense pressure. Then, a massive explosion occurred, causing the matter to spread in various separate celestial bodies, including Earth and the solar system. This phenomenon is often associated with the theories of the formation of the universe recognized in modern science.

Concept of Water as the Origin of Life in the Qur'anic Perspective

The phrase (وجعلنا من الماء كل شيء حي) in Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, emphasizes the fundamental role of water in the existence of life. The word (وجعلنا) (ja'alnā) means “We make” or “We create”, indicating Allah’s power in establishing water as a basic element of all living things. Meanwhile, the term “الماء” (al-mā’i) refers to water as a clear, liquid substance that functions as a vital component in the formation and development of life. Classical Qur’anic exegesis explains that water is not only a source of food but also a vital element that supports the growth and survival of plants, animals, and humans. (Jamil & Nidhom, 2024).

Classical Qur’anic commentators explain that the phrase (وجعلنا من الماء كل شيء حي) indicates that water is the origin of life for all living beings. According to Ibn Kathir, the verse suggests that the origin of every living thing is from water, underscoring that all creatures depend on water for their creation and sustenance. Ibn Kathir also refers to a prophetic narration stating that “Everything was created from water”, which reinforces the interpretation that water is a fundamental element in the formation of life.

Meanwhile, according to Quraish Shihab in his Tafsir Al-Misbah, water is a form of God’s grace that is the basis for the survival of all living things. The explanation of the creation of all living things from water not only shows the vital function of water in life, but also emphasizes the greatness of God in organizing the life system in the universe. Furthermore, the verse contains an ecological dimension that emphasizes the importance of the human role in preserving water resources and the environment. Therefore, Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, not only has theological significance but also provides an ethical foundation for environmental conservation efforts and sustainable development (Kathir, 2000; Shihab, 2002).

In Tafsir al-Qur’an al-‘Azhim, Ibn Kathir further explains that Surat Al-Anbiya verse 30 serves as a reminder of Allah’s perfect power and greatness in the creation of the universe. He describes the heavens and the earth as originally being a single, unified entity, joined together before being separated by Allah’s will. After this separation, the heavens were formed into several layers, and the earth was structured into different levels. Between them, Allah created the space that allows rain to descend from the sky and vegetation to grow from the earth. Through this process, living beings gradually develop and grow, which becomes a clear sign of Allah's existence and His absolute power as the Creator. Based on this explanation, besides highlighting the origin of life from water, it also demonstrates signs of divine creation manifested in the natural order (Iqbal Rahman et al., 2024).

Similar research is found in Tafsir Al-Jalalayn, which interprets the phrase “And We create from water every living creature” as evidence that all living things originate from water and depend on it for survival. Al -Jalalayn emphasizes that life’s dependence on water is one of God’s signs in nature, encouraging humans to reflect on His greatness and wisdom in creating the natural order. This interpretation is consistent with the findings of Alvin (2024), who explains that water, from the perspective of the Qur’an, is not only a physical resource but also a manifestation of Allah’s power and mercy. Water serves as the basis of life, maintaining the balance of ecosystems, and demonstrating the harmony of the natural systems created by Allah.

Several classical and contemporary scholars, such as Ibn ‘Ashur and Wahbah al-Zuhayli, explain that water is an irreplaceable component of life for the continued survival of all beings on Earth. Every living organism, whether human, animal, or plant, requires water for growth, reproduction, and survival. Therefore, the Qur’anic statement describing water as a fundamental component in the creation and maintenance of life is true, demonstrating God’s wisdom in designing the natural order.

From a scientific perspective, water is also recognized as a fundamental resource for living things. Modern biological studies show that water is a primary component of cells, serving as a medium for biochemical processes necessary for life. Furthermore, water also functions as a universal solvent, transporting nutrients and essential compounds within organisms. As emphasized by Zaghlul al-Najjar, water is a key element that enables life to exist and thrive. Thus, the scientific finding confirms the important role of water in sustaining life (Zakariya, 2025).

The Role of Water from a Modern Scientific Perspective

Beyond scientific facts, from a modern perspective, water is considered one of the most essential substances for life on Earth. Several scientific studies show that water is a primary component of living organisms and plays a vital role in various biological processes. For example, in humans, approximately 60-70 % of the body is composed of water, which regulates body temperature, transports nutrients, facilitates metabolic reactions, and removes waste products. Animals depend on water just as humans do, while plants rely on it for photosynthesis, nutrient absorption from the soil, and the maintenance of cellular structure. These physiological functions must proceed normally to avoid jeopardizing the survival of living organisms. Thus, water is not only a natural resource but also a fundamental component of life at the cellular and organismal levels.

As previously noted, roughly 70% of the Earth's surface is water, and the human body itself contains approximately 60–70% water, underscoring that all living things depend on water for survival. Water also plays a central role in photosynthesis, metabolism, and nutrient transport in plants, which form the basis of the food chain in the Earth's ecosystem. Furthermore, in the context of hydrology, water undergoes a regular cycle, from evaporation, condensation, to precipitation (rain), demonstrating the miracle of a system designed by God to maintain the sustainability of life (Mohd Ghazali & Sabjan, 2025).

From a modern perspective, water is understood not only as a biological necessity but also as the origin of life itself. Several verses of the Qur'an, including Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, indicate that water serves as the basis of life on Earth. Water nourishes plant growth, sustains living organism, and support ecological sustainability. Water's properties as a universal solvent enable various biological reactions essential for life. Therefore, the presence of water is a fundamental requirement for the survival of living things, which is in line with the Qur'an's statement in Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, that water is an essential element in life (Afifah, 2022; Angelica Vanesa et al., 2025).

However, in the modern era, the availability of clean water has become an increasingly serious global challenge. This is because rapid population growth, industrial development, environmental pollution, and climate change have contributed to the increasing scarcity of freshwater resources in many parts of the world. According to global environmental studies, millions of people still lack clean drinking water. This situation highlights the urgent need for sustainable use of water resources. Therefore, efforts to maintain the availability and sustainability of water resources, such as water conservation, protection of aquatic ecosystems, and efficient water use, are crucial to ensuring a sustainable water supply for future generations. Therefore, awareness of the importance of water not only has scientific significance but also carries ethical and environmental responsibilities in maintaining the sustainability of life on Earth (Ghifari et al., 2023; Mohd Ghazali & Sabjan, 2025).

Water in the Interpretation of Classical and Contemporary Tafsir

In Quranic exegesis, Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, demonstrates a significant connection between Quranic teachings and modern scientific knowledge. Several classical and contemporary scholars interpret the phrase “وجعلنا من الماء كل شيء حي” as indicating that water is the origin and essential element of life. This interpretation explains that all living things, such as humans, animals, and plants, depend on water for their survival. Thus, interpretation emphasizes God's wisdom in creating a natural system that supports life on Earth.

Modern science also examines the vital role of water in sustaining life. For example, biological studies reveal that water is a key component of living cells and physiological processes necessary for the survival of organisms. Furthermore, water's function on Earth supports ecological balance through processes such as photosynthesis, nutrient circulation, and the hydrological cycle. Thus, these scientific findings demonstrate that water is indeed a fundamental element necessary for the survival of life.

The study of Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, reflects natural phenomena that align with modern scientific knowledge. This verse not only conveys a theological message about God's power and wisdom but also highlights the importance of preserving life and maintaining ecological balance. The continuity between the interpretation of the Qur'an and scientific discoveries will strengthen the understanding that the Qur'an encourages reflection on natural phenomena as signs of divine creation.

Thus, based on the interpretations of classical and contemporary scholars, it is clear that water plays a fundamental role in life. Classical scholars such as Ibn Kathir emphasized that water is the origin of all living things and evidence of Allah Swt's power in creating and sustaining life. Meanwhile, contemporary scholars such as Quraish Shihab expand the meaning of the verse by highlighting its ecological dimensions and human responsibility in preserving water resources. This difference in emphasis demonstrates that Qur'anic interpretation is dynamic and able to meet the needs of every era. Thus, Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, not only provides a theological understanding of the creation of life but also contains ethical and ecological messages relevant to various current environmental issues.

Studies by Ibn Kathir, Al-Jalalayn, and Quraish Shihab collectively demonstrate that water is not merely a physical necessity but also a manifestation of God's wisdom and mercy. These interpretations reveal theological, ethical, and ecological dimensions that remain relevant to contemporary environmental challenges, particularly issues related to water conservation and sustainable development. Therefore, Surah Al-Anbiya, verse 30, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding water from both a religious and a scientific perspective.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined water as an essential element of life through the lens of Surah Al-Anbiya verse 30, which affirms that humans, animals, and plants alike depend on water for survival. The analysis suggests that water functions not merely as a physical substance but as a sign of Allah's greatness that sustains life on Earth. Furthermore, the findings show that the Qur'an's account of water corresponds closely with scientific evidence: numerous studies confirm that water is essential to all living organisms and to the proper functioning of both the human body and the Earth's systems, reinforcing the Qur'an's depiction of water as the source of life. These parallels underscore the importance of using water wisely and conserving it responsibly in the face of ongoing environmental challenges, a responsibility grounded in both religious teaching and scientific understanding.

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