

# The Meaning of Time in Surah Al-'Ashr: An Analysis of Ibn Katsir's Tafsir and Its Relevance to Modern Management

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## Abstract

The Qur'an, as the holy book of Muslims, not only contains spiritual and moral guidance but also touches on aspects of human life, including the values of time. Surah Al-'Ashr is a part of the Qur'an, which specifically discusses the value of time and provides profound teachings on the importance of respecting time in the course of human life. This research aims to examine the meaning of time contained in Surah Al-'Ashr through the interpretation approach of Ibn Katsir, a classical mufasir known as the tafsir bi al-ma'tsur approach, which is a method of interpretation based on other verses in the Qur'an, authentic hadiths, as well as the opinions of the companions and tabi'in.

Through this approach, Ibn Katsir's interpretation shows that time is not just a chronological dimension, but a living capital that must be used responsibly. This research also relates the values in the surah to modern management practices, such as time management, work character building, and ethical leadership. The results of the study show that the messages of Surah Al-'Ashr have a strong relevance, not only in the religious context, but also in shaping a productive mindset in the contemporary era.

*Keywords: Time, Tafsir of Ibn Katsir, Tafsir bi Al-Ma'tsur, Modern Management*

## Introduction

Time is one of the most valuable and irreplaceable assets in human life. The Qur'an, as a comprehensive guide to life for Muslims, pays great attention to the value of time and the consequences of its misuse. One of the surahs that emphatically highlights this theme is Surah Al-'Ashr. Although it consists of only three verses, this surah contains the core of Islamic teachings related to time, human responsibility, and the path to salvation. This surah begins with Allah's oath, "For the sake of time," which is followed by the unequivocal statement that all human beings are at a loss, except those who have four characteristics: faith, righteous deeds, admonishing one another in truth, and admonishing one another in patience. This value structure shows that the fortune of life is determined not only by individual charity, but also by social role and perseverance in the face of trials.

One of the leading classical mufasir, Ibn Katsir, gave an in depth interpretation of Surah Al-'Ashr through the approach of tafsir bi al-ma'tsur, which is a method of tafsir that refers to other verses of the Qur'an, authentic hadiths, as well as the opinions of the companions and tabi'in. In his view, time is not just a chronological dimension, but a divine trust and the main means of determining the success or failure of man in this world and the hereafter. Time in Ibn Katsir's perspective is dynamic and spiritual an opportunity that must be seized to achieve the ultimate goal of human creation.

This research aims to examine the concept of time in Surah Al-'Ashr based on the interpretation of Ibn Katsir and analyze its relevance to modern management principles, especially in the aspects of time management,

ethical leadership, work character formation, and organizational resilience. By linking classical Islamic wisdom with contemporary discourse, this study seeks to show that the Qur'an's worldview is not only spiritual, but also contains practical values that are relevant in building a disciplined, ethical, and goal-oriented life.

Time is something that keeps moving fast, passes unconsciously, and suddenly comes crashing down. It is also one of the main blessings, because without the existence of time, everything that humans have would have no meaning. Therefore, Allah Swt. swears in the name of time in several verses of the Qur'an. One of them is found in His words in Surah Al-Lail verses 1–2:

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ

"By night when it covers (the light of day), and the day when it is bright."

This verse is proof of how much time is valuable in the Qur'an's view of human life. Because, Allah does not swear in the Qur'an except on things that have their own virtues and privileges (Mardiyah, 2021) To understand the meaning contained in the verses of the Qur'an, a method called tafsir is needed. Tafsir is a study effort that aims to explore and explain the meaning contained in the Qur'an from various aspects such as wisdom, moral messages, laws, and universal ethical values (Nugroho, 2024).

This analysis aims to understand more deeply how Islam views time and how to use time well. This interpretation of Ibn Katsir teaches that time is a precious resource, and Ibn Katsir's interpretation provides a deep understanding of the meaning and the importance of time in Surah Al-'Ashr. In the context of Islamic science, tafsir is the main means of understanding the message of the Qur'an. Ibn Kathir is known as a great mufasir who interpreted the Qur'an using the *bi al-ma'tsur* method. This approach relies on Qur'anic verses others, the hadith of the Prophet, as well as the opinions of the companions and *tabi'in* as the main source. This study aims to explore the meaning of time in Surah Al-'Ashr according to the interpretation of Ibn Kathir and explore its relationship with modern management principles.

## Method

In Ibn Katsir's commentary on Surah Al-'Ashr, the method used is the Tafsir *bi al-ma'tsur method*, which means interpretation based on the narration and explanations received from previous generations. Ibn Kathir refers to the interpretation and explanation of the Prophet, his companions, and previous scholars.

Ibn Katsir used the method of tafsir *bil-ma'tsur*, which is to connect the verses that are interpreted with related verses in the Qur'an. Thus, he gained a more comprehensive understanding of the meaning and message of Surah Al-'Ashr. Ibn Kathir also refers to the opinions and explanations of the Prophet's companions and previous scholars. They understand the Qur'an very well and make an important contribution to understanding Surah Al-'Ashr.

This study is a library research that uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Primary data is taken from the book *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim* by Ibn Katsir. The analysis is carried out through a thematic approach (*maudhu'i*), especially regarding the concept of time in the Qur'an and its implications in the contemporary context. The approach of tafsir *bi al-ma'tsur* is the main methodological foundation.

## Result

From the analysis of Surah Al-'Asr based on the interpretation of Ibn Katsir's, a deep understanding of the value of time in the Islamic view is obtained. This surah succinctly but concisely conveys that all human beings are at a disadvantage, except those who are able to take advantage of the time to do four important things: faith, righteous deeds, advising one another in truth, and advising one another in patience.

Ibn Katsir's emphasized that Allah's oath of time in Surah Al-'Asr shows how great and important time is in human life. Time in this context is not just a duration, but includes the entire journey of human life that must be filled with meaningful charity. This interpretation also highlights that time is the main capital of humans that cannot be replayed, so every second must be used with full awareness and responsibility. (Nugroho, Kiram, & Andriawan, 2023)

With the approach of tafsir *bi al-ma'tsur*, Ibn Katsir's interprets the verses in Surah Al-'Asr by linking them to other relevant verses, as well as referring to the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the explanations of the Companions. He also explained that the life of this world is only a place of testing, and time is a means used to determine the success or failure of humans in the hereafter.

The results of the analysis show that Surah Al-'Asr contains a universal message that is relevant

throughout time, namely the urgency of using time wisely to achieve the good fortune of life in this world and the hereafter. Ibn Katsir's commentary enriches this understanding with authoritative fundamentals that reinforce the spiritual and moral meaning and implications of the value of time.

Surah Al-'Asr not only warns of the harm to people who waste time, but also offers solutions in the form of the four pillars of salvation, namely faith, righteous deeds, advising one another in truth, and advising one another in patience. Ibn Katsir's emphasized that these four elements are a unit that cannot be separated. Faith is the basic foundation that guides deeds, while counsel in truth and patience is a support in maintaining the consistency of a Muslim in facing life's challenges.

In the context of modern life, these values are becoming increasingly important. Many people in today's era are caught up in neglectful routines and entertainment, forgetting that time goes on and on. Surah Al-'Asr is a powerful reminder that true luck is not measured by material or social status, but rather by how one fills one's time with the values of faith and beneficial charity.

The results of this study also provide educational implications in the world of Islamic education. Awareness of the importance of time needs to be instilled from an early age in students through integrative learning between the values of the Qur'an and real life. Surah Al-'Asr can be used as a basis for forming the character of discipline, responsibility, and the spirit to advise each other in kindness and patience.

## Relevance to Modern Management

The values contained in Surah Al-'Ashr are very relevant to the principles of management modern. First, in the aspect of time management, this surah emphasizes the urgency of making optimal use of time. Time is an irreplaceable capital. In management practice, this requires planning, priority scale, and the use of time management strategies such as effective work schedules and periodic evaluations. Second, the value of pious charity reflects the importance of work ethics. A person who works with integrity, commitment, and dedication can be considered to be doing righteous deeds in a professional context. This is in line with the values in human resource management that emphasize work ethics and morality.

Third, advising in truth can be translated as an honest and constructive communication practice within the organization. In the world of work, this culture of mutual advice supports the creation of a mentoring system, peer evaluation, and collective discussion that builds teamwork spirit and continuous improvement. Fourth, patience in facing challenges shows the importance of resilience and perseverance in leadership and risk management. A leader who is able to control emotions, be calm under pressure, and persistent in achieving organizational goals is a reflection of the value of patience in this surah.

In the modern context, many individuals and organizations face challenges in managing time effectively. Busy routines, digital distractions, and a tendency to procrastinate work are barriers to productivity. Surah Al-'Ashr reminds that time is a mandate and must be used responsibly. The educational approach based on the value of time in Surah Al-'Ashr can also be applied in the world of education and leadership training. Qur'an-based character education needs to instill awareness that time management is not just efficiency, but also worship. Advising each other in truth and patience is a reflection of team collaboration, professional morals, and steadfastness in achieving the joint vision.

## Implications for Modern Management

The meaning of time stated in Surah Al-'Ashr through Ibn Katsir's commentary has a strong relevance to modern management practices. This surah conveys that all human beings are at a loss except those who use their time with faith, good deeds, counsel in truth, and counsel in patience. These values can be translated into contemporary managerial principles that include time management, ethical character building, leadership development, and the ability to deal with risks and uncertainties.

First, in the aspect of time management, Surah Al-'Ashr emphasizes that time is an asset that cannot be returned. In modern management, this encourages the importance of short and long term strategic planning, the use of time management tools such as *to-do lists*, *time-blocking*, and priority matrices such as *the Eisenhower Matrix*, as well as periodic performance evaluations to maximize productivity and work effectiveness. A study from Covey (1990) in his book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* shows that effective managers are those who are able to manage time based on urgency and importance, not just busyness.

Second, the values of faith and righteous deeds mentioned in this surah reflect the urgency of implementing a strong work ethic in organizational culture. A professional will show dedication, honesty, responsibility, and a desire to make a real contribution. The culture of advising each other in truth encourages open communication, *peer review*, and character development through mentoring and coaching. This creates a healthy and sustainable organizational climate. The *value-based management* model developed by Kaplan and Norton in *the Balanced Scorecard* shows that integrity and ethical values are essential components in creating

organizational excellence.

Third, in leadership and strategic management, the patience mentioned in Surah Al-'Ashr can be translated as the leader's ability to deal with pressure, consistency in executing the vision and mission, and perseverance in guiding the team towards long-term goals. A patient leader will be able to create adaptive strategies in the face of global changes and crises, and be able to maintain organizational stability in times of transition or conflict. This concept is in line with the transformational leadership theory of Bass and Avolio (1994) which emphasizes the importance of inspiration, motivation, and long-term commitment.

Fourth, in decision-making and risk management, the principle of patience teaches that important decisions must be taken with great consideration, through in-depth analysis, and considering moral and social aspects, not just economics. In risk management, awareness of the value of time drives preventive actions, risk priority management, and the application of prudential principles in every policy. This can be attributed to *the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)* model that emphasizes a proactive and holistic approach to identifying, assessing, and managing risks across parts of the organization.

Thus, Surah Al-'Ashr not only provides spiritual guidance, but also contains universal principles that can be applied in the modern world of management. These values underlie the development of superior human resources, the formation of an organizational culture with integrity, and the improvement of operational efficiency and effectiveness oriented towards the success of this world and the hereafter.

### Practical Implications

Surah Al-'Ashr is not only spiritually and morally relevant, but it also provides practical implications in various aspects of life, especially in the world of education, management, and character development. The following table summarizes some of the main implications based on the values in Surah Al-'Ashr:

**Table 1.** "The main implications based on the values in surah Al-'Ashr"

The Value of Surah Al-'Ashr	Practical Implications
Faith	Building a spiritual foundation in leadership and decision-making
Good Deeds	Encourage work ethic, social responsibility, and tangible contributions within the team.
Advising in the Truth	Increase the resilience of individuals and teams in the face of organizational challenges.
Awareness of the Value of Time	Instilling time discipline in education, work planning, and evaluation.

This implication shows that Surah Al-'Ashr is not only a religious doctrine, but also a functional guide in shaping individual behavior and a productive and integrity work system.

### Biography of Ibn Katsir Ibn Katsir

Was a well known commentator and historian. His full name was Abu Al Fida, Imaduddin Ismail Ibn Umar Ibn Katsir Al-Quraisyi Al Basrawi Ad Dimasyqi, famous as Ibn Katsir's. Ibn Katsir was a fiqh expert, hadith expert, historian, and commentator. Hafiz Ibn Hajar said, "He is a scholar of hadith and fuqaha (Al-Qaththan, 1996). Ibn Katsir writings filled the country when he was alive and were used after he died. In Damascus, Ibn Katsir was born in 700 H/1300 M, east of Bashri. At the age of 3, around 703 H, his father died. Since then, Ibn Katsir was raised by his elder brother in Damascus.

It was in this city that he first received his education, during the Mamluk Dynasty and the ruler at that time was Sultan an-Nashir Ibn Qalawun, who later surrendered in 1308 AD and was succeeded by al-Malik al-Muzhaffar Baybars al-Jazhangir who was based in Cairo. Ibn Kathir died shortly after writing the book *al-Ijtihad fi Talab al-Jihad*. He died in Damascus in 774 H. He was buried in a Sufi cemetery, right next to the tomb of his teacher, Ibn Taymiyah (Adz-Dzahabi, 1985).

## **Ibn Katsir's Method of Interpretation**

Ibn Katsir, one of the great mufasirs in the classical Islamic tradition, is known as a figure who used *the tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* approach in his tafsir works. This approach emphasizes the importance of interpreting the Qur'an based on authentic and authoritative sources of narration. In the classification of interpretation methods, Ibn Katsir's tafsir falls into the category of *manhaj tahlili* or analysis method, in which the verses of the Qur'an are explained sequentially according to the order of the mushaf, and each verse is discussed in depth from various aspects.

In its preparation, Ibn Katsir set the order of priority in explaining the meaning of the verses of the Qur'an. First, he interprets verse after verse in the Qur'an (*tafsir Al-Qur'an bi Al-Qur'an*), because he believes that the Qur'an explains each other. Second, if no explanation is found from other verses, then he refers to the authentic hadiths of the Prophet, because the Prophet is the explainer and the main perpetrator of revelation. Third, if an explanation from the hadith is not found, then Ibn Katsir quoting the opinions of the Prophet's companions who are known to have depth of knowledge and closeness to the source of revelation. Fourth, if the opinion of the companion is not found, then he turns to the opinion of the *tabi'in*, i.e. the disciples of the companions, while still considering the validity of their history.

Ibn Katsir was very careful against interpretations that are based only on logic or reason (*ra'yu*), especially those that come from foreign philosophy or thought that are not in harmony with the principles of Islam. He is also selective in responding to the history of *Israiliyat*, which is the stories from the Jewish and Christian traditions that have entered into Islamic literature, by classifying them into those that are acceptable, those that must be rejected, and those that depend on their status. With this approach, *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim* became one of the most authoritative and widely used tafsir in the Islamic world to date because of its strength in the foundation of the evidence and its prudence in interpretation.

## **Ibn Katsir's Interpretive Style**

Tafsir Ibn Katsir is one of the most influential works of tafsir in the Islamic tradition written with the *bi al-ma'tsur* approach or also known as *tafsir bi al-riwayah*. The main characteristic of his interpretive style is to prioritize references to the Qur'an, authentic hadith of the Prophet, as well as the *atsar* of the companions and *tabi'in*. In interpreting a verse, Ibn Katsir always tries to relate it to other verses in the Qur'an that have similar themes or keywords as a form of intertextual approach. If no explanation is found from other verses, then he quotes the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and first ascertains the authenticity of the hadith used.

The superiority of this tafsir lies in Ibn Katsir's meticulousness in filtering the narration; he does not necessarily accept all the narrations, but rather goes through the *sanad* and assesses its validity by the standard of hadith science. He expressly rejects weak hadith (*dhaif*), false (*maudhu'*), or *Israiliyat* narration that has no solid basis. That is why this interpretation is considered a *ma'tsur* interpretation that remains rational, because the author is not only copying the history, but also giving a critical assessment of it.

In addition, Ibn Katsir's presentation style is systematic and easy to understand. He begins the interpretation of one verse or several verses at a time, then explains its meaning gradually with straightforward language and light editorial. He included arguments from other verses as reinforcements, comparing them to explain the context and meaning more fully. In some cases, he also conveyed differences of opinion among scholars, but still showed the strongest opinion based on evidence.

In addition to the narration approach, Ibn Katsir sometimes inserts simple linguistic and logical explanations to clarify the meaning of the verses, without getting caught up in philosophical speculation or excessive superstition. This thorough but cautious approach makes its interpretation relevant not only to academics, but also to the general public who want to understand the Qur'an comprehensively but still refer to reliable sources.

## **Characteristics**

The scholars of Tafsir who interpret the Qur'an according to the majority of *Salaf*, who came after the narrations were collected and received the wealth of narrations left by the Companions and *Tabi'in* are divided into two, namely those pioneered by Ibn Jarir At Thabary and by Ibn Katsir (Fathonah, 2015).

Ibn Katsir belonged to the group that took history seriously and studied its *sanads*. Ibn Kathir rejected all of Ibn Jarir's narrations regarding the story of Zaid and Zain'ab, because he was careful in paying attention to

the sanad (Nihaya, 2012). Ibn Jarir Ath-Thabari is one of the scholars who chooses one opinion that is considered the most appropriate from several existing opinions. The opinion he chose was the one that best suited the context of the Qur'an, closest to the original Arabic meaning, and most in harmony with the narration of the Prophet and was easy to understand in religious (Ardiansa, n.d.).

The peculiarity of Ibn Katsir's interpretation is that he often explains the crimes of *Israilliyat* with the hadith *ma'tsur*. He also mentioned the words of the Ulama in the laws related to *fiqh*. In addition, several things cause weaknesses in *Tafsir bi al-Ma'tsûr*, namely:

1. Many stories were prepared by the enemies of Islam, such as heretics, both Jewish and Christian.
2. There is a mixture of authentic narrations, there are also many sayings that are conveyed to friends and *tabi'in* without selection, so that the truth and the false are mixed.
3. There is an Islamic history that contains fairy tales, and this cannot be justified.

Another peculiarity of Ibn Kathir's *tafsir* is his meticulousness in placing authentic hadiths as the basis for interpretation. He also quoted the opinions of the companions, *tabi'in*, and *salaf* scholars carefully and responsibly. In terms of *fiqh*, he also mentions the opinions of scholars and explains the legal context by referring to strong *sharia* postulates.

However, the *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur* is not without weaknesses. Some of the challenges faced in this method include first, the number of histories from Jewish and Christian traditions (*Israilliyat*) that are included in the early interpretive literature. Second, the difficulty of sorting between *sahih* and *dhaif* narrations when these narrations are conveyed without *sanad* verification. Third, there are stories that are more fairy tales or myths that are not in accordance with the spirit of Islamic science.

*Israilliyat* itself is the plural form of *israilliyah*, which refers to the stories of the Children of Israel or the Judeo Christian heritage that are included in the interpretation of the Qur'an. Ibn Katsir divided *Israilliyat* into three categories: first, those that are in accordance with the *Shari'ah* and acceptable, the second is that which is contrary to Islam and must be rejected, and the third is that which is not mentioned in Islam or rejected, then its status is suspended (*tawaqquf*). This policy shows Ibn Katsir's wisdom in maintaining the purity of the interpretation from invalid external influences.

With these characteristics, Ibn Katsir's *tafsir* occupies an important position in the treasures of classical Islamic scholarship and remains relevant today, both in the context of academic studies and as a reference for the general public.

## Study of Surah Names

Surah Al-'Ashr is one of the surahs referred to in the Makkiah surah group because it was revealed in Mecca before the Prophet migrated to Medina. It is named after surah Al-'Ashr, which is taken from the beginning of the surah. The majority of scholars agree that Al-'Ashr is the same as the word Ad-Dahr, which means time or time that is generally not bound by a particular time.

Surah Al-'Ashr begins with the letter *waw* which shows the form of an oath from Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala. In the Qur'an, every oath that Allah declares indicates that what is called after it has an important meaning and needs serious attention. This is because the oath in Arabic contains the meaning of emphasis or seriousness (*taukid*).

The word "*wal 'ashr*" means "for the sake of the time of asr", and in this context, Al-'Ashr is interpreted as time in general, or a time in human life. God swears by this time because time is a part of life full of events, lessons, and signs of His power and wisdom.

Through this oath, Allah affirms that basically all humans are in a state of loss. However, there are exceptions for those who have four qualities: those who believe in Allah, do righteous deeds, exhort each other to stay on the path of righteousness, and remind each other to remain patient in the face of all trials.

Al-'Ashr can also be interpreted as a very short time, which is analogous to the time of *asar* before sunset. This is a signal from Allah to people to realize how valuable the time that has been given, and encourages them to make the best use of it in accordance with the teachings and rules of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala. That way, this short world life can be lived meaningfully, so that humans become lucky people and are not included in the losing class (Mardiyah, 2021).

## Time

Time is one of the dimensions of human life, by seeing how important the value of time is and how great blessings God has given. The Qur'an has paid great attention to time (Fauzi, M. I., & Hamidah, 2021). Surah Al Ashr emphasizes and pays special attention to the value of time as a warning. Allah warns people who make all their activities only compete to accumulate wealth and spend that time only on worldly affairs, to forget the purpose of life in this world, which is to get closer to Allah and worship. Many people think that living in this world is only for worldly interests, there is no life in the hereafter (Mahmud, 2024).

Time is the most valuable asset, so it must be used as best as possible to do useful things. Malik bin Nabi wrote in his book Syuruth an-Nahdhah also gives the meaning of time as quoted by Shihab (2007) in the journal Murniyetti, "time is a river that flows in all directions since ancient times, crossing islands, cities and villages, arousing spirits or intoxicating people. He is silent in a thousand languages, so much so that man is often unaware of the presence of time and forgets its value, even though everything but God will not be able to escape from it (Murniyetti, 2016).

They consider a person's life and death to be just the passing of time. Death is the end of the journey of human existence and there is no resurrection day after it (Mujahidin, 2013) Islam itself views time as one of Allah's greatest blessings. In the hadith narrated by the Imam Bukhari, Rasulullah SAW say:

نَعْمَتَانِ مَعْبُودٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ الصَّحِيحُ وَالْفَرَاغُ

"There are two blessings that people often forget, namely the blessing of health and leisure." For Allah SWT, time is human life in the sense that humans live in the world, which is always accompanied by time, and the journey of life is always passed by time. In this case, they consider it a blessing and engage in the act of tearing time if a day has passed, even though they do not seek benefits for themselves and the life around them, so they do not seek to increase their pious deeds (Baso, 1999).

It should be noted that everyone's right to the present must be filled with useful knowledge and good deeds ((Jawwad, 2006) Do not postpone until tomorrow because the present that is being lived will disappear into the past and cannot be returned. One should be able to plant today with useful things so that he can harvest them tomorrow (Fatih, n.d.).

## Sub Discussion

The word "time" in Arabic is "الوقت" (al-waqtu). In addition, there is also the word "الزمن" (az-zaman), which also refers to the time or period. In Surah Al-'Ashr, there is a difference in translation between "by time" and "by period", but both refer to Allah's oath about the importance of time, and the main message of this surah remains the same, which is to emphasize the importance of using time well and seeking the truth and advising each other for kindness and patience (Al-Qardhawi, 2005).

This surah consists of three verses and is a Makkiah letter (Saputra, A., 2022) Some of the virtues and meanings of Surah Al-'Ashr include (Ardiansa, 2024):

1. The importance of making use of time: This letter shows the urgency of making use of God given time.
2. Mankind is completely confused: This letter makes it clear that all mankind will lose except those who believe and always do good deeds and counsel one another against suffering and hardship.
3. Righteous deeds and warnings: This letter expects people to believe, do righteous deeds, and counsel one another on the truth.

## Tafsir of Surah Al Ashr verses 1-3

وَالْعَصْرِ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ (٣)

"For the sake of time, men are truly confused, except for those who believe and do good deeds and counsel one another in truth and patience. (QS Al-'Ashr)"

Al-'Ashr is a period in which the various activities of the children of Adam take place, both in good and bad forms. Imam Malik narrated from Zaid bin Aslam: "The word Al-'Ashr means the Asr prayer and the popular one is the first opinion. Thus, God had sworn at that time that mankind would loss, that is, a complete loss and perish. To be a complete loss, to be lost and to be lost.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ

Except for those who believe and do righteous deeds. By this, Allah provides an exemption from that loss for those who believe with their hearts and do righteous deeds through their limbs.

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ

And advising to obey the truth. That is, being aware of all forms of obedience and abandoning something that is forbidden.

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

And advise each other to be patient. That is, to be patient with all sorts of trials, fates, and distractions thrown at those who uphold the commandments of good and evil.

Given the importance of making use of time, the Qur'an mentions several situations where people feel regret for having wasted time during their life in the world. In Q.S. Fatir verses 36-37, there is a conversation between Allah SWT and the inhabitants of Hell. They complain to God to be returned to the world to start over and do righteous deeds. However, the request was not granted due to time for charity has passed and now is the time to receive an answer (Al-Qardhawi, 1995). In addition, Q.S. Al-Munafiqun verses 9-11 and Q.S. as-Sajdah verse 1 also describe a situation where people feel sorry for the loss of their time (Syifa, 2019).

Surah Al-'Ashr consists of three short verses but has a very deep and comprehensive meaning. Allah SWT opens this surah with the oath, "For the sake of time," which shows how important and precious time is in human life. Some scholars interpret *al-'ashr* as a time in general, while others interpret it as the time of the Asr prayer or the time of the Prophet PBUH, but the broadest and strongest meaning is time as the whole of human life. After the vow, Allah declared that man was at a loss. The emphasis in the phrase "*lafi khusr*" emphasizes that this loss is not just a part, but a total loss, both in this world and in the hereafter, because the time given is not used as it should. However, not all humans lose; Allah gives exceptions to those who have four main characteristics, namely faith, righteous deeds, admonishing one another in truth, and admonishing one another in patience.

The faith in question is a firm belief in the heart, sworn orally, and proven by deeds. Pious deeds are a manifestation of faith itself, in the form of all forms of goodness commanded by Allah SWT. It is not enough to do good individually, people who survive losses must also play an active role in society by advising each other in the truth, namely inviting monotheism, noble morals, and all the true teachings of Islam. However, in upholding this truth there are certainly challenges and tests, so Allah mentions the last trait, which is to counsel one another in patience. This patience includes patience in obedience, shunning disobedience, facing calamity, and remaining steadfast in the struggle to uphold the truth.

This surah teaches a great lesson that time is the main capital in life, and whoever does not use it to gain faith, righteous deeds, and spread the truth with patience will be a loser. The Qur'an also mentions in several other verses the regret of those who waste time, such as in Q.S. Fatir verses 36–37, when the inhabitants of Hell asked to be returned to the world in order to do righteous deeds, but the request was rejected because time had run out. Similarly, in Q.S. Al-Munafiqun verses 9–11 and Q.S. As-Sajdah verse 1, Allah reminds people not to be negligent in their lives because every second of time will be accounted for. Therefore, Surah Al-'Ashr is a concise summary of Islamic teachings that touch the core of life: faith, charity, da'wah, and patience. Without these four things, life would only end in regret and loss.

**Table 2.** "Scholars' opinion about time"

<b>Tema Utama</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Source</b>
Definition of Time in Islam	Time is a gift that must be used with faith, righteous deeds, and patience.	Tafsir of Ibn Katsir
Time as Main Capital	Time is an irreversible capital, so it must be used to its best advantage.	Tafsir of Ibn Katsir
The Survivors	Those who take advantage of the time to believe, do righteous deeds, and counsel one another in truth and patience.	Tafsir of Ibn Katsir
Consequences of Wasting Time	A person who wastes time without godly deeds and goodness is at a disadvantage.	Tafsir of Ibn Katsir
The Urgency of Time Awareness	Awareness of the value of time is the basis for achieving happiness in this world and the hereafter.	Tafsir of Ibn Katsir

## Comparison with other interpretations

In order to enrich the understanding of Surah Al-'Ashr, it is important to compare Ibn Katsir's interpretation with the views of other mufasir. Fakhruddin al-Razi, in *Tafsir al-Kabir*, emphasizes the philosophical and rational aspects of understanding the verses of the Qur'an. He saw God's oath of time as a signal to the inevitable change and destruction of earthly life. Al-Razi argues that human losses are not only physical or economic, but also involve the loss of spiritual and intellectual potential if they are not used to draw closer to Allah. His emphasis on the inner meaning of time expands the view that man is not only required to be outwardly productive, but also aware of his existential purpose.

Meanwhile, M. Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir al-Mishbah* interprets Surah Al-'Ashr with a contextual approach. He highlights how the values in this surah are very relevant to modern social dynamics. According to him, the right use of time is not only for individuals, but also concerns collective awareness to build a just and civilized society. Shihab also emphasized that *tawāṣaw bil-ḥaqq* and *tawāṣaw biṣ-ṣabr* contain elements of active and non-passive social da'wah, so Muslims must be involved in defending truth and justice, even in the midst of the pressures of the times.

By comparing these three mufasirs, it can be seen that Ibn Katsir provides a normative and historical foundation through authentic history, al-Razi expands his philosophical and metaphysical dimensions, while Quraish Shihab offers a contextual sociological approach. All three contribute to enriching the understanding of the urgency of time and human moral responsibility in various walks of life.

## Conclusion

Time is one of the dimensions of human life, seeing how important the value of time is and how great a blessing God gives. The Qur'an has paid great attention to time. Surah Al-'Ashr emphasizes and pays special attention to the value of time as a warning. For Allah SWT, time is human life in the sense that humans live in the world, which is always accompanied by time, and the journey of life is always passed by time.

In connection with this, they consider it a blessing and engage in the act of tearing time (time) if a day has passed, when they do not seek to benefit themselves and the life around them, so they do not seek to increase their righteous deeds. The virtue and meaning of Surah Al-'Ashr is the first of all, the importance of making use of time, this surah shows the urgency of using the time given by Allah. Second, mankind is completely confused: This letter makes it clear that all mankind will lose except those who believe and always do good deeds and counsel one another against suffering and hardship. Third, righteous deeds and warnings: This letter expects people to believe, do righteous deeds, and counsel one another on the truth.

In this study, the author analyzes the value of time contained in the Qur'an, Surah Al-'Ashr

Tafsir Ibn Katsir. The author advises readers to use their time well and appreciate the value of time according to Surah Al-'Ashr as well as the Qur'an and hadith so that our lives are more focused and avoid a group of people who lose. Hopefully it can provide benefits for readers, this article is far from perfect, therefore the author expects criticism and suggestions from various parties who read it for future improvements.

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