

The Role of Al-Khalwah in the Development of Al-Qalb According to Ibn `Ajibah (d.1224 H)

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Abstract

This study explores the role of *al-Khalwah* in the development of *al-Qalb* from the perspective of Ibnu `Ajibah, as discussed in his work, *Iqaz al-Himam fi Syarh al-Hikam*. *Al-Khalwah* is defined as a practice of self-isolation with the primary goal of focusing the consciousness of *al-Qalb* solely on Allah SWT through remembrance (*zikir*) and contemplation (*tafakkur*). The research is qualitative in nature and reveals Ibnu `Ajibah's holistic view of the positive impact of *al-Khalwah* on the development of the spiritual dimension of *al-Qalb*. The study's findings highlight ten positive impacts of the practice of *al-Khalwah*, indicating its effectiveness in enriching the development of *al-Qalb* for Muslim individuals. This research provides profound insights into the concept of *al-Qalb* development according to Ibnu `Ajibah, emphasizing the value and relevance of *al-Khalwah* in achieving these objectives.

Keywords: al-Khalwah; al-Qalb; Ibnu `Ajibah; Development; Tafakkur; Zikir.

Abstrak

Kajian ini mengeksplorasi peranan *al-Khalwah* dalam pembangunan *al-Qalb* menurut perspektif Ibnu `Ajibah, sebagaimana dibahas dalam karyanya, *Iqaz al-Himam fi Syarh al-Hikam*. *Al-Khalwah*, didefinisikan sebagai praktis isolasi diri dengan tujuan utama memusatkan kesedaran *al-Qalb* hanya kepada Allah SWT melalui zikir dan tafakkur. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif dan mengungkapkan pandangan holistik Ibnu `Ajibah terhadap impak positif *al-Khalwah* dalam pembangunan dimensi batiniah *al-Qalb*. Hasil kajian ini, Ibnu Ajibah

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mengidentifikasi sepuluh dampak positif dari praktik *al-Khalwah*, menunjukkan efektifnya dalam memperkaya pembangunan *al-Qalb* bagi individu Muslim, hasil penelitian ini memberikan wawasan mendalam terkait konsep pembangunan *al-Qalb* menurut Ibnu Ajibah, dengan menyoroti nilai dan relevansi *al-Khalwah* dalam mencapai tujuan tersebut.

Kata Kunci : al-Khalwah; al-Qalb; Ibnu 'Ajibah; Pembangunan; Tafakkur; Zikir.

A. Introduction

Al-Khalwah is a spiritual practice that has a significant influence in the development of al-Qalb according to Ibn 'Ajibah's thoughts. He was an 18th century Islamic scholar who produced many scientific works in various fields including works in spiritual science such as the book *Iqaz al-Himam fi Syarh al-Hikam* teaching that through al-Khalwah individuals can achieve a deeper understanding of themselves, improve your morals and get closer to Allah SWT. According to him, al-Khalwah is a form of self-purification and a spiritual journey that involves self-isolation to achieve an understanding of the nature of human relationship with Allah SWT. This practice provides an opportunity for individuals to explore the spiritual dimension in more depth to bring closer (al-qurbah) a relationship with Allah SWT in addition to playing a role in

awakening a prosperous soul (Qalbu Salim). Al-Khalwah helps individuals overcome the influence of material things that can interfere with moral development. In a state of solitude, a person can reflect deeply on his actions, identify weaknesses and mazzumah traits within himself and direct himself to improve his behavior with better morals. This article will discuss Ibn 'Ajibah's views on the role and benefits of al-Khalwah practices in the development of al-Qalb. It is hoped that this article will contribute added value to the understanding of Ibn 'Ajibah's thoughts regarding al-Khalwah and its relationship to the development of al-Qalb. This research can also provide a new concept on how to apply the principles of al-Khalwah in life so that it can awaken al-Qalb as well as increasing spiritual connection with Allah SWT.

B. Method

This research is research using the type of library study research. This research is qualitative in nature and reveals Ibn `Ajibah's holistic view of the positive impact of al-Khalwah in developing the inner dimensions of al-Qalb.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Biography of Ibn `Ajibah (d.1224 H)

Al-Imam al-`Allamah al-Mufasssir Ahmad bin Muhammad bin al-Mahdi bin al-Husain bin Muhammad (Ibnu Ajibah, 1999) bin `Ajibah al-Hujuji al-Hasani known as Ibn `Ajibah, he was born in 1161 Migrating in Ajabisy Village, the Anjarah tribe (Abd al-Haiy al-Kattani, 1982) settled in the mountainous area along the coast of the city of Tetouan, Morocco. His descendants were known for their pious lineage, it was once said that his father was a pious person, ascetic, devout, pious, liked to khalwah, diligently read the Koran and prayed. The line from his parents continued to the Prophet Muhammad SAW through Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib. (Ibn `Ajibah, 1999). Ibn `Ajibah adheres to

the teachings of the Akidah ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama`ah. Since childhood, he has shown a deep interest in studying, his love for knowledge, making him study day and night. His early education began in his birthplace and after that to Tetouan and finally in Fes. At an early age he had memorized the Koran and when he was a teenager he had attended no less than 7 scientific study sessions day and night by studying with scholars in the city of al-Qashr al-Kabir and after that when he was 20 years old he moved to the city of Tetouan to attending various religious science meetings ranging from Fiqh, Tafsir, Hadith, linguistics such as Nahwu, Sarf and Mantiq. Before the age of 29, he began teaching at mosques and madrasas, besides studying with scholars in the city of Tetouan. When he was 40 years old he continued his intellectual journey to the city of Fes. There he studied various branches of knowledge from scholars in the city of Fes, among which he took a hadith diploma from al-`Allamah al-Muhaddith al-Tawdi bin Saudah. Apart from that, he also studied Tafsir, Faraid and languages for 2 years. At Fes, he was given the trust (tauliyah) to teach by

various different teachers. After that, he returned to Tetouan to teach and print his works. (Ibn 'Ajibah, 1990)

Among his teachers were al-Faqih al-Qadhi Abd al-Karim Bin Quraish (d. 1197 AH), al-Faqih al-Sheikh Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Ahmad bin Syathir al-Hasani (d. 1191 AH), al-Faqih al-'Allamah Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Hasan al-Janawi al-Hasani (d. 1200 AH), al-'Allamah al-Muhaddith Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad al-Tawdi bin al-Thalib bin Saudah (d. 1209 AH), al-Hafiz Abu 'Abdullah al-Thaiyib bin 'Abdul Majid bin Kiran (d. 1227 AH), al-'Allamah Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Banis al-Fasi (d. 1213 AH) and al-Faqih al-'Allamah al-Hujjah al-Barakah al-'Arif billah al-Salih Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad bin Ali al-Warzazi (d. 1214 AH). (Ibn 'Ajibah, 1990)

Later, Ibn 'Ajibah became interested in studying Sufism when studying the books al-Risala al-Qusyairiyah, Hikam Ibn 'Atha', Usul al-Thariqah, al-Nasihah al-Kafiyah Sheikh Zarruq. Then he studied with Sheikh al-Darqawi and Sheikh al-Buzidi. Sheikh al-Darqawi was the founder of the

Tariqah Darqawiyyah Shaziliyyah which was developing at that time. He is Abu al-Ma'ali al-'Arab bin Ahmad al-Hasani. Tariqah Darqawiyyah Shaziliyyah is a Sufi tariqah which has teachings that follow the basis of the Koran and Sunnah. Meanwhile, Imam al-Buzidi was a senior disciple of Imam al-Darqawi and was a leading scholar from the Ghumarah tribe who had a lineage to Abu al-Hasan al-Shazili (d.656 H) (founder of Tariqah Shaziliyyah). These two teachers influenced him a lot in the spiritual field. Imam al-Buzidi once said to Ibn 'Ajibah: "O Ahmad my son, one of the conditions of our tariqah is honesty (al-sidq) and love (mahabbah)" (Ibnu 'Ajibah, 1999).

Ibn 'Ajibah has left behind valuable thoughts through his works such as Iqaz al-Himam fi Syarh al-Hikam, al-Bahr al-Madid fi Tafsir al-Quran al-Majid, Azhar al-Bustan fi Tobaqoh al-Aa'yan, al-Futuhah al-Ilahiyyah fi Syarh al-Mabahith al-Asliyyah, al-Durar al-Mutanathirah fi Taujih al-Qiraat al-Mutawatir, Tabsirah al-Taif al-Zarqawiyyah, Tashil al-Madkhal li Tanmiyah Aa'mal bi al-Niyyah al-Solehah 'inda al-Iqbal, Syarh

Solawat Ibn Masyisy, Syarh al-Qosidah al-Munfarijah, al-Futuhat al-Quddusiyyah fi Syarh al-Muqaddimah al-Ajrumiyyah, al-Fahrassa. (Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli, 1992).

Ibn A'jibah, a scholar recognized by all historical reviewers of his life, died at the age of around 64 years. He died in 1224H/1809M, on Wednesday, 7 Shawwal. He was buried in the city of Anjra. Although some modern scholars have different views, most agree with the facts of his death. (Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli, 1992). His followers in Darqawi 'Ajibiyyah hold a hol day every year in September to honor and commemorate his life (Ibn 'Ajibah, 1999). He has left a valuable intellectual and spiritual legacy and is a source of inspiration for the ummah in science and spiritual development.

2. Benefits of Al-Khalwah in the Development of al-Qalb

According to Ibnu 'Ajibah (2013), the practice of al-Khalwah has at least ten benefits for the development of al-Qalb besides being able to form noble morals, namely:

- 1) Save yourself from tongue disaster. If someone is in al-

Khalwah, of course no one will talk to him, so he is saved from the disaster of his tongue. The Prophet SAW said:

عن أنس بن مالك قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم "رحم الله امرأ تكلم فغتم أو سكت فسلم"

The meaning: "May Allah have mercy on a servant who is silent, then he is saved or someone who speaks, then he benefits" (al-Nawawi.3492).

Most humans will not be spared from disasters caused by the tongue except those who prioritize the practice of al-Khalwah. A salik who prioritizes al-Khalwah over socializing with other people, prefers silence to speaking and prioritizes fasting over overeating, then that salik has reached a valuable stage of progress in his spiritual journey. On the other hand, a salik who likes to socialize with people, talks a lot and is always in a state of excess when it comes to eating will give the impression that his stage of progress in his spiritual journey is still not perfect.

The evils of excessive talking are lack of self-reflection, loss of piety, too long in immoral sins, bad records that will be displayed in the afterlife, many demands for rights from other humans, being

involved in unjust treatment of creatures, many testimonies from angels recording their actions and turning away from them. Allah SWT because bad conversations are the key to major sins committed through the tongue. Bad conversations can lead to lies, insults, slander, and false testimony. Most of the sins of Adam's children lie in their tongues and the people who will sin the most on the Day of Judgment will be those who talk a lot about vain things.

- 2) Al-Khalwah can protect someone's eyesight and be saved from the dangers of eyesight, because someone who is khalwah or isolates himself from humans, he will be saved from looking at their behavior and also saved from worldly influences that are on them as Allah SWT says:

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا
مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ
فِيهِ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ

The meaning: "And do not direct your eyes with desire for what We have given to some groups of those who disbelieve to enjoy it which is the beauty of the life of this world so that We can

test them on it; while the grace of your Lord abounds in a better and more eternal afterlife." (Year:131)

So, khalwah will prevent someone from looking at the luxuries of the world that exist in other people which may increase their desires for them. And can distance yourself rather than wanting to compete with them in seeking the world.

How important it is to avoid views that are not useful because views that are not useful can arouse lust. Individuals who often pay attention to things that are not useful will be trapped in continuous restlessness and anxiety. The eye, as an organ of vision, is the cause of damage and destruction. If a person does not guard the wise use of his eyes, he will be caught in perdition. There is no doubt that looking too much at things that are not beneficial will cause a divided heart.

- 3) al-Khalwah can protect and maintain al-Qalb to avoid pretense, falsehood and various other heart diseases. When someone socializes with humans, a tendency will appear to behave in a fake way when interacting with them. Individuals who show a fake

attitude show a pointing or rippling nature within themselves. Those who have this attitude will experience the same destruction as the ripple group.

What are the methods for reaching the al-tahqiq (haqiqat) stage? One way is to not look at humans (creatures) because looking at them can bring darkness. If one is unable to avoid their gaze, it is advisable not to listen to what they say because their words can cause hardness of heart. If someone cannot avoid talking to them, then try not to associate with them in the al-Khalwah way. The impact of association with them will result in loss, regret and distance from Allah SWT. If someone is still forced to associate with them because he is among them, then it is advisable not to feel good about them, because feeling good about them will lead to destruction.

A person's Al-Qalb will tend to be among those who perish if a person is busy paying attention to people who are negligent, likes to talk to ignorant people, likes to hang out with people who don't do good deeds, then unconsciously his heart will be

impressed by these bad qualities and will instead be lulled by dreams. -empty dreams of feeling the sweetness of obedience to Allah SWT, while in essence his heart is far from Allah SWT. Mujahadah experts lay down very important principles in mujahadah to train the purity of their hearts. If they want to guard their hearts from bad trajectories, they will guard their views rather than looking at useless things, namely matters related solely to the worldly world.

4) Al-Khalwah can produce the attitude of asceticism towards the world and qana'ah, because this characteristic is a glory and perfection for a servant of Allah. This characteristic is also the reason why a person receives the love of Allah SWT, because of the words of the Prophet SAW:

عن أبي العباس سهل بن سعد الساعدي رضي الله عنه قال : جاء رجلٌ إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: يا رسول الله، دلني على عملٍ إذا عملته أحبني الله وأحبنى الناس، فقال: ازهد في الدنيا يحبك الله، وازهد فيما عند الناس يحبك الناس

It means: "Zuhud to the world, surely Allah will love you and zuhud to

what is in humans, surely they will love you." (HR Ibn Majah).

It is certain that someone who does not associate with and see humans who tend towards the worldly and are racing to get it will certainly be saved from following their behavior and saved from bad attitudes and despicable morals. Only a handful of people are able to defend themselves from the influence of associating with groups bound by love of the world. People who love the world and enjoy it, their hearts are spiritually dead. Associating with people whose hearts are dead will cause their hearts to die too.

5) Protected from evil people. Mingling with people who don't care about religion will cause extreme evil and terrible danger. There is a hadith of the Prophet SAW saying:

مَثَلُ الْجَلِيسِ الصَّالِحِ مَثَلُ الْعَطَّارِ إِنْ لَمْ يُصِيبْكَ مِنْهُ أَصَابَكَ رِيحُهُ وَمَثَلُ الْجَلِيسِ السَّوِّءِ مَثَلُ الْفَيْنِ إِنْ لَمْ يُحْرِقْكَ بِشَرِّهِ عَلِقَ بِكَ مِنْ رِيحِهِ

The meaning: "For example, an evil friend like a blacksmith, if he is not exposed to a spark of fire, his body will definitely smell bad" (Ibn Hibban. 579)

A person who associates or is friends with bad people will be despicable even though he is essentially

good. There are many people who are not sincere in their relationships with fellow humans, avoid friendships that do not receive approval from Allah SWT because they are the main enemy, their hearts become hard and they distance themselves from the Grace of Allah SWT. On the other hand, socializing and making friends with people with morals, namely those who like to cleanse their souls, is like a treasure that will never run out. If Allah SWT wants one of His servants to receive goodness, he will certainly be given (brought closer) to him a friend whose heart is clean and will keep away from him those who have bad morals. In fact, a person does not gain success unless he is friends with someone who is successful.

6) Opportunity to worship and do dhikr as well as undertake pious deeds to achieve the character of a devout servant of Allah. Another purpose for al-Khalwah is to empty the al-Qalb of creatures, devote the al-Qalb and the five senses to the Creator (Allah SWT) and be serious about istiqamah with him (zikrullah). If someone prays, he has the opportunity to spend his time in worship. At that time, he was able to concentrate

all his physical and mental attention on worship alone because there were no distractions and influences that occupied him other than worship.

7) AL-Qalb can taste the sweetness of obedience and can taste the delights of munajat because his heart is pure. This experience applies and is passed by the solihin who state that a person who is salik will not be recognized for the validity of his deeds unless he goes through the experience of al-Khalwah which is carried out with sweetness, enthusiasm and sincerity that was not obtained through previous physical practices. Spirituals can feel calm in being alone.

8) Rest your al-Qalb and your body because if someone hangs out with a lot of people, their heart will quickly get tired because of them. The body is also tired of trying to fulfill their desires and fulfill their requests. Even if he gets a reward, he has lost because he missed the greater and more important reward, namely al-Khalwah. The practice of al-Khalwah leaves a good impression on the body in addition to the heart being able to rest because the focus of the heart's memory when worshipping is only

Allah SWT with no memory other than Him.

9) Maintaining oneself and one's religion rather than being exposed to the evil and ugliness that one always experiences when interacting with people. Lust really likes and is fond of interfering in matters like this, as is the case with worldly lovers and those who like to flaunt to show their own goodness. Some people enjoy the world as much as they want, while true servants of Allah only take a small part of it. He can feel the pleasures of the world as well as the suffering from it. He sees the world as mere deceit and falsehood like water flowing on the surface of a meaningless container. The world to him was just a worthless carcass, surrounded by dogs that attracted people to serve their lusts. Therefore, by distancing oneself from love of the world, one can save oneself from its influence. However, if someone desires it passionately, they will fall prey to that desire.

10) Make efforts to worship by means of tafakkur (appreciation) and

iktibar (teaching). It is the main goal of the khalwah. Hadith states:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ :
فِكْرَةٌ سَاعَةً خَيْرٌ مِنْ عِبَادَةٍ سِتِّينَ سَنَةً

The meaning: "Fikrah (Tafakkur) of appreciation for a moment is better than worship (without appreciation) for sixty years" (Al-Suyuti, Al-Dur Al-Manthur.4/406).

According to Ibn 'Ajibah, people who use their words as remembrance, their silence becomes appreciation, their reflection becomes an example, they glorify others by seeing their humiliation and do good deeds to provide for the afterlife. Whoever wants glory in the afterlife must increase his tafakkur (appreciation) because with this he can discover various secrets of the nature of things, can differentiate and explain things that are right and wrong, can identify the smallest of mental illnesses and their deceptions, understand the world, can know the form of -a form of worldly deception so that we can avoid it and be able to cleanse ourselves of various diseases of the heart. The beginning (ahli al-Bidayah) for the salik who begins to learn to know Allah SWT through the practice of tafakkur when his

khalwah will reveal the al-Qalb hijab so that he can witness the nature of the majesty and perfection of Allah SWT through tafakkur to the verses of Allah SWT or signs of greatness through His creation . Apart from that, you will also be able to appreciate the blessings that are given, both real and implied. In the end, a person will attain various stages of happiness, disappear heart ailments, continue to be steadfast in doing good deeds with obedience to Allah SWT. While for someone who has undergone al-Khalwah (expert al-Nihayah), it has become their habit to always do dhikr and tafakkur in their hearts even though their bodies are with people because they have been given the gift of Allah SWT that their hearts can be jama' rather than farq, which is no difference for them. they either have their bodies alone (al-Khalwah) or their bodies are with the crowd. They can accept various kindnesses with complete ease and do not take advantage of other people's rights.

D. Conclusion

Overall, this article describes the holistic approach applied by Ibn 'Ajibah

in the process of building al-Qalb through the practice of al-Khalwah. He succeeded in identifying ten benefits contained in the practice of al-Khalwah, describing its potential in awakening and forming noble personalities. The concept of al-Khalwah, which is defined as practical self-isolation with the main aim of concentrating the spiritual dimension only on Allah SWT through dhikr and tafakkur, became the basis for Ibn 'Ajibah's holistic understanding of the development of al-Qalb. The results of this study reveal Ibn 'Ajibah's positive view regarding the good impacts that can be obtained through the practice of al-Khalwah. Therefore, it can be concluded that according to Ibn 'Ajibah, al-Khalwah has extraordinary benefits and has the potential to awaken al-Qalb, as well as shape individual Muslim identity. These conclusions provide valuable insight into the relevance and effectiveness of al-Khalwah practices in the context of spiritual and moral development in Islam.

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