IJISI
International Journals of Islamic Studies Issues

International Journal of Islamic: Studies Issues (IJISI)
https://kalimasadajournals.com/

July 2025: Vol. 1 No. 2
E-ISSN: 3089-6827
Pp: 53-56
DOI:
https://doi.org/10.59966/9pxmrb13

Mountains as Earth's Stakes in the Perspektive of the Qur'an: An Interdisciplinary Study of Qur'anic Exegesis and Geological Science

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Abstract

This research examines the concept of mountains as Earth's Stakes through an interdisciplinary lens, integrating Qur'anic perspectives with modern geological science. The study aims to bridge the gap between classical and modern exegesis (*tafsir*), specifically focusing on *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* and Quraish Shihab's *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, and contemporary scientific understanding.

The study employs an interdisciplinary approach, synthesizing qualitative textual analysis of religious scriptures with established scientific theories. It compares the linguistic and theological descriptions of mountains in the Qur'an (specifically Surah An-Naba: 6-7) with empirical geological data, including plate tectonics and the principle of isostasy.

The results indicate that the Qur'anic term *"autad"* (stakes) aligns with modern geological findings which reveal that mountains have deep "roots" embedded in the Earth's crust. These structures contribute to the Earth's geodynamic stability, mitigate seismic impacts, and provide essential resources for life. Furthermore, the study finds that while classical interpretations focus on physical stability, modern interpretations expand this to include the spiritual significance of divine balance in creation.

This research demonstrates a profound harmony between divine revelation and empirical science. By validating the stabilizing function of mountains through both theological and scientific frameworks (including perspectives from scholars like Keith L. Moore), it provides a foundation for developing faith-based scientific knowledge and encourages a holistic view of the relationship between religion and the natural world.

Keywords: Earth's stakes; mountains; equilibrium; qur'anic interpretation; geology.

Manuscript received : 01-05-2025; revised : 30-06-2025; accepted : 25-07-2025. Date of publication : 30-07-2025.
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I. INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an, as the holy book of Muslims, contains not only spiritual teachings but also touches upon various aspects of science, including natural phenomena. One topic of particular interest is the Qur'anic explanation of mountains as earth's stakes (*autad*), as mentioned in Surah An-Naba: 6-7:

﴿ أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِهَٰدًا ٦ وَٱلْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا ٧ ﴾

"Have we not made the earth a resting place, and the mountains as stakes?"

This verse depicts mountains as structures that function to maintain the Earth's stability, which scholars interpret as one of the signs of Allah's power. Classical exegesis, such as *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, explains that mountains serve as balancers of the Earth to prevent it from shaking. Modern exegesis, such as *Tafsir Al-Misbah* by Quraish Shihab, further asserts that the function of mountains is not merely physical; it also carries spiritual significance as a testament to the greatness of Allah.

On the other hand, modern science, specifically in the field of geology, has proven that mountains possess a stabilizing function through the concepts of plate tectonics and isostasy. Mountains are understood to be the result of tectonic plate movements that create deep "roots" to maintain the equilibrium of the Earth's crust.

This demonstrates a harmony between divine revelation and scientific knowledge in understanding the function of mountains. This research aims to examine the concept of mountains as Earth's stakes from a Qur'anic perspective and compare it with modern scientific findings. Utilizing a thematic exegesis (*tafsir mawdu'i*) and scientific review approach, this study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the integration between the Qur'an and science.

II. METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach using the library research method. The study is conducted to analyze the concept of mountains as Earth's stakes in the Qur'an and compare it with modern scientific findings in geology.

The primary data consists of Qur'anic verses that directly discuss the function of mountains, such as Surah An-Naba: 6-7, Surah An-Nahl: 15, Surah Luqman: 10, Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 19, and Surah Fussilat: 10, which serve as the foundation of this study. These verses are analyzed by referring to both classical and modern books of exegesis.

The interpretation of the Qur'anic verses is carried out through a thematic (*maudhu'i*) approach, referencing authoritative works of exegesis such as *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (classical), Quraish Shihab's *Tafsir Al-Misbah* (modern), and Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilalil Qur'an*. Secondary data includes modern scientific literature related to geology, specifically the theories of plate tectonics and isostasy, as well as research discussing the role of mountains in maintaining the Earth's stability. One of the primary scientific references used is the work of Keith L. Moore, *The Developing Human*.

The data is analyzed through three distinct approaches. The thematic approach focuses on identifying the main themes within the Qur'anic verses related to mountains. The comparative approach involves comparing the explanations provided by the Qur'an with modern scientific discoveries in the field of geology. Finally, the integrative approach synthesizes Qur'anic explanations and scientific evidence to find the harmony between divine revelation and scientific knowledge.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Qur'an mentions mountains as stakes in several verses, one of which is surah An-Naba: 6-7:

﴿ أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِهَٰدًا ٦ وَٱلْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا ٧ ﴾

"Have We not made the earth a resting place? And the mountains as stakes?"

The word *autad* (أَوْتَادًا) in this verse carries the meaning of stakes used to fasten something to ensure it remains stable. These stakes serve as a symbol of the mountain's strength as a stabilizer against the earth's tremors. According to *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Allah created mountains to keep the earth from shaking, thereby allowing humans to live safely upon it. Mountains function as stabilizers for the earth's surface, which has the potential to shake due to internal movements.

This explanation is further reinforced in Surah An-Nahl: 15:

﴿ وَاَلْقٰى فِى الْاَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ اَنْ تَمِيْدَ بِكُمْ وَاَنْهٰرًا وَّسُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَۙ ١٥ ﴾

"And He has cast firmly set mountains upon the earth lest it should shake with you, and [made] rivers and roads that you may be guided."

According to *Tafsir Al-Misbah* by Quraish Shihab, this verse indicates that the existence of mountains serves more than just a physical function; it is also a sign of the greatness of Allah, who created the universe with balance and harmony. These mountains, though appearing solid, are a manifestation of Allah's power in creating equilibrium on earth for the continuity of human life.

Another relevant verse is Surah Luqman: 10:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاۤءِ مَاۤءً لَّكُمْ مِّنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَّمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيْهِ تُسِيْمُوْنَ ١٠ ﴾

"He created the heavens without pillars that you see and has cast firmly set mountains upon the earth lest it should shake with you, and dispersed therein every kind of moving creature. And We sent down rain from the sky and caused to grow therein [every] good kind of noble pair."

This verse affirms that mountains play a vital role in maintaining the earth's stability. This is understood by exegesis experts as a form of balance intentionally created by Allah to support human life.

In modern geological studies, it is known that mountains are formed through plate tectonic processes, namely the movement and collision of the earth's plates which create massive structures on the earth's surface. This process produces mountain "roots" that are embedded deep into the earth's mantle, similar to the function of stakes mentioned in the Qur'an. This phenomenon is explained through the theory of isostasy, which states that mountains function to maintain the balance of the earth's crust against excessive movement.

Mountains also play a role in reducing the impact of earthquakes by absorbing the energy generated by tectonic plate movements. This makes mountains an essential element in maintaining the planet's stability. Keith L. Moore, a scientist and embryologist, mentions in his book *The Developing Human* that the Qur'anic description of mountains as stakes is highly relevant to modern scientific findings. He states that the "roots" of mountains embedded in the earth provide scientific evidence of their function as stabilizers of the earth's crust, as mentioned in the Qur'an.

The alignment between the Qur'an and modern science becomes increasingly clear when discussing mountains as the earth's stakes. Verses such as Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 19 emphasize the importance of contemplating the creation of mountains:

﴿ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّوْنَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُوْنَ ١٩ ﴾

"And at the mountains, how they are erected?"

According to Sayyid Qutb in *Fi Zilalil Qur'an*, this verse is a call to reflect on the wonders of the universe, including the mountains that stand firmly upon the earth. He emphasizes that the existence of mountains is a sign of Allah's power, having created the world with full balance and order.

These verses show that the function of mountains as the earth's stakes provides not only physical benefits but also a spiritual dimension. Modern geological discoveries regarding mountain "roots" embedded in the earth's mantle strengthen the truth of the Qur'anic description. Thus, the Qur'an is not only relevant to people at the time of revelation but also provides inspiration for the development of scientific knowledge.

Beyond the function of stabilization, the Qur'an also depicts mountains as a sign of Allah's greatness. In Surah Fussilat: 10, Allah states:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاۤءِ مَاۤءً لَّكُمْ مِّنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَّمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيْهِ تُسِيْمُوْنَ ١٠ ﴾

"*And He placed on the earth firmly set mountains over its surface, and He blessed it and determined therein its [creatures'] sustenance in four days without distinction, for [all] those who ask."*

This verse affirms that mountains were created not only to maintain the earth's balance but also to support human life by providing natural resources such as water, minerals, and fertile soil.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the Qur'an clearly depicts the function of mountains as the earth's stakes, both physically and spiritually. Both classical and modern exegeses demonstrate that mountains function as balancers of the Earth to maintain its stability, while simultaneously serving as a sign of Allah's greatness in creating the universe with perfect balance.

Modern geological science supports this description with scientific explanations regarding mountain formation through plate tectonic processes. The "roots" of mountains, which are embedded within the Earth's mantle, function to balance the Earth's crust in accordance with the concept of isostasy. Furthermore, mountains play a vital role in mitigating the impact of earthquakes and providing various natural resources that support human life.

The alignment between divine revelation and scientific study demonstrates that the Qur'an was not only relevant at the time of its revelation but also continues to make significant contributions by inspiring the development of scientific knowledge. Thus, this research affirms that the integration of

revelation and science can provide a deeper understanding of natural phenomena and motivate scientific exploration based on the values of faith.

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