

BOOK REVIEW

The Truth behind the Text: the Study of the Qur'an with the *Hikmah* Approach

Yogyakarta: Nusa Media, 2013.

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O you who believe, why do you say what you do not do? (3) It is severely hateful in Allah's sight that you say what you do not do. (QS. As-Saff: 2-3)

What is true behind the text is what Dr. Syarif tried to explain in his book, Appearance behind the Text: the study of the Qur'an with the *Hikmah* Approach.

In this book, one will find many terms on texts that have been examined by some experts of Qur'anic interpretation on the literal aspects, but did not introduce the meaning of what is really meant by the text.

This book was examined using the *hikmah* approach. In many references, *hikmah* is often assumed as wisdom. Then if there is a word in the text of the Quran, for example *al-hakim*, usually it is translated as "the Most Wise", since that word is attached to the mentioning of the name of Allah. Some people also link the word to the core of philosophy. As described by Syarif, by learning to contemplate, philosophers or any person may become wise. However, for Syarif, here lies the problem, as the definition of wisdom is not clear and tends to be abstract. According to him, wisdom is often related to who issues something or to whom it is issued.

Through this book, Syarif explained that the definition of wisdom should refer to the Quran. As revealed in the Quran through the texts. There are several texts related to the phenomenon of the term *al-hikmat*.

First, *al-hikmat* always goes with the word *al-kitab* as in QS al-Baqarah 02: 129 dan 151. It can also be found Rest can also be found in QS al-Jumuat 62: 2; QS al-Nisa'04: 54, 113; al-Maidah 05: 110. It seems that the mention of *al-hikmat*, based on these verses, requires that one should first understand the meaning of *al-kitab*. In short, we must know the meaning of *kitab* especially its ontological manifestation.

The meaning of *kitab* (the book or scripture) here can be ana-

lyzed with wisdom by referring to many verses of the Qur'an, including QS al-Baqarah 02: 2. This text becomes the reading object of al-'Alaq96:1, QS al-Isra' 17: 14. Also in a form of a theme with a different command of reading contained in the QS al-Ankabut29: 45. Based on these verses, *kitab* is not a record, not in the form of a scratch of a pen on paper.

Syarif, who is now serving as Vice Rector II at IAIN Pontianak, in his book suggested several reasons: first, that the word We (i.e. the word for God), did not send down a written scripture on a page (QS al-An-'Am 6: 7). Linguistically, the *kitab* also means record/script, not a *book* as it is often defined, because 'book' is the meaning of the word *jildat* in Arabic, namely writings that fill out sheets indexed or bundled in a binder or books. In the QS al-An-'Am 6: 7, the *kitab* is also described as "not in the form of a script of the pen". It is also related with QS al-Ankabut29: 48 (that Muhammad never wrote with his right hand). The second reason, the fact that if the command to read in QS al-'Alaq 96: 1, QS al-Isra' 17: 14, and QS al-Ankabut is a form of writing of a pen on paper, which was impossible to be done by the Messenger, Muhammad who did not know how to read and write. That's why, in Syarif's opinion, the command of reading is illogical and counter-productive if its object is "script on paper", and in "Arabic". Therefore, it is not correct to interpret the words *al-kitab* in the texts of the Qur'an as a book in the shape of a binder of sheets with script on them or factory-printed in Arabic. This is because, as He describes about the term "*al-Kitab*", all the recorded revelations have not been written on a book. According to Syarif, the *kitab* in question is "a scripture in the heart". Based on QS al-Ankabut 29: 45-48, the *kitab* in question is "the verses in the heart".

Second, the words *al-hikmat* and *al-Kitab* are associated with an apostle. This means that *al-hikmat* teaches the desired people i.e. an apostle. *Al-hikmat* cannot be retrieved from the "regular interpretation". In the study of *al-hikmat*, it is necessary to distinguish between Muhammad physically and non physically. So far, the distinction between prophets and messengers/apostles already exists, but is still in the epistemological level, i.e. a Prophet is one who receives a revelation but there is no obligation to pass it on to someone else, while an Apostle receives the revelation to be delivered to another person. In fact, Syarif said the Prophet himself is a person who brings news to others. A person who does not bring news to others is not a messenger. So the definition of a messenger is in fact contrary to the meaning of al-Nabi itself. Prophets and Apostles have physical and non-physical connectedness. Prophet Muhammad is a mortal (an Arab). The Prophet was delivering the news of Prophet Muhammad, who was in his body (the inner of the Prophet). That means Mu-

hammad the Messenger of Allah was the inner side of Muhammad. In other words, Ibn Abdillah was the mortal and Muhammad SAW was the immortal. In an ordinary human like us, the body is on the outside and the spirit is on the inside. However, the inner in the Prophet Muhammad was not a spirit but “*Nur of Allah*”. He refers to it as *abu al-arwah* (the father of all spirits). The statement can be found in *Hadith Qudsi, Ana abu al-arwah wa aadamu abu al-basyar* (I am the father of all spirits and Adam was the father of all body). The spirit of an ordinary man will never die when the body dies (QS al-Baqarah 2: 154), let alone the *Father spirits*, will certainly never die. This belief led Syarif to adopt a hypothesis in his book, that allows acceptance of the message of the Qur’an that the science of *al-haikmat* was taught by the Messenger because the words *yatlu*, *yuzakki*, and *yuaallimu* in the verses are written in the form of *fiil mudhari’*, which means in progress until the future.

Third, that the Messenger, prior to teaching *al-Kitab* and *al-Hikmat*, first recited the verses of God, as in QS al-Baqarah 02: 129, 151; QS Ali Imran03: 164; QS al-Ahzab33: 34; QS al-Jumuah62: 2. In the science of *al-Hikmat* this should not be read in the context of what is written on paper. The entire text of the Qur’an is not written on paper, there should be an ontological explanation or its existence.

Fourth, the word *al-Hikmat* is associated with something that has yet to be known. For example, as explained in QS al-Baqarah02: 151 dan QS an-Nisa04: 113. *Al-Hikmat* is something known as the material being taught the Messenger, referred to in the texts, i.e. about self, relationships with Allah, relationship with Muhammad (the non-physical), and the relationship self with *Baitullah*. This is where, according to Syarif, we should manifest the meaning and material of *al-Hikmat* based on what was taught by the Messenger.

To conclude the review of this book, the *hikmah* (wisdom) approach used to in the study of this book does not refer to the literal-epistemic source, but to its original source, i.e. the Prophet. The representation that the *hikmah* (wisdom) approach used in the study of this book made the Prophet Muhammad as a primary source, is seen from how the source of the Quran and the *Hadith* becomes the dominant reference of this book.

Specifically the study of wisdom in this book assesses the terms of texts of the Qur’an that have to do with oneself and Allah, and how to connect oneself with Allah. Several things are examined here, namely: first, knowing oneself; second, the relationship between oneself and Allah; third, the relationship between oneself and Muhammad; and fourth, the relationship with the *baitullah*.

Considering that observing religion must be done with a comprehensive understanding, meaning that religion is not merely practiced on the outside but also should be accompanied by the non-physical “insights”, which does not rely on logic only. Therefore, this book worth reading as part of the enrichment of insight. The advantages of this book, written in terms of the science-inspired wisdom based on the Qur’an. ***