

Research Article

The Concept of Asy-Syifā' in the Qur'an: An Analysis of Surah An-Nahl Verse 69 from the Perspective of Tafsir Al-Misbah

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ABSTRACT

The Qur'an, as the word of God, serves various purposes in life, including healing diseases (syifa). As-syifā' in the Qur'an describes the function of the Qur'an as a healer for diseases, both physical and spiritual. Asy-Syifā' in the perspective of M. Quraish Shihab's interpretation of al-Mishbah emphasizes that the healing referred to in the Qur'an is not only spiritual and moral in nature, but also includes the physical dimension. Quraish Shihab also highlights that healing does not come solely from God but must also be accompanied by human effort. The Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl, verse 69, Quraish Shihab, through the interpretation of Al-Misbah, bees and honey as symbols of moral and social examples, where honey is a healing gift, and bees are an image of creatures that are obedient, productive, and provide benefits to all. This study uses a literature review approach (library research), namely examining various academic sources such as books, scientific journals, research reports, and official documents relevant to Asy-Syifā' in the Qur'an: Analysis of Surah An-Nahl Verse 69 from the Perspective of Al-Misbah's Interpretation. The purpose of this study is to examine honey as a treatment for physical ailments in Surah An-Nahl Verse 69.

Keywords: Al-Quran; As-Syifa; An-Nahla; Verse 69; Interpretation; Al-Misbah

1. INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an has very broad and fundamental uses for human life. As Kalamullah, which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (Mohamed Akhiruddin Ibrahim, 2017). The Al-Qur'an functions as guidance, mercy, and healing for humans (Collins et al., 2020). From the perspective of Quraish Shihab's interpretation in Tafsir Al-Mishbah, the Al-Qur'an is not only a holy reading book, but also a source of healing, inspiration, and eternal guidance for humans in achieving inner and outer balance. One of the functions of the Qur'an is as a syifā that cures disease (Rozi & Arif, 2023). As-syifā' in the Qur'an describes the function of the Qur'an as a healer for illnesses, both physical and spiritual. Etymologically, syifā' cures or eliminates illness. In a theological context, as-syifā' not only refers to the physical healing process, but also contains a deep spiritual meaning, namely the purification of the soul from diseases of the heart such as ignorance, doubt, arrogance, and hypocrisy. (Mohamed Akhiruddin Ibrahim, 2017; Wijaya, 2021; Rozi et al., 2023); Rozi et al., 2023).

The concept of Asy-Syifā' in the perspective of M. Quraish Shihab's interpretation of al-Mishbah emphasizes that the healing referred to in the Qur'an is not only spiritual and moral in nature, but also includes the physical dimension. Previous research on the Qur'an as a spiritual force capable of providing healing effects on human physical ailments. In research by (Hapsari et al., 2024)(Hapsari et al., 2024), it is explained that the Qur'an plays a role as a healing asy-syifā' for physical ailments through certain verses. Reading and reciting verses of the Qur'an have been proven to provide calm that has a positive effect on the body's physiological functions, including normalizing blood pressure, lowering heart rate, and improving the consciousness of coma patients. Empirically, Qur'an-based therapy such as murottal has been shown to increase muscle strength and reduce anxiety levels in stroke patients undergoing a range of motion exercises. The results of research by (Ixora, et al., 2020)(Ixora, et al., 2020) showed that combining physical therapy with the reading of the Al-Quran murottal significantly increased the strength of the hand and leg muscles and accelerated the patient's recovery.

Many literatures analyze the Qur'an as Ash-Syifā', which can cure various diseases with various interpretations, one of which is the interpretation of al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab. However, the author has not found evidence based on the concept of Ash-Syifā' in the Qur'an: Analysis of Surah An-Nahl Verse 69 from the Perspective of Al-Misbah's Interpretation. In Surah An-Nahl verse 69, Allah SWT explains that from the belly of the bee comes out a drink of various

colors, and in it there is healing for humans (fīhi syifā'un linnās). This verse shows that honey has great benefits as a natural medicine that can help the healing process of various diseases, maintain body health, and is a sign of Allah's greatness for people who are willing to think. Honey is a natural product secreted by honeybees containing more than 200 bioactive compounds, both organic and inorganic. The diversity of these compounds makes honey a natural energy source and a multicomponent pharmacological agent, with high stability due to its low water content and acidic pH (2.4 - 4.7). Honey has benefits as a natural antimicrobial agent, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory, anticancer, digestive medicine, and diarrhea therapy, oral and dental health, liver and metabolic protection, and can also be used as a complementary therapy. Scientifically, honey supports the statement of the Qur'an and hadith that "in it there is a cure for humans." (Israili, 2014 (Israili, 2014; Khan et al., 2018 (Khan et al., 2018; Ramsay et al., 2019 (Ramsay et al., 2019; Suiçmez & Öztürk, 2025) (Suiçmez & Öztürk, 2025)).

Based on the above description, a deeper study of the concept of Asy-Syifā' in Surah An-Nahl verse 69 from the perspective of Tafsir Al-Misbah is important, as it not only reveals the meaning of spiritual and psychological healing but also addresses physical healing. Through M. Quraish Shihab's interpretation, this verse presents a holistic understanding of revelation, science, and human values within a divine framework.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a thematic interpretation and a library research approach. This approach was chosen because the focus of the research lies in the study of the texts of the Qur'an, commentaries, and relevant Islamic literature. According to Zed (2018), library research aims to collect, review, and interpret data sourced from previous scientific works in order to gain a deep understanding of the object being studied. The main source of this research is the Qur'an, specifically Surah An-Nahl, verse 69, by Tafsir Al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab. Secondary data was obtained from supporting literature such as books, scientific journals, academic articles, and previous research that discusses the theme of healing in the Qur'an and M. Quraish Shihab's commentaries.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Biography of M. Quraish Shihab

Muhammad Quraish Shihab was born in Rappang, South Sulawesi, on February 16, 1944, coinciding with 21 Safar 1363 H. He grew up in a distinguished family of scholars; his father, Prof. Abdurrahman Shihab, was a professor of interpretation and had served as rector of the Muslim University of Indonesia (UMI) and IAIN Alauddin Makassar. The Meaning of Syifa' in the Quran: A comparative study of the interpretation of M. Quraish Shihab and Asy-Sya'rawi. Institute for Higher Education of Al-Quran Sciences. Jakarta: "No 2 (2020): 1–9. Quraish Shihab began memorizing and understanding the meaning of tafsir from a young age and received his basic education at Jami'at Al-Khair Jakarta. and continued to the Darul Hadith Al-Faqhiyyah Islamic Boarding School in Malang under the guidance of Habib Abdul Qadir Bilfaqih. His deep love for the science of the Qur'an then led him to study at Al-Azhar University, Cairo, where he obtained an Lc. (S1) degree in Tafsir and Hadith (1967), an MA in Tafsir Al-Qur'an (1969) with the thesis Al-I'jaz at-Tasyrīfī fi al-Qur'an al-Karim, and earned a doctorate (Ph.D.) in the Sciences of the Qur'an (1982) with the predicate summa cum laude. This achievement made him the first scholar from Southeast Asia to successfully obtain a doctorate in this field from Al-Azhar. Quraish Shihab interprets the verses of the Qur'an with a semiotic-spiritual approach in the Al-Misbah tafsit (Amal, 2025) (Amal, 2025).

Quraish Shihab's Tafsir Al-Misbah is a modern interpretation that attempts to bridge the revealed text and human reality. With simple language and a rational approach, this interpretation presents a peaceful, open, and contextual face of Islam. This work represents Nusantara's interpretation that emphasizes the balance between reason, revelation, and local culture, and shows how the Qur'an functions as a source of guidance and healing (syifā') for humanity in various aspects of life. (Kasmianti, 2021; Kasmianti, 2023) (Kasmianti, 2021; Kasmianti, 2023).

3.2. The Concept of As-Syifa in the Al-Quran Perspective

Syifa in the Qur'an is not limited to a medical meaning, but rather a form of balance between body and soul. HAMKA interprets syifa as a spiritual healer born of faith, while Bisri Mustofa links it to the socio-cultural context of society. Both emphasize that the Qur'an is a universal healing tool that restores humanity holistically. (Hidayah & Aulia, 2022) (Hidayah & Aulia, 2022). The Qur'an teaches a balance between medical efforts and spiritual faith. Syifa' is not merely "therapy," but a process of cleansing the heart and strengthening the belief that Allah is the only true Healer. Thus, the spiritual values of the Qur'an form the basis for the integration of modern medicine and the religious dimension of humanity (Padilah et al., 2024) (Padilah et al., 2024).

Syifa is a holistic healing principle in Islam that includes spiritual therapy through verses of the Qur'an and physical treatment. This approach emphasizes that modern medical science and Qur'anic values are not contradictory, but rather

complementary in achieving total human health (Mohamed Akhiruddin Ibrahim, 2017)(Mohamed Akhiruddin Ibrahim, 2017). Syifa' is a form of manifestation of God's love that teaches humans to seek a balance between scientific medicine and spiritual faith. Modern science is seen as a means to reveal the divine wisdom of the Qur'anic healing concept. Syifa' is a form of manifestation of God's love that teaches humans to seek a balance between scientific medicine and spiritual faith. From a Sufi perspective, syifa is a tajallī of God's love that soothes the soul. The Qur'an acts as a "medicine of the heart" that returns humans to their natural state. Therefore, Syifa is not just a medical phenomenon, but a spiritual experience of union between humans and the Healer (Ibrahim, 2019)(Ibrahim, 2019).

3.3. The Concept of As-Syifa' in the Perspective of the Interpretation of Al-Misbah (Surat An-Nahl Verse 69)

In Tafsir Al-Misbah, M. Quraish Shihab interprets Asy-Syifa' as the comprehensive healing function of the Qur'an, not only for physical ailments, but also mental ailments, such as doubt, hatred, and disbelief. Quraish Shihab emphasizes that the Qur'an provides spiritual healing through His guidance and mercy for believers. The Qur'an functions as a lesson, a remedy for the heart, guidance, and mercy (Nidhom, 2020)(Nidhom, 2020). Quraish Shihab also highlights that healing does not only come from Allah, but must also be accompanied by human effort. Disease is seen not to come from God directly, but as a result of human conditions themselves, as explained in his interpretation. (Ibrahim, 2019)(Ibrahim, 2019; Nidhom, 2020)(Nidhom, 2020). In the view of ordinary people, the Koran is also often used as a traditional healing medium, such as ruqyah or reading to overcome physical and psychological disorders. However, Quraish Shihab warned that this kind of understanding should still be directed at belief and monotheism in Allah, not at mystical things (Rozi et al., 2023)(Rozi et al., 2023; (Amal, 2025)(Amal, 2025). He emphasized that the healing effect will only be felt by those who believe and have an open heart to the truth of the Koran. On the other hand, for those who are kufr or close themselves off, the Koran does not have the same influence (Nidhom, 2020)(Nidhom, 2020; Zakin & Saerozi, 2025)(Zakin & Saerozi, 2025).

Quraish Shihab, through his Tafsir Al-Misbah and oral sermons, conveys that this verse not only explains the biological process of bees producing honey but also contains a profound message of exemplary behavior for humans. The honey produced by bees is not merely a sweet food, but also contains elements of "syifā'" (healing) for humans, both physically and spiritually. Quraish Shihab emphasizes that "syifā'" in this context has a broader meaning, namely, healing from moral, social, and even spiritual crises. According to Quraish Shihab in Tafsir Al-Misbah, QS An-Nahl verse 69 describes bees and honey as a symbol of moral and social exemplars, where honey is a healing gift, and bees are a depiction of creatures that are obedient, productive, and provide benefits to all. (Maulida Nuzula Firdaus, 2023)(Maulida Nuzula Firdaus, 2023).

3.4 Literature Review

In the interpretation of M. Quraish Shihab, there are several verses that interpret the concept of As-Syifa' in the Quran that can cure physical illnesses, including Surah An-Nahl verse 69, which is often associated with the concept of as-syifā' in the context of physical healing. The verse mentions honey as a medicine that brings healing to humans. According to the interpretation of M. Quraish Shihab in Tafsir al-Mishbah, honey produced by bees is one of God's gifts that is used as syifā' or a means of healing for various physical illnesses suffered by humans, as mentioned in the Quran (Shihab, 2002)(Shihab, 2002).

According to Research, Ashofi, Nasikin, Bisri, "Honey in the perspective of the Quran and Modern Science: Analysis of Surah An-Nahl Verses 68-69 and Peter Molan's findings on the therapeutic benefits of honey," *El-Mu'jam: Journal of the Study of the Quran and Hadith*, Vol 5 No. 1 June 2025 E-ISSN 2809-1779/P-ISSN 2809-4328 (Shihab, 2002)(Shihab, 2002; Ahmad Sofiyul Mubarak, 2023)(Ahmad Sofiyul Mubarak, 2023). Surah An-Nahl verse 69 represents an integrative concept between revelation and science, where honey is not only seen as a healing substance in the medical sense, but also as a symbol of balance and divine grace. Modern studies strengthen the truth of the content of the verse with empirical evidence about the ability of honey in physical healing, increasing immunity, and cellular protection from various diseases. Overall, this verse confirms that modern science actually confirms the meaning of "syifā'" in the Qur'an, which shows the harmony between Divine revelation and the scientific reality about honey as a means of healing for humans (Ziaei et al., 2020)(Ziaei et al., 2020).

Surah An-Nahl Verse 69 as follows: "Then eat of all kinds of fruits and follow the paths of your Lord which have been made easy (for you). From the bellies of bees comes a drink (honey) of varying colors, in which there is a cure for mankind. Indeed, in that is a sign for a people who give thought." In this verse, Quraish Shihab interprets that there is only one type of food or drink that is explicitly mentioned as having medicinal properties for humans, namely, honey. Toshiki Kobayashi and Tomohiro Yamazaki, *Recent Advances in Extraction and Analytical Techniques for Herbal Medicine Characterization* 121, no. 15 (2020): 8-9, (Hapsari et al., 2024).

According to Ibn 'Asyur, Verse 69 indicates that honey is not a cure for all diseases. Honey cannot cure all diseases because not all medicines are contained in it. The understanding "not all medicines" comes from the word nakirah

(uncertain) used, not a negation, so it does not mean all medicines. It is also possible that certain factors in certain individuals make their physiques less compatible with the substances contained in honey. Experts who compiled the interpretation of al-Muntakhab explained that honey contains high levels of glucose and perfumery elements, namely types of sugar that are very easily absorbed by the body. According to modern medicine, glucose is very useful in the healing process of various diseases, both through injection and oral consumption as a strengthening agent. Honey (*Apis mellifera*) is recognized as a multifunctional natural substance that has played an important role in nutrition, medicine, and health care for thousands of years (Arawwawala & Hewageegana, 2017) (Arawwawala & Hewageegana, 2017).

Honey has long been considered a therapeutic agent as well as a symbolic entity in religious and mythological contexts across various cultures. A large body of medical literature examines the benefits of honey for the treatment of various ailments, including its use as a treatment for diarrhea and digestive disorders, which has a strong basis in both the hadith and modern medical findings. (Suiçmez & Öztürk, 2025)(Suiçmez & Öztürk, 2025). Honey contains more than 200 bioactive components, including various types of sugars such as fructose and glucose, organic acids, minerals, and enzymes such as glucose oxidase and catalase. Furthermore, honey is also rich in vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, and C, as well as polyphenolic and flavonoid compounds that act as antioxidants and antimicrobials (Al-Farsi et al., 2018)(Al-Farsi et al., 2018; Becerril-sánchez et al., 2021)(Becerril-sánchez et al., 2021). The fructo-oligosaccharide content functions as a prebiotic that helps maintain the balance of microflora in the intestine. Honey content effectively inhibits the growth of more than 60 species of pathogenic bacteria, prevents the formation of biofilms on the tooth surface, suppresses the growth of microorganisms that cause plaque, honey has been proven to reduce the number of bacteria and maintain the pH of the mouth above 5.5, reducing bad breath. Honey as an anticancer. Honey acts as a natural osmotic and antimicrobial agent that accelerates tissue regeneration and reduces infection, and heals wounds and burns. Natural honey can lower blood glucose levels and improve liver and kidney function because it contains antidiabetic effects (Ramsay et al., 2019)(Ramsay et al., 2019; Sibomana & Hakayuwa, 2023)(Sibomana & Hakayuwa, 2023; Aga et al., 2023)(Aga et al., 2023).

Research conducted by Khalil, Sulaiman, and Boukraa, honey is not only a sweet food ingredient but also a natural nutraceutical with broad therapeutic effects. Its antioxidant content plays an important role in cancer prevention, heart protection, free radical control, and maintaining healthy nerves and body tissues. Honey has great potential to be used as a functional food ingredient and a natural alternative to synthetic sweeteners that provide long-term health benefits (Khalil et al., 2010)(Khalil et al., 2010). Honey from stinging bees and stingless bees has high therapeutic value and great potential as a natural phytopharmaceutical agent, especially in the fields of wound treatment, infectious diseases, chronic inflammation, and prevention of degenerative diseases (Khan et al., 2018)(Khan et al., 2018). According to Israili, honey has been shown to accelerate wound healing, reduce skin and respiratory infections, improve cardiovascular and metabolic function, and play a role in inhibiting cancer cell growth and boosting immunity. Several clinical trials have also demonstrated honey's effectiveness in treating coughs, sinusitis, urinary tract infections, burns, and diabetic ulcers, both through oral consumption and topical application

Consuming honey has the potential to help reduce the severity of COVID-19 infection. This effect may occur directly through honey's possible antiviral activity against SARS-CoV-2, or indirectly by enhancing the body's immune response. The therapeutic benefits of honey, both direct and indirect, are largely attributed to its antioxidant phenolic compounds. Nevertheless, the advantages of honey cannot replace medical consultation or the use of prescribed medications. (Al-Hatamleh et al, 2020)(Al-Hatamleh et al, 2020). Honey is known to exhibit protective effects against cardiovascular diseases, and these benefits are strongly influenced by various factors, including its chemical composition—particularly its phenolic content. Although the antioxidant activity of honey is associated with the total amount of phenolic compounds, this effect is likely derived from the synergistic action of multiple phenolic components. A similar pattern is observed in other biological activities of honey, such as its antiplatelet potential, which plays a significant role in the prevention and management of stroke, atherosclerosis, coronary heart disease, and other cardiovascular disorders linked to platelet hyperactivation (Olas, 2020)(Olas, 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

The concept of *Ash-Syifā'* in the Qur'an encompasses the meaning of healing that is comprehensive in physical, spiritual, and moral aspects. Based on an analysis of Surah An-Nahl verse 69 through the perspective of Tafsir Al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab, the honey mentioned in the verse not only functions as a biological healing substance, but also has a symbolic meaning as a manifestation of mercy, balance, and obedience to Allah SWT. In Quraish Shihab's view, "*fīhi syifā'un linnās*" describes the universal healing of honey as a medicine for physical ailments, while the Qur'an plays a role as a medicine for diseases of the heart. Various studies have shown that honey contains more than 200 bioactive compounds, such as flavonoids, phenolics, enzymes, and organic acids, which have antibacterial, antioxidant, anticancer, and anti-inflammatory activities. Empirically, honey has been proven effective in healing wounds, infections, digestive disorders, and degenerative diseases, as well as improving the body's immunity. This study demonstrates the harmony between revelation and modern science, where scientific truth reinforces the spiritual meaning of the Koranic verses. The concept of *Ash-Shifa'* in Surah An-Nahl verse 69 illustrates the integration of revelation, science, and humanity. The

Quran, through this verse, emphasizes that healing depends not only on medical aspects but also on spiritual and moral dimensions. Honey is clear evidence of the "healing for mankind" mentioned in the Koran, as well as a symbol of the order of creation and God's compassion for His creatures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research is recommended to develop an interdisciplinary approach that connects the study of Qur'anic interpretation with modern health science. The concept of ash-syifā' can serve as a theological foundation for the application of Qur'anic healing, combined with biomedical findings related to the efficacy of honey and spiritual therapy in the body's recovery process. Furthermore, empirical research and clinical trials are needed to objectively assess the physiological effects of Qur'anic recitation (such as murottal) and honey consumption on various health parameters, such as blood pressure, blood sugar levels, the immune system, and oxidative stress levels, thus providing scientific justification for the concept of healing derived from the Qur'an.

This study also has the potential to serve as a reference for curriculum development in the field of spiritual care nursing or Islamic health education, particularly in teaching the principle of balance between medical and spiritual aspects as a concrete manifestation of the value of rahmat lil 'alamin in health care practice. Furthermore, future research is expected to thematically examine the verses of the Qur'an related to health, halal and thayyib food, and spiritual healing in Nusantara commentaries such as HAMKA's Tafsir Al-Azhar and KH Bisri Mustofa's Tafsir Al-Ibriz, to broaden insight into the contextual and integrative concept of Islamic healing. Because the Qur'an explicitly mentions honey as "a medicine for mankind," further research is recommended to examine the potential of local Indonesian honey in the context of Islamic phytotherapy, including analysis of its bioactive content, antioxidant levels, and therapeutic effectiveness compared to imported honey.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

This article is the result of collaborative work between the lead author and the supervisor within the scope of academic research. Mardiah, Husneini, and Bobby Fahreza played a role in formulating the research idea, collecting and analyzing the literature, and drafting the main manuscript, which includes the introduction, theoretical review, and discussion of the research findings. Dr. M. Syahrial Razali Ibrahim, M.Ag., contributed as conceptual director and academic reviewer, providing methodological guidance and scientific input to the analysis of Al-Misbah's interpretation, and ensuring alignment between the interpretation approach and scholarly relevance in the context of contemporary Qur'anic studies. Both parties jointly reviewed the manuscript, approved the publication version, and take full responsibility for the scientific integrity of the entire article.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest in the preparation, analysis, or publication of the article entitled "The Concept of Ash-Shifa' in the Qur'an: An Analysis of Surah An-Nahl Verse 69 from the Perspective of Tafsir Al-Misbah." The entire research and writing process was conducted independently and objectively, without any financial, institutional, or personal influence that could influence the results or interpretation of the data in this article.

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