Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 4, Issue 6 (2026)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

CREATED WITHOUT PURPOSE? A QUR'ANIC RESPONSE TO NIHILISM AND THE MODERN CRISIS OF MEANING

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ABSTRACT

Nihilism is one of the most serious philosophical and existential challenges of the modern age. It questions whether human life has any ultimate meaning, whether moral values have any objective foundation, and whether death cancels the significance of human existence. In many modern discussions, nihilism emerges from the weakening of belief in God, the rise of materialistic worldviews, and the assumption that human life is merely a temporary biological event without final purpose or accountability. This paper presents a Qur'anic response to nihilism by analyzing selected verses of the Holy Qur'an that address creation, purpose, worship, moral responsibility, death, and the Hereafter. The central argument of this research is that the Qur'an rejects nihilism by affirming that human beings are not created in vain, that life is a moral test, and that every person will return to Allah for accountability. The paper uses qualitative textual analysis and comparative philosophical analysis to engage Western perspectives on nihilism and meaning, particularly in the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Viktor Frankl. These thinkers help explain the modern crisis of meaning. Still, the Qur'an provides a more complete answer by grounding human purpose in divine

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creation, worship, righteous action, truth, patience, and the Hereafter. The study concludes that the Qur'anic worldview refutes nihilism not only by claiming that life has meaning, but also by explaining why it has meaning. Because Allah created it, it is subject to moral responsibility and will return to Him. Therefore, the Qur'an offers a coherent spiritual, philosophical, and moral alternative to the modern crisis of meaning.

Keywords: Nihilism, meaning of life, Qur'an, purpose, accountability, existentialism, Islamic worldview, Western philosophy

1. Introduction

The question of the meaning of life has always been one of the deepest concerns of human existence. Human beings do not merely live; they ask why they live. They ask whether suffering has a purpose, whether morality is real, whether death is the end, and whether human life has any final value. In modern philosophy, these questions are often discussed through the concept of nihilism. Nihilism can be understood as the belief that life lacks ultimate meaning, objective value, or final purpose. In its existential form, nihilism holds that human existence is meaningless; in its moral form, it holds that moral values lack an objective foundation.

Although the term nihilism is modern, the basic problem it raises is not new. The Qur'an addresses this question directly by rejecting the assumption that human beings were created without purpose. One of the most powerful Qur'anic verses for this topic is found in Surah al-Mu'minun:

Arabic:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

Translation: "Did you think We had created you in vain, and that you would not be brought back to Us?" (Qur'an 23:115, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse directly challenges the heart of nihilism. It rejects two major nihilistic assumptions: first, that human beings are created without purpose, and second, that there is no final return or accountability after death. The Qur'an presents the opposite view: human life is purposeful, morally serious, and directed toward return to Allah.

This paper argues that the Qur'an offers a strong refutation of nihilism by

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http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

presenting human existence within a complete framework of origin, purpose, responsibility, and destiny. Human beings come from Allah, are created to worship Him, are tested through life and death, and return to Him for judgment. Therefore, life is not meaningless, morality is not arbitrary, and death is not the destruction of significance.

The paper also engages selected Western thinkers who have discussed the problem of meaning. Nietzsche describes the collapse of traditional religious and moral values in modern society. Camus discusses the absurdity that arises when human beings search for meaning in a universe that appears silent. Sartre argues that human beings must create meaning through freedom and choice. Frankl, however, argues that the search for meaning is one of the deepest human needs, even in suffering (Camus, 1991; Frankl, 2006; Nietzsche, 1974; Sartre, 2007). These perspectives help clarify the problem, while the Qur'an offers a divinely grounded answer.

1.1 Background and Significance

The modern world has achieved remarkable progress in science, technology, medicine, communication, and economic development. However, material progress has not removed the crisis of meaning. Many people continue to struggle with despair, purposelessness, moral confusion, and spiritual emptiness. The more human life is explained only in material terms, the more difficult it becomes to answer questions about ultimate purpose, moral responsibility, and the value of suffering.

Nihilism becomes significant because it is not merely an abstract philosophical idea. It affects how people understand themselves, their choices, their relationships, their morality, and their future. If life is ultimately meaningless, then morality may become a matter of preference, suffering may appear pointless, and death may seem to erase all human effort. This creates a serious spiritual and ethical problem.

Western philosophy has recognized this crisis in different ways. Nietzsche's famous statement that "God is dead" describes the collapse of belief in a transcendent moral order in European modernity (Nietzsche, 1974). Camus sees human life as marked by the absurd because human beings long for meaning but face a universe

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that appears indifferent (Camus, 1991). Sartre situates meaning-making within human freedom, arguing that human beings must define themselves through their choices (Sartre, 2007). Frankl, by contrast, argues that the human being cannot live without meaning and that meaning can be found even in suffering (Frankl, 2006).

The Qur'an is highly significant in this discussion because it does not leave meaning to subjective invention. Instead, it grounds meaning in Allah as Creator, Sustainer, Lawgiver, and Judge. The Qur'an repeatedly teaches that creation is not vain, human beings are not abandoned, and moral actions are not lost. In Surah al-Dhariyat, Allah states:

Arabic:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

Translation: "I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me." (Qur'an 51:56, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse gives human life a clear purpose. Worship in Islam is not limited to ritual acts; it includes obedience to Allah, gratitude, moral conduct, justice, remembrance, and living in accordance with divine guidance. Thus, the Qur'an presents meaning as something rooted in a relationship with Allah.

Another important verse is found in Surah al-Mulk:

Arabic:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ

Translation: "He who created death and life to test you and reveal which of you does best—He is the Mighty, the Forgiving." (Qur'an 67:2, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse shows that life is not a meaningless duration between birth and death. Rather, life is a moral test. Human beings are judged not merely by existence, wealth, pleasure, or power, but by the quality of their deeds. This makes the Qur'anic worldview a direct response to nihilism.

1.2 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this research is to examine how the Qur'an responds to nihilism and how selected Qur'anic verses provide a meaningful framework for human existence. The study aims to demonstrate that the Qur'an rejects the notion of a meaningless life by linking human existence to divine creation, worship, moral responsibility, and

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accountability in the Hereafter.

The objectives of this research are:

1. To define nihilism and explain its connection with the modern crisis of meaning.
2. To examine major Western philosophical perspectives on nihilism, absurdity, freedom, and meaning.
3. To analyze selected Qur'anic verses that address purposelessness, worship, moral testing, materialistic denial, and accountability.
4. To compare nihilistic assumptions with the Qur'anic worldview.
5. To argue that the Qur'an offers a coherent and powerful response to nihilism by grounding meaning in Allah, righteous action, truth, patience, and the Hereafter.

1.3 Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions guide this study:

6. What is nihilism, and why is it considered a major philosophical and existential problem?
7. How do selected Western thinkers understand the crisis of meaning?
8. Which Qur'anic verses most clearly reject the idea that life is meaningless or purposeless?
9. How do worship, moral testing, righteous action, and accountability provide a Qur'anic response to nihilism?
10. Can the Qur'anic worldview provide a stronger foundation for meaning than secular or existentialist alternatives?

The central hypothesis of this paper is that the Qur'an rejects nihilism by presenting human life as purposeful, morally accountable, and directed toward return to Allah. A secondary hypothesis is that Western existential thought powerfully identifies the crisis of meaning. However, it cannot fully resolve it unless meaning is grounded in something beyond subjective choice, social convention, or temporary worldly existence.

2. Literature Review

The literature for this study can be divided into two main areas: Western philosophical discussions of nihilism and meaning, and Qur'anic teachings on purpose, worship, accountability, and the Hereafter.

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2.1 Western Perspectives on Nihilism and Meaning

Nihilism is a complex concept. It can refer to the denial of objective moral values, the denial of ultimate meaning, or the collapse of inherited belief systems. In this paper, the focus is mainly on existential and moral nihilism. Existential nihilism denies that life has ultimate meaning, while moral nihilism questions whether moral values have objective truth.

Friedrich Nietzsche is one of the most important thinkers in the discussion of nihilism. His statement "God is dead" does not simply mean that people stopped believing in God. It means that Western society had lost its traditional religious foundation for morality and meaning, while still trying to preserve moral values that depended on that foundation (Nietzsche, 1974). Nietzsche saw nihilism as the devaluation of the highest values and as a crisis created by the collapse of transcendent meaning (Reginster, 2006).

Albert Camus approaches the problem through the idea of the absurd. In The Myth of Sisyphus, Camus argues that human beings long for meaning, order, and clarity, yet the universe appears silent and indifferent (Camus, 1991). This clash between human longing and cosmic silence creates the absurd. Camus does not recommend despair, but he does not ground meaning in God either. Instead, he suggests revolt, freedom, and continued living despite the absurd.

Jean-Paul Sartre presents an existentialist response. He argues that "existence precedes essence," meaning that human beings are not born with a fixed essence or predetermined purpose in a religious sense. Instead, they define themselves through choices and actions (Sartre, 2007). Sartre gives great importance to freedom and responsibility. However, from the Qur'anic perspective, human freedom does not mean freedom from divine purpose. Islam affirms that human beings make choices, but those choices occur within a created moral order established by Allah.

Viktor Frankl provides a different and useful Western perspective. In Man's Search for Meaning, Frankl argues that the search for meaning is one of the deepest human motivations. He writes from the experience of suffering and argues that even in extreme hardship, human beings can find meaning through love, work, courage,

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and their attitude toward suffering (Frankl, 2006). Frankl's view differs from the Qur'anic worldview, but it supports the idea that human beings cannot live well without meaning.

These Western thinkers show that the question of meaning is central to modern thought. Nietzsche diagnoses the collapse of values, Camus describes absurdity, Sartre emphasizes freedom, and Frankl emphasizes the human need for meaning. However, the Qur'an offers a more complete foundation because it does not leave meaning to human invention alone. It grounds meaning in Allah, revelation, moral accountability, and the Hereafter.

2.2 Qur'anic Perspective on Purpose and Human Existence

The Qur'an repeatedly rejects the idea that life is accidental, purposeless, or morally empty. It presents the universe as a creation of Allah and human beings as morally responsible servants of Allah. The Qur'anic worldview is therefore deeply opposed to nihilism.

The central verse of this study is Surah al-Mu'minun 23:115:

Arabic:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

Translation: "Did you think We had created you in vain, and that you would not be brought back to Us?" (Qur'an 23:115, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse rejects purposelessness directly. The Arabic word عَبَثًا carries the meaning of vainly, aimlessly, or without purpose. The verse also connects purpose with return to Allah. This is important because the Qur'an does not separate meaning from accountability. Human life has meaning because it comes from Allah and returns to Allah.

Surah al-Dhariyat 51:56 gives the purpose of creation:

Arabic:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

Translation: "I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me." (Qur'an 51:56, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse provides a positive answer to the question of life's meaning. The purpose of life is worship. However, worship should not be understood narrowly. In Islam,

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Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

worship includes ritual devotion as well as ethical living, obedience, justice, gratitude, remembrance, and service to creation for the sake of Allah.

Surah al-Mulk 67:2 explains life as a test:

Arabic:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ

Translation: "He who created death and life to test you and reveal which of you does best—He is the Mighty, the Forgiving." (Qur'an 67:2, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse is very important because it shows that life is not merely about survival, pleasure, or success. Life is about moral excellence. The phrase أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا means "best in deeds," indicating that meaning is connected with the quality of one's actions.

Surah al-Jathiyah 45:24 presents a worldview close to materialistic nihilism:

Arabic:

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ

Translation: "They say, 'There is only our life in this world: we die, we live, nothing but time destroys us.' They have no knowledge of this; they only follow guesswork." (Qur'an 45:24, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse is extremely relevant to nihilism because it describes people who deny the Hereafter and reduce existence to worldly life and the passage of time. The Qur'an criticizes this view as speculation without certain knowledge. This directly challenges materialistic assumptions that deny resurrection and accountability.

Finally, Surah al-Asr provides a concise framework for meaningful life:

Arabic:

وَالْعَصْرِ ۝ إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۝ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

Translation: "By the fading day, man is deep in loss, except for those who believe, do good deeds, urge one another to the truth, and urge one another to steadfastness." (Qur'an 103:1–3, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This surah gives a complete anti-nihilistic structure: faith, righteous deeds, truth, and patience. It teaches that human beings are in a state of loss unless their lives are grounded in these realities.

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Volume 4, Issue 6 (2026)

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Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

3. Methodology

This study uses a qualitative research method based on textual and comparative analysis. It is qualitative because it examines ideas, meanings, arguments, and religious texts rather than numerical data. The main purpose is to interpret the Qur'an's response to nihilism and to compare it with selected Western philosophical views.

The primary source for this research is the Holy Qur'an. The main verses analyzed are Surah al-Mu'minun 23:115, Surah al-Dhariyat 51:56, Surah al-Mulk 67:2, Surah al-Jathiyah 45:24, and Surah al-Asr 103:1–3. The English translation used is Abdel Haleem's The Qur'an: A New Translation (2004). The Arabic text is included to preserve the original Qur'anic wording and to strengthen the connection between the research argument and the primary Islamic source.

Secondary sources include works by Nietzsche, Camus, Sartre, and Frankl, as well as relevant scholarly studies on nihilism and existentialism. Nietzsche is used to discuss the collapse of transcendent values. Camus is used to explain absurdity. Sartre is used to analyze existential freedom and self-definition. Frankl is used to show the human need for meaning even in suffering (Camus, 1991; Frankl, 2006; Nietzsche, 1974; Sartre, 2007).

The method follows four steps. First, the paper defines nihilism and explains its relationship to the crisis of meaning. Second, it reviews selected Western perspectives. Third, it analyzes Qur'anic verses related to purpose, worship, accountability, and the Hereafter. Fourth, it compares the nihilistic worldview with the Qur'anic worldview to show how the Qur'an offers a coherent rejection of nihilism.

The study is limited to existential and moral nihilism. It does not cover all forms of nihilism, such as political or epistemological nihilism. It also does not claim that all Western philosophy is nihilistic. Rather, it uses selected Western thinkers to clarify the problem of meaning and then presents the Qur'anic response.

4. Findings/Results

The analysis of the Qur'anic verses and Western philosophical perspectives leads to several findings.

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Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

First, the Qur'an directly rejects the belief that human beings were created without purpose. Surah al-Mu'minun 23:115 asks whether human beings assumed that they were created عَبَثًا, meaning vainly or aimlessly. This verse is the strongest Qur'anic foundation for rejecting existential nihilism.

Second, the Qur'an grounds human meaning in worship. Surah al-Dhariyat 51:56 states that jinn and human beings were created to worship Allah. This means that the purpose of life is not invented by human preference alone. The Creator gives it.

Third, the Qur'an presents life as a moral test. Surah al-Mulk 67:2 states that Allah created death and life to test who is best in deeds. This shows that human actions have real value. Life is meaningful because it is the field in which human beings choose between faith and disbelief, justice and injustice, gratitude and arrogance, righteousness and corruption.

Fourth, the Qur'an criticizes materialistic reductionism. Surah al-Jathiyah 45:24 describes a worldview that says there is only worldly life and that nothing destroys human beings except time. This worldview resembles modern materialistic nihilism because it denies resurrection and final accountability. The Qur'an rejects this position as guesswork without certain knowledge.

Fifth, the Qur'an provides a practical framework for a meaningful life through Surah al-Asr. Faith, righteous deeds, truth, and patience form a complete response to nihilism. Faith gives life foundation, righteous deeds give life moral expression, truth protects life from illusion, and patience gives strength during hardship.

Sixth, Western thinkers identify the crisis of meaning but offer incomplete solutions. Nietzsche diagnoses the collapse of transcendent values, Camus describes the absurd, Sartre emphasizes self-created meaning, and Frankl affirms the human need for meaning. However, the Qur'an provides a more complete solution because it grounds meaning in divine reality rather than subjective construction.

Seventh, the Qur'anic response to nihilism is both philosophical and practical. It answers the philosophical question of why life has meaning and also provides a practical path for living meaningfully through worship, good deeds, truth, and

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Volume 4, Issue 6 (2026)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

patience.

5. Discussion

The findings show that the Qur'an refutes nihilism at the level of its deepest assumptions. Nihilism assumes that life may be without ultimate meaning, that values may be human inventions, and that death may be the end of significance. The Qur'an rejects these assumptions by presenting human life as created by Allah, directed toward worship, tested through moral action, and completed by return to Him.

5.1 Nihilism and the Loss of Divine Purpose

Nihilism becomes powerful when human beings lose a sense of divine origin and destiny. If a person believes that life is accidental and death is final annihilation, then it becomes difficult to explain why morality has ultimate value or why suffering has any final meaning. The Qur'an addresses this directly:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

"Did you think We had created you in vain, and that you would not be brought back to Us?" (Qur'an 23:115, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse is powerful because it connects two ideas: being created in vain and not returning to Allah. In the Qur'anic worldview, denial of return leads to moral and existential confusion. If there is no return, then injustice may appear unresolved, suffering may appear meaningless, and human effort may seem temporary. However, if there is a return to Allah, then every action matters and every injustice is known.

The Qur'an, therefore, restores meaning by restoring origin and destiny. Human beings are not self-created accidents. They are created servants of Allah, and their lives unfold within divine knowledge and wisdom.

5.2 Worship as the Foundation of Meaning

The Qur'anic answer to the purpose of life is stated clearly:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me." (Qur'an 51:56, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse provides a direct answer to nihilism. If nihilism says that life has no

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http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

ultimate purpose, the Qur'an says that life has a divinely given purpose: worship of Allah. Worship is not a narrow or empty ritualism. It is the full orientation of human existence toward Allah. Prayer, fasting, charity, honesty, justice, patience, kindness, gratitude, and self-control can all become acts of worship when done sincerely for Allah.

This understanding makes ordinary life meaningful. A believer's work, study, family responsibilities, social service, and moral struggles can all carry spiritual significance. Nihilism empties life of meaning; worship fills life with meaning by connecting every sincere action to Allah.

5.3 Life as a Test of Moral Excellence

Surah al-Mulk explains why life and death exist:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ

"He who created death and life to test you and reveal which of you does best—He is the Mighty, the Forgiving." (Qur'an 67:2, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse is essential for rejecting nihilism because it teaches that life is not random. It is a test. The purpose of life is not merely to enjoy, consume, compete, or survive. The purpose is to live with moral excellence.

This gives meaning to both success and hardship. Wealth is a test of gratitude. Poverty is a test of patience. Power is a test of justice. Knowledge is a test of humility. Suffering is a test of faith and perseverance. In this way, the Qur'an transforms all of life into a field of moral significance.

The phrase أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا is especially important. It does not only mean doing many deeds, but doing the best deeds with sincerity and righteousness. Therefore, the Qur'anic worldview does not define meaning by quantity of pleasure or worldly achievement, but by the quality of moral action.

5.4 The Qur'an's Critique of Materialistic Nihilism

A major cause of nihilism is the belief that there is nothing beyond worldly life. The Qur'an describes such a worldview in Surah al-Jathiyah:

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ

"They say, 'There is only our life in this world: we die, we live, nothing but time destroys us.' They have no knowledge of this; they only follow guesswork." (Qur'an 45:24, Abdel Haleem,

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
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trans., 2004)

This verse is highly relevant to the modern crisis of meaning. The statement "nothing but time destroys us" resembles a worldview in which human beings are reduced to biological existence within time. There is no resurrection, no final accountability, and no eternal meaning.

The Qur'an rejects this view as speculation. It does not deny that human beings die or that time passes. Rather, it denies the claim that worldly life is the whole of reality. The Qur'an teaches that death is not the end of meaning. It is a transition to accountability. This belief gives moral seriousness to life because no good deed is wasted and no injustice is permanently hidden.

5.5 Surah al-Asr as a Complete Response to Nihilism

Surah al-Asr is one of the shortest but most powerful Qur'anic responses to meaninglessness:

وَالْعَصْرِ ۝ إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۝ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

"By the fading day, man is deep in loss, except for those who believe, do good deeds, urge one another to the truth, and urge one another to steadfastness." (Qur'an 103:1–3, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This surah begins with time, reminding human beings that life is passing. Without guidance, human beings are at a loss. However, the surah gives four foundations of meaningful life.

First, faith gives life its ultimate foundation. Second, righteous deeds turn faith into action. Third, truth protects human beings from illusion and falsehood. Fourth, patience allows people to remain firm in the face of suffering, delay, and difficulty.

This is a complete anti-nihilistic framework. Nihilism leads to emptiness, but Surah al-Asr leads to meaningful commitment. Nihilism weakens morality, but Surah al-Asr demands righteous deeds. Nihilism can lead to despair, but Surah al-Asr demands patience. Nihilism can deny truth, but Surah al-Asr places truth at the center of human salvation.

5.6 Comparison with Nietzsche, Camus, Sartre, and Frankl

Nietzsche's analysis is useful because he understood that when belief in God

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 4, Issue 6 (2026)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

collapses, moral values become unstable. However, the Qur'an does not accept Nietzsche's solution of creating new values beyond traditional morality. Instead, the Qur'an restores the divine foundation of value. Human beings do not create meaning on their own; Allah gives it.

Camus honestly recognizes the pain of absurdity. He understands that human beings deeply desire meaning. However, Camus assumes that the universe is silent. The Qur'an rejects this assumption. Revelation means that reality is not silent. Allah speaks through revelation, creation, conscience, and signs. Therefore, the human longing for meaning is not absurd; it is a sign that the human being is made for Allah.

Sartre emphasizes freedom and responsibility. The Qur'an also affirms responsibility, but it does not accept that human beings define themselves without divine purpose. In Islam, freedom is real, but it is tested freedom. Human beings choose, but they choose within a moral order created by Allah.

Frankl is closest to the Qur'anic view in his rejection of meaninglessness. He shows that even suffering can contain meaning. However, the Qur'an goes further by grounding the meaning of suffering in Allah's wisdom, testing, mercy, forgiveness, and reward. Frankl shows that human beings need meaning; the Qur'an explains why meaning is real.

5.7 The Qur'anic Refutation of Nihilism

The Qur'anic refutation of nihilism can be summarized in five main arguments.

First, nihilism is false because creation is not purposeless. Allah did not create human beings عَبَثًا, in vain or without wisdom.

Second, nihilism is morally weak because it cannot fully secure the objective value of good and evil. The Qur'an grounds morality in Allah's command, knowledge, justice, and final judgment.

Third, nihilism fails to give suffering ultimate meaning. The Qur'an teaches that suffering can be a test, a means of purification, a reminder, or a means of spiritual growth when understood through faith.

Fourth, nihilism wrongly reduces reality to worldly life. The Qur'an teaches that the world is real and important, but it is not the whole of existence. The Hereafter gives

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final meaning to worldly life.

Fifth, nihilism is practically destructive because it often leads to despair, moral confusion, or spiritual emptiness. The Qur'an offers a practical path: faith, righteous deeds, truth, patience, worship, repentance, gratitude, and hope.

Therefore, the Qur'an rejects nihilism both intellectually and spiritually. It gives human life meaning by connecting it to Allah from beginning to end.

7. Conclusion

This paper has argued that the Qur'an provides a strong and coherent response to nihilism. Nihilism claims that life lacks ultimate meaning, moral values lack an objective foundation, and death may erase human significance. The Qur'an rejects these claims by teaching that Allah creates human beings, created for worship, tested through life and death, and returned to Allah for accountability.

The central verse of this research is Surah al-Mu'minun 23:115:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

"Did you think We had created you in vain, and that you would not be brought back to Us?" (Qur'an 23:115, Abdel Haleem, trans., 2004)

This verse powerfully captures the Qur'anic rejection of nihilism. Human beings are not created in vain, nor are they moving toward meaningless extinction. They are created servants of Allah, living in a moral test, and returning to Him.

When read alongside Surah al-Dhariyat 51:56, Surah al-Mulk 67:2, Surah al-Jathiyah 45:24, and Surah al-Asr 103:1–3, this verse forms a complete Qur'anic framework for meaning. Human life has an origin, a purpose, a responsibility, and a destiny. The Qur'an, therefore, rejects nihilism not only by affirming that life has meaning but also by grounding that meaning in Allah, worship, moral excellence, truth, patience, and eternal accountability.

Thus, the Qur'anic worldview offers a powerful answer to the modern crisis of meaning. A human being is not a meaningless accident in an indifferent universe. A human being is a servant of Allah, honored with moral responsibility, guided by revelation, tested through life, and destined to return to the Creator. This is the Qur'anic answer to nihilism.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 4, Issue 6 (2026)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

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