

## ISLAMIC THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT OF MUHAMMAD ZAIN AL-'ASYI IN THE *BIDAYAH AL-HIDAYAH*



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### Abstract

The rapid development of science in the archipelago, especially in Aceh, is characterized by the emergence of manuscripts in various fields of study. Apart from the big names that have been very well-known, such as Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsuddin As-Sumatrani, and Nuruddin Ar-Raniri, many other names are also very productive. One of the thinkers who has not been widely studied in the Aceh thought tradition is Muhammad Zain al-Asyi, who has many works in various fields such as Sufism, fiqh, monotheism, history, and others. This article aimed at analyzing the manuscript of *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, a work of Muhammad Zain al-Asyi related to Islamic theological thought. This study used philological methods in addition to content analysis. This work contains the ideology of *wujudiyah* developed by its predecessors, namely Hamzah Fansuri and Syams Al-Din al-Sumatrani. Apart from these teachings, it was also found that al-Asyi developed the instructions of the Sunni *aqidah* of Abu Hasan al-Asy'ary and Abu Mansur al-Maturidi written by al-Imam al-Sanusi in *Matn Umm al-Barahin*.

### Abstrak

Pesatnya perkembangan keilmuan di Nusantara, terutama di Aceh, ditandai dengan munculnya manuskrip dalam berbagai bidang kajian. Selain nama-nama besar yang sudah sangat terkenal seperti Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsuddin As-Sumatrani, Nuruddin Ar-Raniri, masih banyak nama-nama lain yang juga tidak kalah produktifnya. Salah satu tokoh pemikir yang belum banyak dikaji dalam tradisi pemikiran di Aceh adalah Muhammad Zain al-Asyi, yang memiliki banyak karya dalam berbagai bidang seperti tasawuf, fiqh, tauhid, sejarah, dan lain-lain. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis naskah *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, sebuah karya Muhammad Zain al-Asyi yang terkait pemikiran teologi Islam (kalam). Kajian ini menggunakan metode filologi di samping *content analysis*. Karya ini berisi paham wujudiyah yang dikembangkan oleh pendahulunya, Hamzah Fansuri dan Syams Al-Din al-Sumatrani. Di samping ajaran tersebut ditemukan juga konsep bahwa al-Asyi mengembangkan pengajaran *aqidah* yang bercorak Sunni Abu Hasan al-Asy'ary dan Abu Mansur al-Maturidi yang ditulis oleh al-Imam al-Sanusi dalam *Matn Umm al-Barahin*.

## INTRODUCTION

Manuscripts are cultural treasures that contain very high value. This treasure is a legacy of the Indonesian ancestors. Manuscripts have cultural values which involve thoughts, feelings, beliefs, customs and value systems that were applied in the past and written in various languages and scripts. Nevertheless, according to Uka Tjandrasasmita, only a tiny portion of the information content of such manuscripts has been extracted. It can be seen from the lack of many books or study results that use texts or manuscripts as study sources (Tjandrasasmita, 2016). This condition could also be caused by only a few people who are experts in the field of philology and a lack of attention to applying the results of philological studies to the area of social sciences. The abundant heritage of the manuscripts is now stored in various depositories both within the country and abroad.



The manuscripts are kept in many countries abroad, including Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, England, Germany, Russia, Netherlands, etc. Domestically, these manuscripts are stored in the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia, regional museums throughout Indonesia, and manuscript owners or collectors still keep many. Aceh is undoubtedly an essential place for developing Islamic religious ideas in the archipelago. Many scholars have emerged in Aceh and produced works in manuscripts. Among the famous ones are al-Raniri, Shamsuddin Sumatrani, and Hamzah Fansuri (Syarifuddin, 2020). However, many manuscripts from Acehese scholars' works have yet to be published and studied for their ideas. It is crucial for the sustainability and dynamics of religious thought after al-Raniri and Hamzah Fansuri and Shamsuddin Sumatrani, especially after the controversy over the *wujudiyah* doctrine that had shaken the intellectual and religious world of the Aceh community in the 17th century. Indeed, several studies have also been carried out, such as a study on the ulama 'Abdurrauf Sinkel by Fathurrahman (1999), but this does not exclude the possibility of the existence of other ulama who are also more important to study, including Muhammad Zain ibn Faqih Jalal al-Din al-'Asyi.

As one of the regions in the archipelago with many handwritten manuscripts, Aceh is an excellent example of looking at cases of manuscript preservation by the community. Based on observations, the Aceh manuscripts owned by the community are kept and maintained by placing them in cupboards and chests so that the physical condition of the manuscripts is very concerned about their conservation. The manuscripts of Aceh have many varieties, including religious nuances, regarding Islamic teachings and life. For example, the manuscripts in the Aceh manuscript catalog were compiled by Voorhoeve and Teuku Iskandar in 1994. One thing that needs to be noted is that element of Sufism, including the *tarekat*, also colours, if not dominate the writing of religious texts in this region (AR, 2018).

The Aceh Sufism manuscripts became famous, especially with the presence of great works by Sufism figures, such as Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsuddin As-Sumatrani, Nuruddin Ar-Raniri, and Abdurrauf al-Fansuri (Fakhriati, 2014; Ni'am, 2017). Apart from these big names who are very well known, many other names are also no less productive, for example, Muhammad Zain al-'Asyi, who has many works in the field of Sufism as well as in other fields such as fiqh, monotheism, history, and others.

This article focuses on studying Muhammad Zain al-'Asyi's thoughts on Islamic theology in the Book of *Bid'iyah al-Hid'iyah*, completed on 24 Sha'ban 1170 AH/14 May 1757 AD. The study in this article uses philological methods in addition to content analysis. The primary source for this study is the book of *Bid'iyah al-Hid'iyah*, which contains theological thoughts of Syaikh Muhammad Zain related to the ideology of *wujudiyah* developed by his predecessors, namely Hamzah Fansuri and Syams Al-Din al-Sumatrani.

## RECOGNIZING MUHAMMAD ZAIN AL-'ASYI

In general, his birth is still traceable. It is said that the year of his birth coincided with the period of knowledge debate between Hamzah Fansuri (w. 1016 AH/1607 AD) and Syamsuddin al-Sumatrani who had a Sufi style with Nuruddin ar-Raniri (w. 12 Rajab 1039 AH/ February 25th, 1630 AD) who took the theological pattern. These years were years of intellectual shift in the Aceh community.

Muhammad Zain is a descendant of Acehese ulama, beginning with his father, Faqih Jalaluddin al-'Asyi, and his datok, Arif Billah Kamaluddin bin Qadi Bahaginda Khatib al-'Asyi. They are known as ulama who left many works, apart from disseminating

Islamic teachings through studies and teaching, especially to the community of Aceh and the archipelago.

Muhammad Zain received his early education through his parents at a home boarding school, then studied with his father's teacher, Baba Daud bin Agha Ismail ar-Rumi. Growing up, he went to Makkah al-Mukarramah to gain various religious knowledge. He studied with Muhammad Said, Abdul Ghani bin al-Alim Muhammad Hilal, Ahmad al-Farsi, and Ahmad Durrah; the latter two were Egyptian-born ulama.

His students are famous both from within and outside the country. Before returning to Aceh, Muhammad Zain taught his knowledge at the Al-Haram Makkah al-Mukarramah mosque. Among his students were Hajj Abdur Rauf ibn Makhaliid Khalifah al-Qadiri al-Bantani, Abdus Shamad al-Falimbani, Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, Muhammad Nafis al-Banjari, and Daud bin Abdullah al-Fathani.

Like other ulamas, Muhammad Zain is also known as a productive ulama. It is indicated by numerous works written and left as valuable manuscripts for the academic world. Among the results of his work are: (1) *The Science of Tawhid*, written in 1114 AH/1702 AD, (2) *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, finished writing on 24 Sha'ban 1170 AH/May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1757 AD, (3) *Kasyf al-Kiraam*, completed on 8 Muharram 1171 AH/September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1757 AD, (4) *Talkish al-Falah fi Bayan Ahkam at-Thalaq wa an-Nikah*, n.d., (5) *Risalah Dua Kalimah Syahadah*, n.d., (6) *Faraidh al-Qur'an*, n.d., (7) *Masalah al-Faraid*, n.d., (8) *Doa Hizb al-Bahri*, n.d.

The *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, one of the most monumental books about Islamic theology, is this study material. This book is being studied because it was written by Muhammad Zain and still continue to be taught in various countries, and Islamic boarding schools to the present day. In neighboring countries, this book is one of the references used as study material in the field of theology. Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, and Cambodia are the countries that use this book the most.

Kolej Universiti Uagama Seri Begawan Brunei Darussalam, under the Center for Research and Study of Jawi and the Book of Turath has also made this kitab one of the compulsory books in the field of aqidah. This book is taught to students and civilians who are members of the *Talaqqi Kitab Turath* program every Thursday and Sunday evening.

## RECOGNIZING THE BOOK OF *BIDAYAH AL-HIDAYAH*

The curator recorded the *Bidayah al-Hidayah* manuscript under the number MI 341B, in which the information about the title was not found at the beginning of the text. The text is copied with Arabic script in Malay and Arabic languages. It is written in red and black ink. Malay is marked in black ink, and Arabic is marked in red ink and presented in prose.

This *Bidayah al-Hidayah* manuscript has been transferred to microfilm with roll number 414.08. It has been inventoried in the Master Catalog of Archipelago Manuscripts, volume 4 of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia. This manuscript is also inventoried in the Malay manuscript collection catalog of the Central Museum, Dep. P&K compiled by Amir Sutaarga and friends. According to the Sutarga catalog, MI. 341, p. 1–80, 20 X 15 cm 19 lines, Arabic letters, clear. Note. Nov. 7, etc. See above. Paint. V. R. Page 437. According to the written year number 1250 AH, it can be ascertained that this manuscript is a copy of Abdurra'uf's work because he lived in the 17th century.

In general, information about the description of the MI 341B manuscript from the collection of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia is provided. The cover of

the MI 341B manuscript is dark brown, measuring 20 x 15 cm. The writing base for the manuscript is thick infort paper with a Strasburg Lily watermark with a "VG" countermark. The writing is still clearly legible, the page size is the same as the cover size, while the text block size is 16 X 10 cm, each page consists of 19 lines, and the manuscript is 282 pages thick. The page numbering is others' additional numbering in pencil, with a double system, Arabic numerals 1 – 282, blank pages 207 and 217.

This manuscript describes moral teaching based on Sufism. This manuscript is a copy of Abdurra'uf's work, pages 208 – 211, containing advice for students. Pages 212 – 216 is about *'ilm al-usul*. Starting on page 218, entitled "*Dhiya al-Wara ila Suluki thariqat al-Ma'budi al-'Ula*," the interpretation explains humans walk in the highest path of God. They were written at the end of the text regarding the colophon of the manuscript. The end of this book was written in the *Musyarrifah* country of Mecca on Friday night, the twenty – fourth day of the month of Sha'ban. This book is the work of Muhammad Zein as a response to the many seekers of knowledge in the Arab land (Makkah al – Mukarramah) who came from the land of Jawi. This book is a translation of the book of Umm al – Barahin by al – imam al – faqil al – wara' Abhi Abdillah Muhammad Ibnu Yusuf as – Sanusi al – Hasani radhiallah' anhu.

#### **ANALYSIS OF MANUSCRIPTS RELATED TO ISLAMIC THEOLOGY (KALAM)**

Islamic theology, often referred to in the academic world as *kalam*, is a branch of science that talks explicitly about the priestly bond between creatures (humans) and their gods. The birth of Islamic theology is closely related to the fundamental issue of the nature of *aqidah* faced by Muslims. The various problems of this community raise controversy, dividing them into multiple groups. Among the well – known Islamic theological issues are the nature of God, the status of the Qur'an, the creation of the world, causality, destiny, and free will.

*Kalam* means speech or conversation. This term refers to a system of speculative thought that defends Islam and Islamic traditions from threats and challenges from outside (Kartanegara, 2002, p. 117). Meanwhile, the science of Islamic theology can be understood as a scientific study that attempts to understand religious beliefs based on solid arguments.

*'Ilm al-kalam* is seen as traditional knowledge (transmitted by recognized authorities), presented with rational explanations and denial of disagreed opinions. Its equivalence with *'ilm al-tauhid* occurs due to the centrality of the issue of the oneness of Allah in early disputes among believers (Esposito, 2001, p. 352).

According to al – Farabi, this science can be useful to uphold or strengthen explanations of *aqidah* and understanding of Islamic religion from the attack by its opponents through rational reasoning (Fakhry, 2002). However, it should be noted that the Islamic theology that developed in Islam generally remains subject to revelation, even though it uses a lot of rational arguments in its discussions. The differences that often arise only lie in the level of recognition of the function of reason to understand revelation and the degree of liberalization of interpretation of scripturalization (literacy) readings over the text. In this focus, Islamic theology can be distinguished from philosophy and *fiqh*. Islamic theology is a science that deals with everything related to *uluhiyah*, including *kalamullah* (Nasution, 2007).

In its development, Islamic theology has had many classical and contemporary figures. The classic figures include Wasil bin Atha' (al – Mu'tazilah), Imam Abu Hasan

al-Asy'ary (Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah), al-Maturidi, Al-Juwaini (imam al-Haramain), Al-Ghazali (Hujjatul Islam) ibn Taimiyyah (Shaykhul Islam), Abdul Wahhab, and also other imams (Anawati, 1988). Meanwhile, figures who can be categorized as contemporary include Nuruddin ar-Raniri (Aceh), Nawawi al-Bantani (Banten), and Muhammad Zain al-Asyi' (Aceh) (Jambak, 2018). The last figure from the book of *Bidayat al-Hidayah* will be the subject of study in this book.

The discussed themes in Islamic theology range from the attributes of Allah (*wajib* (obligatory), *mustahil* (inadmissible), and *jaiz* (admissible)), His *asma'*, *af'alullah*, and also *kalamullah*, namely *al-Qur'an al-karim*. Apart from these themes, the subject of study in Islamic theology is the issue of Angels, Allah's Messengers, the last day, good and bad destiny, and the issue of the ability of reason in various perspectives that cannot be separated from the debate in Islamic theology.

In this regard, the essence of the Islamic theology contained in the *Bidayah al-Hidayah* manuscript by Muhammad Zain al-Asyi is explored in this section:

### 1. Al-Ma'rifat

In this section, al-Syaikh explains that the essence of ma'rifat (knowledge) that is required of every *mukalaf* is *al-jazmu al-muafiqu lima indallahi 'an dalilin* in which believing that Allah is Almighty and *Wujud* in Himself without the need for arguments or the truth (*hujjah*).

Al-Asyi mentioned three categories of *al-Jazam* (sure), namely *al-Syak* (doubt), *Zhan* (estimate), and *Waham* (wishful thinking). People who have these three things are included in the group of *kafir* (unbelievers) because they do not believe and doubt the existence of Allah Ta'ala. The people are also called ignorant people, like Christians who think and believe that there are three Gods, the physical interpretation (*jauhar*) is composed of three origins, namely *wujud*, knowledge, and hayat (life), so they call them God as the father, the son, and Holy Spirit. Similarly, Majusi thought that there are two Gods, namely *Nur* (light) as a symbol of the God of goodness, and *Dzulmat* (darkness) as a symbol of the God of Evil.

The *dalil* (guide) required by every *mukallaf* is *Ijmali* (general), which does not include detailed and rigorous *dalil*. At least, when asked by other people whether Allah exists, the answer is that Allah exists, with evidence that this creature's existence is *dalil* for Allah Subhanahu wata'ala's existence. "*Wa kadza yajibu 'alaihi an ya'rifa mitsla dzalika fi haqq ar-rural 'alahim ash-shalatu wa as-salam*".

Rasul (messenger of Allah) is a human being whom Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala sent down revelation and then ordered to convey it to his people. Still, if he is given a revelation and is not to say it to others, he is called a prophet. There are four thousand known prophets, and only 313 people became *rasul*; in one history, it is said 314 people. The most important among them was the Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wasallam, followed by the Prophet Ibrahim, the Prophet Musa, the Prophet Isa, and the Prophet Nuh Alaihissalam. These people are known as the Prophets and *Rasul Ulul Azmi*.

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرُونَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنْ نَّهَارٍ بَلَاغٌ فَهَلْ يُهْلَكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

*Meaning: "So be patient as those who have the steadfast hearts of the Messengers that have been patient and do not ask for hastening (doom) for them. On the day they see the punishment that is threatened against them (feel) as if they did not remain (in the world) but for a moment during the day. This is a sufficient lesson, so not the wicked (fasiq) will be destroyed."*

## 2. Obligatory Attributes of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala

There are twenty obligatory attributes of Allah outlined by al-Syaikh in this manuscript, namely *famimmā yajību Limaulānā Jalla wa 'Azza' isyrūna shifatan*. We have to believe that God's attributes are infinite in number, but we must know that there are twenty of them. The attributes are:

*"Wa hiya al-wujud wa aliqidam wa al-baqa wa al-mukhalafat li al-hawadits wa qiyamuhu ta'ala binafsih an la yaftaqira ila mahalin wala ila mukhashshishin wa al-wahdaniyyat ai la tsaniya lahu ta'ala fi dzatihi wala fi shifatihi wala fi af'alihi . Fahadzihi sattu shifatin, alula nafsiiyyah, wahiya al-wujuduha al-khamsatu, ba'daha salbiyyah. Syumma yajibu lahu ta'ala sab'u shifatin tusamma shifatin, shifat al-ma'ani Wahiya al-qudrat wa al-iradat al-muta'alliqani bijami: almumkin wa al-'ilmu al-mu'alliqu bijami' al-wajibat wa al-ja'izat wa al-mustahilat Wa al-hayat wahiya la tata'allqu bisyai'in wa as-sam'u wa al-basharu al-muta'alliqani bijami' al-maujudati. wa al-kalam al-ladzi laisa biharfin wala bishautin wayata'allaqu bima yata'allaqubihi al-'ilmu min al-muta'alliqat Tsumma sab'u shifatin tusammashifatin ma'nawiiyyatin wahiya mulazimatun li sab'i al-ula wahiya kaunuhu ta'ala qadiran wa muridan wa 'aliman wa hayyan wa sami'anwa bashiran wa mutakalliman".*

From these 20 attributes, al-Asyi divided them into four attributes. Firstly, the attribute of *salbiyah*, if it has *madlul* (given by *dalil*, namely Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala), negates anything inappropriate to Allah Ta'ala, namely three characteristics. Secondly, *ma'ani*, if there is a *madlul* of *tsabit* and *maujud*, it has seven attributes. Thirdly, *ma'nawiyah*, if there is a *madlul*, it is *tsabit*, which means they will have *ma'ani* attribute, but there is no *maujud*, wallahu a'lam, and seven more will come. Fourthly, *nafsiyah*, if there is a *madlul* of *tsabit*, it does not have the attributes of *ma'ani* and *maujud*.

It is also explained in this book that there are 20 *mustahil* (inadmissible) attributes of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala which are the opposite of these 20 obligatory attributes, namely, *Wahiya al-'adam wa al-huduts wa thuru' al-'adam*. The interpretation of al-'adam is not the opposite of *wujud*. Moreover, *wa alhuduts* means new (held), the opposite of *Qidam*, which means earlier (not preserved). Then, *wa thuru' al-'adam* is interpreted as impermanent (*fana'*) as the opposite of *al-baqa'* (eternal).

*Mumusalatuhu* of Allah in *wa al-mumatsalatu li al-hawadits* is the opposite of *mukhlafatuh ta'ala li al-hawadits*. The impossibility of resembling Allah Ta'ala is seen in eight problems;

- First, it is impossible for the substance of Allah Ta'ala to be shaped like the shape of an object whose interpretation takes the substance of the Most High. *Firāgh* means the distance between two forms, the Holiest Allah Subhanah, rather than the nature of the form.

- Second, it is impossible for Allah Ta'ala to have *'aradh* in form. The meaning of the word *'aradh* is every new attribute, such as white and red, black and various other colors. The *'aradhialah* is one of the attributes.
- *Third*, it is impossible for Allah Ta'ala to be in one position among the various places that exist, such as above, below, right, left, front, back like above the *'Arasy* or below it or to the right or to the left or in front of him or behind him, because the *'Arasy* is one of the locations of several places created by Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala, the Holiest Allah Ta'ala from such attributes.
- Fourth, it is impossible for Allah Ta'ala to have five senses because they are one of the characteristics of humans and His creatures. Like other material characteristics, Allah does not resemble the attributes of the body parts of His creatures, such as having heads, legs, and arms. The body parts mentioned and attributed to Him are according to what He has.
- Fifth, it is impossible for Allah Ta'ala to have a boundary with a place like the *'Arasy* and others or have a period like the past, future and present, day, night and light or darkness.
- Sixth, it is impossible that Allah Ta'ala is new, like the nature of power in understanding His servants and wills something new.
- Seventh, it is impossible for Allah Ta'ala to be small or big because the small meaning contains little meaning, and the big one has many broad implications. Some ulama say that Allah cannot be small in a short life and big in the sense of a long life. Meanwhile, Allah's decree in which Allah *al-Kabīr almuta'al* means that Allah Ta'ala is the Greatest and Most High.
- Eighth, it is impossible for Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala to desire the benefits of what He has created. Because the nature of desire is the characteristic of His creatures.

### 3. The Division of Twenty Attributes

- Al – Asyi emphasized that the twenty attributes are divided into four parts below;
- First; *Nafsiyyah*. This attribute means that Allah has individual characteristics that cannot be imitated or equalled by His Creatures. It means something that cannot be accepted by reason if this attribute does not characterize Allah. It is also a characteristic that determines the existence of Allah. *Wujud* is categorized into the attribute of *Nafsiyyah*. The obligatory attribute of *wujud* means that Allah exists, and the opposite is an inadmissible attribute, namely *'adam* (non – existence). The existence of Allah has been widely confirmed in the Qur'an and al – Sunnah. One of them is "So by God who made the heavens and the earth, and he speaks like you." (Az – zbriyat: 23)
  - Second; *Salbiyah*. This attribute means the characteristic that rejects what is not worthy of Allah. The attributes of the *Salbiyah* are *Qidam*, *Baqo'*, *Mukhalafatu lil hawaditsi*, *Qiyamuhu binafsihi*, and *Wahdaniyyah*. The obligatory attribute of *Qidam* means earlier or no beginning "*Huwa al-Awwalu wa al-'akhiru wa al-Dzahiru wa al-Bathinu*" (He is Allah, the Most Beginning – has no beginning and the Most End – has no end –, the Most *dhahir* – real, not hidden – and also the Most Inner – knowing everything visible and invisible). It is impossible for Allah to have the opposite attribute, namely *al-huduts* (new/destroyed/perish). This obligatory attribute of *Baqo'* means that He is the Most Eternal, not destroyed and perished (Allah cannot

have the *Fana' attribute*). *Fana'* is one of the characteristics of Allah's creatures; therefore, humans' awareness of Allah's eternity and their mortality will make them more alert and always on the path of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala. The obligatory attribute of *Mukhalafah Lilhawaditsi* means that Allah will never be the same (for example) as His creatures. In other words, it is impossible for Allah to have the attribute of *Mumatlah Lilhawadits* (same as the new one). Allah says, "*Laukana Fihima Illallaha Lafasadata*", meaning that if there were two Gods in this world, there would be destruction. Then, the obligatory attribute of *Qiyam Binafsihi* means that Allah exists without the help and assistance of others, existing with no one causing His existence. Therefore, it is impossible for Allah to have the opposite, namely *Ihtiyaj Ila Mahal Wa Mukhashshash*. The obligatory attribute of *Wahdaniyah* means that Allah is Almighty; there is no one to associate with Him because Allah cannot be *ta'addud* (being more than one or plurality).

- Third; Ma'ani. This attribute means that Allah has characteristics that are required for the essence of Allah, a law or characteristic that must exist in the essence of Allah. This attribute consists of seven parts, namely *Qudrat, Iradah, 'Ilm, Hayat, Sama', Bashar* and *Kalam*. The attribute of *Qudrah* means that Allah is Almighty and it is impossible to be weak (*'Ajiz*). The power of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala is unlimited. He can do anything without anyone stopping Him. Allah can make people who look weak become mighty and strong, and then strong and brave people become weak and helpless.

In the *Hadith Qudsi*, Allah says, "If all the creatures in this world from the east (*masyriq*) to the west (*maghrib*) try to harm you, if I don't allow it, then it will never happen. On the other hand, if all of them help you not to be harmed, if I allow it, an accident will definitely happen."

The attribute of *Iradah* means the characteristic of will and determination. Allah is the One who determines everything that happens to His creatures. Therefore, it is impossible for Allah to have *karahah* attribute. Allah is never forced to do something. His basic desires determine whether something happens or not.

The attribute of *'Ilm* means that Allah is All – Knowing. Allah knows everything that humans do and imagine. The *'ilm* of Allah includes the real and hidden matters for humans. It is impossible for Allah to have the attribute of *jahil* (ignorant). In the Qur'an, Allah emphasizes that:

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿الحديد: ٣﴾

Meaning: "He is the All-Knowing. He is the Beginning and the End, the Zahir and the Inner; and He is All-Knowing of everything."

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿البقرة: ٢٩﴾

Meaning: "He is Allah, who created everything on earth for you and He willed (created) the heavens, then He made them seven heavens. And He is All-Knowing of everything."

إِنْ تُبْدُوا شَيْئًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿الأحزاب: ٥٤﴾

Meaning: "If you give birth to something or hide it, then indeed Allah is All-Knowing of everything."



The attribute of *Hayah* means Allah is Alive, never sleeps and dies, "*Allahu Laa Ilaha Illa Huwal Hayyul Qayyum*". Therefore, it is impossible for Allah to have attribute of *maut* (dead). In the Qur'an, Allah has emphasized many times that He is Alive.

*Sama'* attribute means that Allah is All – Hearing of all visible and hidden speech, even Allah is All – Hearing those that are still in the heart. Therefore, it is impossible for Allah to be *Shamman* (deaf) because this attribute is only possessed by Allah's creatures.

Bashar's attribute means Allah is All – Seeing of everything His creatures do. No real or hidden work is missed from the sight of Allah Subhanahu wata'ala. Therefore, it is impossible for Allah to be blind (*Amma*) and not see anything His servants do.

*Kalam* means that Allah is omniscient, as stated in various holy books. Allah's words are a guide in carrying out human life. Therefore, it is impossible for Allah to be *bakam* (mute).

- Fourth; *Ma'nawiyah*. It means that the attribute of Allah is normal or cannot be separated from the attribute of *Ma'ani*. *Ma'nawiyah* is *mulazimah* that becomes the result of *ma'ani* attribute. This attribute consists of seven parts, namely *Kaunuhu Qadiran*, *Kaunuhu Siswaan*, *Kaunuhu Aliman*, *Kaunuhu Hayyan*, *Kaunuhu Sami'an*, *Kaunuhu Bashiran*, *Kaunuhu Mutakalliman*.

The ulamas call these four attributes *qadim*, and some also describe them as *azali*. From these two opinions, in al – Syaikh's view, *qadim* is more important than *azali*.

#### 4. Al–Mumkinat and al–Mustahilat

Al – Asyi said: "*Wa amma burhanu kauni fi'li al-mumkinati au tarkiha ja'izan fi haqqihi ta'ala fal'annahu lau wajaba 'alaihi ta'ala syai'an minha 'aqlan au istihalan au 'aqlan la inqalaba al-mumkinu wajiban au istihalan wadzalika la ya'qilu.*" (Zein, n.d., p. 139).

From al – 's expression, the *dalil mumkin* and *jaiz* for Allah Ta'ala can be seen in carrying out all deeds. Whether He wants to do it or leave it, it will not be a problem for Allah, because He has the prerogative right.

The word *mumkin* is interpreted as a realistic (reasonable) thing in its *wujud*, such as the *wujud* of Allah's deed towards His servants. If you do good, you will receive a reward from Him; if you do something immoral, you will receive excruciating punishment. Providing the reward of the obedient servant is obligatory for Allah because it is stated in Allah's promises in the Qur'an al – Karim. Likewise, Allah's punishment to those who are disobedient and commit immoral acts is mandatory for Him because of the promises He has made (Kartanegara, 2002, p. 15).

"Then it will be clear to you that Allah rewards those who are obedient that it must be based on reason and obligatory on the *syara'* and punishes those who commit sins which must be based on reason and according to the *syara'*." (Zein, n.d., p. 140).

Allah does not burden a person except according to his ability. He shall be rewarded for what he has done and punished for the evil he has committed. They pray;

"O our Lord, do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake. O Our Lord, do not impose on us a heavy burden as you imposed on those before us. O Our Lord, do not bear upon us what we cannot bear. Forgive us; and have mercy on us. You are our helper, so help us against the people who disbelieve."

## 5. The Attributes of Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wasallam

Al-Asyi said; "*Wa amma ar-rusulu 'alaihi ash-shalatu wa as-salamu fayajibu f i haqqihim ash-shidqu wa al-amanatu wa attablighu wama umiru bitablighihi li al-khalqi.*" (Zein, n.d., p. 141).

From the expression, it can be seen that there are attributes of the Prophet as *Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*, namely *Shiddiq* (truth), *Amanah* (trust), and *Tablig* (convey). Meanwhile, in other references that often study the attributes of Rasul, there are four characteristics, which are the previous three with the additional one other characteristic, namely *fathanah*.

The attribute of *shiddiq* means no difference between speech and right action. The emerged truth is based on the truth prescribed by Allah, not the other truths. According to Syaikh, the word *shiddiq* means "*The interpretation of shiddiq is truthful of all the things they convey comes from Allah Ta'ala, and muwafaqat for things belongs to Allah Ta'ala.*" (Zein, n.d., p. 36).

Linguistically, *Amanah* means 'honest' and 'straight'. As sharia meaning, it is something that must be guarded and conveyed to those who are entitled to receive it". Al-Shaykh interpreted this word as, "*Their belief is in everything that is haram and makruh, so all of them 'alaihim ash-prayer wa assalam are protected from all small and big sins when they forget and when they are humbled before becoming Rasuls or later*" (Zein, n.d., p 37).

*Tabligh*, in a *lughah* way, comes from the words "*Ballagha Yuballighu Tablighan*" which means to convey. So the rasul being tabligh means conveying everything that Allah Subhanahu wata'ala commands for the happiness of His servants. Al-Shaykh defines tabligh as: "*To convey to all creatures of all things that Allah Ta'ala commands and not hiding everything from what they are told, even if it is a little thing*" (Zein, n.d., p. 38).

The three attributes that the rasul of Allah must possess can generally also be applied by us as his people. When the rasul is *Shiddiq*, we should also characterize ourselves as *Shiddiq*; whatever we say should guide our activities. When rasul is *amanah*, we must also preserve and follow this character. Lastly, when Rasul is tabligh, we must also convey whatever we have received. In this case, Rasulullah sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam said, "*Ballighy Anno Walau 'Byah*". It means that conveying anything about me even in one verse.

## 6. *Mustahil* (Inadmissible) Attribute of Rasul

Al-Syaikh said that: "*Wayastahilu fi haqqihim 'alaihim wa ash-shalatu wa as-salamu idldadu hadzihi ash-shifat wahiya al-kidzbu wa al-khiyanatu bifi'li syai'in mima naha 'anhu nahya tahrimin wa karahatin wa kitmanin syai'un mima umira watablighuhu li al-khalqi*" (Zein, n.d., p. 38).

From the expression, it can be seen that al-Shaykh mentioned three opposite attributes that must not have existed in Rasul. Each of these three attributes is *al-Kazib* (lying). If Rasul is *Siddiq* then it is impossible to lie in all his words and actions. Allah confirms this in the Qur'an; "*Wamb yantiqu Anil Hawb In Huwa Illb Wahyuyyuha*" which means not a single word was spoken by the Rasul, but a revelation was revealed to him.

The second inadmissible attribute of Rasul is *khianat* (betrayal). This attribute is the opposite of *amanah* (trust). Betrayal is not only directed at each other but also betraying the laws that Allah Subhanahu wata'ala has outlined, which is meant by al—. If the law is haram (forbidden), then it must be avoided, and if it is halal (lawful), it must be obeyed.

The third inadmissible attribute of Rasul is *kitman* (hiding). In this context, *kitman* means that it is not permissible for Rasul and us, as his followers, to hide the knowledge or expertise that Allah has given us. If a little knowledge is conveyed, it will increase, and if knowledge is put into practice, it will grow, but if it is hidden and not put into practice, then it will die.

An Arabic proverb emphasizes "*Al-Ilmu bila amalain ka as-syajari bilaa tsamarin,*" which means that unpracticed knowledge is like a tree that does not bear fruit. In the hadith, the Prophet mentioned the sanctions for those who hide their knowledge; "*Man Katama Ilman fa al-Jamahullahu Yaumal Qiyamati bilijamin Min Naar*". It means that whoever conceals the knowledge he knows, then on the *Yawm al-Qiyamah* (Day of Resurrection), Allah will restrain his mouth with a bridle made of hellfire).

### 7. The Meaning of the *Tawhid* (Islamic Monotheism) Phrase

Al— said: "*wayajmau ma'ani hadzihi al-'aqa`idi kulliha qaulu la ilaha illallah ar-rasulullah shallallahu 'alaihi wasallam. Idz ma'na al-uluhiyyati istighna `u 'an kulli ma siwahu wa iftiqaru kulli ma siwahullahu. Fama'na la ilaha illallahu, la mustaghniyan 'an kulli ma siwahu wa muftaqiran ilaihi kullu ma 'adahu illallahu ta'ala.*" (Zein, n.d., p. 157).

The meaning of the sentence is the collection of all *aqaid* (beliefs) sentences in the *lafadz* "*La ilaha illallah Muhammadar-rasulullah sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam*". The phrase *la ilaha illallah* shows that there is nothing worthy of worship except *Allah Rabbul Baaraya*. Then, *Muhammadar—rasulullah* means no messenger is worthy of being followed except Muhammad Nabi Allah al—amin.

The value of *uluhiyyat*, as outlined in the text, means that Allah does not need or desire everything in this universe because it is tiny and insignificant for Him when compared to the power He has. So the monotheistic phrase "*la ilaha illallah*" has the meaning of the Oneness of the Almighty in all the attributes, attitudes and actions of *Allah Rabbul Izzati*.

Some *ulamas* (scholars) say that the meaning of *la ilaha illallah* is *la ma'buda bihaqqin maujudun ghairullahi*, in which there is no God who is truly worshiped except Allah Ta'ala. This expression can mean that the Most Holy substance with His obligatory *wujud* has all the characteristics of endless *kambibt*.

The phrase *Ilaha* comes from Arabic that is interpreted in Malay as God, and the *madlul* is "substance," which has the characteristic of *kambibt* (perfect) and is used in the attribute of *mustaghni* and *ma'bud*. So *mustaghni* means a rich substance. And the meaning of *ma'bud* is a substance that is to worship. From the meanings, some people say that *Ilaha* means rich, not God (language: Malay), which is a big mistake because God is a substance and rich is an attribute.

### 8. Seven Dignities in Sufism

Al—Asyi said that studying the seven dignities is not obligatory for him anymore, nor is there any expert at this time. In this case, it will lead to destruction if we do not

know the interpretation and violate the sharia because some of the books of the previous people are abandoned since there are no experts to teach them and explain the interpretation in Arab lands, such as Mecca and Medina as the ulama had died at this time" (Zein, n.d., p. 169).

From al-Shaykh's expression, it can be seen that studying the seven dignities is not recommended and even tends to be abandoned because of the unknown meaning. In addition, some of the substances do wrong to the concept of Sharia apart from not having experts who will explain the nature of the teaching.

Studying the seven dignities is not recommended because the teachers and the proponents of this teaching no longer exist. Even if they live, they are too difficult to reach because they are far away. Apart from these reasons, it is also seen that this science is complicated to understand for the *mubtadi'* and *mutawassith* (middle) people.

## 9. The Division of Faith

Al-Asyi states that "And because of this, Sheikh Abdul Salam in the *jauhar sharia* which is listed by Sheikh Ibn Abi Qosim, said that faith is divided into three parts. The first is that as long as there is more, there is nothing less, namely faith and Anbiya 'alaihim ash-salat wa as-salam. The second part is nothing more and nothing less, namely the faith of all the Angels 'alaihim ash-shalat wa as-salam. And the third is sometimes more with more obedience and sometimes less with less obedience, such as doing immoral work." (Zein, n.d., p. 197).

From the statement above, it can be seen that the concept of faith in humans is divided into three parts. Firstly, faith is always in an increasing position, namely the faith of the Anbiya. Secondly, it does not increase or decrease as a reflection of the faith of God's Angels. Lastly, sometimes it increases with obedience and decreases with committing disobedience (Al-Imanu Yazid Wa Yanqush), *yazid bi al-Thaat wa Yanqushu bi al-Maksiat*.

Faith originates in the heart but then spreads throughout all parts of the body if it is in virtue, but if the members of the body commit disobedience to Allah, then the light of faith is reunited in the heart.

A thoughtful person should have a stronger mind. The more he calls Allah, the more he becomes obedient and closer to *Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*.

Al-Asyi said "Fa'ala al-'aqili an yaktsura min dzikriha mustahdliran lima ihtawat 'alaihi min 'aql-iman hatta yanzarija ma'naha bilahmihi wadamih, fa'innahu yaraha min al-asrar wa al'ajaib insya Allah ta'ala ma la yadkhulu tahta hashrin wabillahi attauf iq la Rabba ghairahu." (Zein, n.d., p. 200).

It means that a person's intelligence can be seen from how close and often he calls the name of Allah, whether in an attitude developed in society or when he is alone. Closeness is expressed to the extent that there is a union between flesh, blood and the self of God within him.

## CONCLUSION

The essence of the Islamic theology contained in the book of *Bidayah al-Hidayah* by Muhammad Zain al-Asyi includes *al-ma'rifat*, the obligatory attribute of Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala, the division of twenty attributes, *al-mumkinat* and *al-mustahilat*, the attributes of Rasulullah sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam, *mustahil* (inadmissible) attributes of

Rasul, the meaning of tawhid (Islamic monotheism) phrase, seven dignities in Sufism, and the division of faith. From the concepts explained, it can be seen that this work contains the understanding of *wujudiyah* developed by its predecessors, namely Hamzah Fansuri and Syams Al – Din al – Sumatrani. Apart from these teachings, it was also found that al – Asyri developed the teachings of Sunni aqidah of Abu Hasan al – Asy'ary and Abu Mansur al – Maturidi written by al – Imam al – Sanusi in *Matn Umm al-Barahin*.

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