

Salafi's Textualism in Understanding Quran and Hadith

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Abstract: This paper discusses salafi's textualism in understanding Quran and Hadith, especially the early salafi's figures who have great influence in the theology of salafi. Literature study method by examining the books and biographies related to the topic is used in this paper. According to salafi everything that is not mentioned clearly in Quran and Hadith should not be done, and must be left and kept away. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal which is considered as the inventor of salafi strongly refused Mu'tazilah doctrine who said that Quran is a creature in al-Ma'mun era, because this thought is not exist in Quran and Hadith then the successor of salafi thought Ibnu Taimiyah did not accept the interpretation of Allah attribute, he accepted the ayah and hadith about attribute textually.

Keywords: Salaf, Textualism, Quran, Hadith.

Abstrak: Makalah ini mendiskusikan tekstualisme salafi dalam memahami Alquran dan Hadis, khususnya tokoh Salafi masa awal. Metode studi pustaka dengan meneliti buku-buku dan biografi yang terkait dengan topik digunakan dalam makalah ini. Menurut kalangan Salafi semua hal yang tidak disebutkan dalam Alquran dan Hadis secara eksplisit tidak boleh dilakukan dan harus dihindari. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal yang dikenal sebagai penggagas Salafi dengan tegas menolak doktrin Mu'tazilah bahwa Alquran adalah makhluk pada masa al-Ma'mun karena pemikiran ini tidak terdapat di Alquran dan Hadis, kemudian penerus pemikiran beliau Ibnu Taimiyah tidak menerima interpretasi sifat Allah dan menerima ayat dan Hadis sifat secara tekstual

Kata Kunci: Salaf, Textualisme, Alquran, Hadis.

Introduction

Islam is the only religion that is accepted by Allah,¹ because actually it is the last Shari'ah revealed through the last *Rasūl* Prophet Muḥammad *peace be upon him*, Islamic shari'ah is as a perfection of the shari'ah that have been revealed previously,² so that Islam is final, there will be no other shari'ah that erases or perfects it which makes Islam relevant at all times and until the end of the world.

The core message brought by Islam is to improve human morals, one of which is the proclamation of peace which becomes an important jargon in Islam, Islam is not a religion that sees differences as reasons for hostility, berating, let alone the legitimacy of acts of anarchism, to non-Muslims who worship different god, Muslims are prohibited from ridiculing and berating them³ especially among Muslims, there are often differences in non-fundamental matters such as the problem of *furū'iyah* in fiqh,⁴ this difference must be addressed wisely and should not be one of the reasons for the division of Muslims.

¹The status of Islam as the only religion accepted by Allah SWT is mentioned in the Quran:
إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعْضًا بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ يَكْفُرُ
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. And those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after knowledge had come to them - out of jealous animosity between themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allah, then indeed, Allah is swift in [taking] account. (Ali 'Imran: 19)

Wahbah al-Zuhaili explained that what is meant by Islam as the only religion accepted by Allah Almighty is all religions carried by all the *rasūl*, including the shari'ah that was brought before the Prophet Muḥammad, called Islam because the true purpose of the shari'ah is *monotheism* and *al-salām* or peace/safety. See Wahbah Zuhaili, *al-Munīr fī Aqīdah wa al-Sharī'ah wa al-Manhaj*, 2 ed. (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1997), 3: 179.

²Islamic Shari'ah does not erase all previous shari'ah, there are some previous shari'ah which are still valid in Islam such as the fasting of the Prophet Daud.

³In the early days of Islam the Muslims chided the worship of the infidel, and they chided Allah Almighty in return, then after that the verse came down:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

"And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge". (Al-An'am: 108)

This verse teaches ethics which is very important for Muslims so that they do not abuse those who have different beliefs, because those who do not know Allah SWT need a good approach, not with diatribes and curses. See Ibnu Jarir al-Ṭabarī, *Jami' al-Bayan fī Tafsir al-Qur'an*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risalah, 2000), 12: 34.

⁴*Furū'iyah* derived from *far'un*, which can be defined as things that follow *aṣl*. See 'Ali Ibn Muḥammad al-Jurjani, *Al-Ta'rifāt*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub Al-'Alamiyah, 1983), 166. The muslim scholars often disagree on this issue, such as *qunūt*, marriage regulation and so on, but actually they agree on fundamental things such as Allah Almighty is the only god, prophet Muḥammad as the Messenger of Allah, making the Qur'an and Sunnah as the main islamic law resources. Even al-Bustami revealed that the differences of islamic scholars are a blessing, because if there are differences in how to understand the Qur'an and Hadith, then it can ease the Muslims

There is one important principle related to differences in ijtihad, namely *al-ijtihādu lā yunqāḍu bi al-ijtihād* which means that one ijtihad cannot be canceled with another ijtihad. Thus, if someone has done it, the results of ijtihad that he does cannot be erased by other people's ijtihad, there is no absolute status in ijtihad products, we can say someone opinion is correct and the other's is wrong or vice versa, ijtihad products are only *ẓanni*, not 100% correct,⁵ therefore *ta'aṣṣub* with one opinion should be avoided, especially in matters of *furu'iyah*.⁶ After the Prophet Muḥammad *peace be upon him* died various kinds of slander occurred which eventually resulted in the Muslims being divided into several groups, this split became a great slander among the Muslims, a lot of blood was shed, many *'ulamā* were jailed, a lot of *takfīr*, *tabdi'* and *taḍlīl* happened, but apart from that all we must understand that they are only ordinary people who can make mistakes and errors, and more important than that is the words of the Prophet Muḥammad *peace be upon him*: "who pray like our prayers and face our *qiblah* and eat our slaughter then he is **a Muslim...**".⁷

The History Of Salafi

Between "Salafi" And "Wahabi"

The terms "salafi" and "wahabi" do sound identical and connotes the same group so that it is a little difficult to distinguish between the two, salafi refers to the group that makes the scholars of the early centuries namely 1-3 H as role models in religion, they are people who get direct legitimacy from the Prophet

in carrying out shari'ah. See 'Abdul Karīm al-Qushairi, *Al-Risālah al-Qushairiyah* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'arif, n.d.), 1: 57.

⁵This is in accordance with the words of the Prophet Muḥammad *peace be upon him*:

إذا حكم الحاكم فاجتهد فأصاب، فله أجران، وإذا حكم فأخطأ، فله أجر واحد

"If a judge decides a case and he commits *jihād* and he is right then he gets two rewards, and if he decides and he is wrong then he gets a reward" (Narrated by Tirmidzi)

See Muḥammad Ibn 'Isa al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, 2nd ed. (Egypt: Mustāfa al-Halabi, 1975), 3: 607.

⁶Muḥammad Yāsīn al-Fadāni, *al-Fawā'id al-Janiyyah*, 1st ed. (Libanon: Dār al-Mahaja, 2008), 291.

⁷The text is as follow:

من صلى صلاتنا واستقبل قبلتنا وأكل ذبيحتنا فذلك المسلم

See Muḥammad Ibn Ismā'il al-Bukhāri, *Ṣaḥīh Bukhāri*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dār Ibnu Katsir, 1987), 1: 153.

Muḥammad *pecae be upon him* as the best generation.⁸ Salafi in the language means the former or previous people,⁹ this term has also been used frequently by Ibn Taymiyyah in some of his works such as *Iqtidā al-Ṣirat al-Mustaqīm* and *Aqīdah al-Iṣbahāniyyah*. Whereas wahabi refers to the dakwah movement led by Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb who is one of the important figures in salafi’s genealogy. The mention of “wahabi” as a follower of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb was firstly polarized by Aḥmad Zainī Dahlan in his book *al-Durar al-Saniyyah fī al-Rad ‘ala al-Wahhābiyyah* and *Fitnah al-Wahhābiyyah*, another figure who popularized this term was Rashīd Riḍa, he wrote *al-Wahhābiyyūn wa al-Ḥijaz*, in this book Rashīd Riḍa tried to straighten out negative accusations against Wahhābī.¹⁰

The Beginning Of Salafi

Salafi conceptually did appear later, but the spirit of his movement had existed long before the time of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb and Ibn Taimiyyah, the initial appearance was during the Abbasiyyah’s Dynasty in the leadership of al-Ma’mun precisely, he was known as the leader of Abbasiyyah’s Dynasty who was the most intelligent and loved knowledge, he had a great service in the development of science, he also heard the hadith from his father and several other scholars,¹¹ During his leadership Aristoteles’ book and other Greek philosophies were translated into Arabic,¹² it seems that he had an interest in learning Greek philosophies, after he studied it, he argued that the Quran is a creature,¹³ This is

⁸The legitimacy is the hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad *peace be upon him*:

خيركم قري ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم

“The best of you all are people who live in my day, then people who live after them and after them” (Narrated by Al-Nasā’ī) see Abū ‘Abdul Rahmān al-Nasā’ī, *Sunan Nasā’ī*, 1 ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub Al-‘Alamiyyah, 1991), 3: 135.

⁹Abū Faḍl Ibnu Manẓur, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dār Shādir, 1993), 9: 158.

¹⁰Arrazy Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 1st ed. (Ciputat: Maktabah Darus Sunnah, 2017), 29.

¹¹Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī, *Tārikh al-Khulafā*, 1 ed. (Saudi Arabia: Makyabah Nizar Mustafa al-Baz, 2004), 225–226.

¹²Abdul Rahman Ibnu Khaldun, *Tārikh Ibnu Khaldūn*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1988), 649.

¹³Among *dalil* used is ayah:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an that you might understand. (Yusuf: 2)

one of the slanders that occurred at that time, till al-Ma'mun held an open court for the scholars at that time related to the status of the Quran as a creature or not. Among the scholars who were exiled to *Riqqah* for rejecting the *khalqiyyah al-Qur'ān* doctrine were Muḥammad Ibn Sa'ad, Yaḥyā Ibn Ma'in, Abū Khaithamah, Abū Muslim, Ismā'il Ibn Daud, Ismā'il Ibn Abī Mas'ud and Aḥmad Ibn Ibrāhīm, but they were sent back to Baghdād after acknowledging the doctrine.¹⁴

After that incident al-Ma'mun ordered to gather the scholars who reject the Qur'anic doctrine as a creature, then presented several scholars, namely Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, Bishr Ibn Walīd al-Kindī, Abū Ḥasan al-Ziyādī, 'Alī Ibn Abī Muqātil and many more, then al-Ma'mun ordered that anyone who refused he would be prohibited from speaking and narrating the Hadith.¹⁵ In here was seen the figure of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal who firmly rejected the doctrine, though will be punished he remains with his establishment.¹⁶ Another figure who rejected this doctrine was Bishr Ibn Walid, so both of them were forbidden to speak and narrate the Hadith at that time. Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal was also forced to be imprisoned several times during the reigns of Mu'taṣim and Wathīq.¹⁷ From this we can understand the emergence of the salafi movement triggered by the rise of the Mu'tazilah theology which prioritized reason, then the salafi emerged with the idea of returning to the Quran and the Sunnah.

The Rise Of Salafi

Salafi began to rise during the reign of al-Mutawakkil, when one of his closest ministers sent a letter to Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal regarding the issue of the status of al-Quran as a creature or not, in that letter al-Mutawakkil did not intend to test Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal as was done by the previous caliph,¹⁸ then he answered:

From this ayah al-Ma'mun understand that Qur'an is a creature, because Arabic language used by Arab, and of course it is a creature

¹⁴al-Suyūṭī, *Tārikh al-Khulafā*, 228.

¹⁵al-Suyūṭī, *Tārikh al-Khulafā*, 228.

¹⁶Abbas 'Id, *al-Da'wah al-Salafiyyah wa Mauqifuhā min al-Harakāt al-Ukhrā* (Iskandariyah: Dār al-Iman, 2002), 9–10.

¹⁷Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 47.

¹⁸Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 50.

“It has been reported from not only one salaf that the Quran is the word of God and not a creature, and that is the tendency of my opinion, I am not a *kalām* expert, and I do not know *kalām* except what is in the Quran or Hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad or his companions or the *tabi'īn*, while other than that then talking about it is not commendable”.¹⁹

It seems that al-Mutawakkil had a tendency towards Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal's opinion, in 237 H he met al-Mutawakkil in person and some time after that, the delegate of the caliph always visited his house, until Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal died in 241 H.²⁰ During al-Mutawakkil, it was also clear that the government was very pro to the salafī's movement, in 236 H al-Mutawakkil ordered the destruction of buildings above the grave of Ḥusayn Ibn 'Alī Ibn Abī Talib, the buildings around his grave were destroyed and made into plantations, and people were forbidden to come with strict guard from the officer. One of the officers said: “whosoever we meet in the grave of Ḥusayn Ibn 'Alī more than three times will be put in an underground prison”.²¹

Al-Mutawakkil also freed the scholars detained by the regime that supported the Mu'tazilah theology, and in 237 H he replaced Muḥammad Ibn Abū al-Laiṭh who had previously served as supreme judge in Egypt for adhering to the Jahmiyah sect. He also deposed an important figure Mu'tazilah Aḥmad Ibn Abū Du'ad who had an important role in imprisoning scholars who rejected the Mu'tazilah doctrine especially about the *khalqīyah al-Qur'ān*, he also removed his son Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Abū Du'ad.²² Furthermore, al-Mutawakkil ordered 'Isā Ibn Ja'far who chided Abū Bakr, 'Umar Ibn Khaṭṭab, 'Aisha and Ḥafshah to

¹⁹The text is as follow:

وقد روي عن السلف أنهم كانوا يقولون: القرآن كلام الله غير مخلوق، وهو الذي أذهب إليه، لست بصاحب كلام، ولا أرى الكلام في شيء من هذا إلا ما كان عن كتاب الله، أو حديث عن النبي -صلى الله عليه وسلم- أو عن أصحابه، أو عن التابعين، فأما غير ذلك، فإن الكلام فيه غير محمود

See Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Siar A'lām al-Nubalā*, 3 ed. (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risālah, 1985), 11: 286.

²⁰Abū Nu'aim al-Asbihāni, *Hilyat al-Auliya Wa Tabaqāt al-Ashfiya* (al-Sa'adah: Mesir, 1974), 9: 220.

²¹Ibnu Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tārikh Al-Ṭabarī*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Turāth, 1967), ix. 185.

²²Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafī*, 55.

be whipped with five hundred lashes, and if he died because of that, his body would be thrown into the Tigris river without being prayed.²³ This shows that during al-Mutawakkil the government changed 180 degrees which was previously pro Mu'tazilah to be contra to it.

The Important Figure After Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal

The genealogy of salafi does not stop at Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, because at that time, salafi conceptual has not been completed, there are many figures who continue the thought of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal and certainly have *sanad* to him, such as Ibn al-Jawzī (597 H), Ibn Qudāmah (620), Ibn Taymiyyah (728 AH), al-Dhahabī (749 AH), Ibn Abū al-'Izz (792 AH), Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdul Wahhab (1206 AH) and Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Bāz (1420). These scholars have important role in the development of salafi, especially Ibn Taimiyyah, better known as the *Shaykh al-Islām* among his students, he is also known as a reformer of the Salafi theology who is proficient in various sciences.²⁴ after his death his students continued the relay of salafi thoughts such as Ibn Qayyim and others.²⁵

The influential figure after Ibn Taymiyyah and his students was Muḥammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab who was a reformer of the salafi dakwah movement, at the time the Muslims were divided into several groups, many heresy occurred and also the majority of the Muslims did not study and understand religion well, it was from here that Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdul Wahhab started his dakwah, he tried to spread knowledge and campaign to return to the Quran and Hadith, and leave heresy.²⁶ Although his dakwah movements were rejected several times in areas such as Basrah, he was expelled from there because his dakwah activity was contrary to most scholars there. Then he moved to Uyaynah in 1143 H, he was welcomed by Uthmān Ibn Mu'ammār the new governor of Uyaynah city, and worked with him to enact *rajam* and demolish buildings above the cemetery, but in the end many people refused him, and he moved to Dar'iyah.²⁷

²³al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh Al-Ṭabarī*, 9: 201.

²⁴Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 124.

²⁵'Id, *al-Da'wah al-Salafiyah wa Mauqifuhā min al-Harakāt al-Ukhrā*, 11.

²⁶Nāsir Ibn 'Abdul Karīm, *Islāmīyah lā Wahhabiyyah* (Saudi Arabia: Dār Kunuz Asybiyah, 2004), 21–22.

²⁷Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 146–147.

The journey of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb in the city of Dar’iyyah has a huge influence on the future of Waḥḥabiyyah and the country of Saudi Arabia, because ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abdul Rahman Sulaim as the *amir* of this city has good access to Muḥammad Ibn Su’ud, so he can bring Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab to him. The idea of his dakwah was accepted by Muḥammad Ibn Su’ud and he strengthened it politically and militarily, so that the movement of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab was so successful, the climax was when the formation of the ‘Alu Su’ud or Saudi Arabia which rebelled against the Dynasty of ‘Utsmaniyah.²⁸

Salafi’s Textualism

Salafi’s textualism clearly visible since the beginning of its appearance, the figure of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal who is also an expert of Hadith who wrote *Musnad Aḥmad* was very textually in a matter of law and aqidah, his dakwah at that time was campaigning to return to the Quran and Hadith, even he often times in polemics with the *ahl al-ra’yi*. Salafi textualism can also be seen from salafi teachings related to theology, specifically the concept of *tauḥīd asmā wa ṣifāt*, and also in the issue of fiqh.

Salafi’s Teology

The Concept of Monotheistic Trilogy

One of the most important concepts in salafi theology is the division of monotheism into three: *Rubūbiyyah*, *Ulūhiyyah* and *Asmā wa Ṣifāt*, this concept is not found in the books written by Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, or other early generation salafi scholars, because the one who built it and introduced was Ibnu Taimiyah. However, this concept of trilogy is accepted by all groups who call themselves salafi post-Ibn Taymiyyah.²⁹ Without these three monotheisms, someone cannot yet be considered as a believer.

²⁸Hasyim, 148. Compare to: Karīm, *Islāmiyyah lā Wahhabiyyah*, 29.

²⁹Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 212–213.

Tawhīd Rubūbiyyah is the monotheism of the *kāfirīn* at the time of the Prophet Muḥammad *peace be upon him* and they are not among the Muslims.³⁰ Allah Almighty said:

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ
مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ ۗ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا
تَتَّقُونَ

Say, “Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Or who controls hearing and sight and who brings the living out of the dead and brings the dead out of the living and who arranges [every] matter?” They will say, “Allah”, so say, “Then will you not fear Him?” (Yunus: 31)

Ibn Abī al-'Izz more clearly explained about *Tawhīd Rubūbiyyah*, according to him *Tawhīd Rubūbiyyah* is acknowledging that Allah Almighty is the creator of all things, and it is impossible for the universe to have two gods at once.³¹ In other words, every Muslim must believe that the universe has a creator who governs everything, namely Allah Almighty.³² Recognition of Allah as Lord and Ruler of everything isn't enough to consider someone as a muslim according to salafi.

Tawhīd Ulūhiyyah is making Allah as the only god with the action of servants, such as praying, *nadhār*, sacrifice, hope, fear, resignation.³³ Other scholars define it as the right of Allah almighty as the only one who must be worshiped who has no allies.³⁴ Among the ayah about *Ulūhiyyah* is as follow:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ

“And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, “There is no deity except Me, so worship Me”. (Al-Anbiya': 25)

³⁰Abdul Qādir al-Arna'ut, *Majmu'at al-Tawhīd* (Saudi Arabia: Maktabah Dār al-Bā, 1987), 5.

³¹Ibnu Abī al-'Izz, *Sharhu Al-Ṭahawīyyah Fī al-'Aqīdah al-Salafīyyah* (Cairo: Dār al-Hadith, 2005), 19.

³²Id, *al-Da'wah al-Salafīyyah wa Mauqifuhā min al-Harakāt al-Ukhrā*, 13.

³³al-Arna'ut, *Majmu'at al-Tawhīd*, 6.

³⁴al-'Izz, *Sharhu Al-Ṭahawīyyah Fī al-'Aqīdah al-Salafīyyah*, 18.

Thus according to the salafi viewpoint of a human being it is not enough to be considered a believer if he only has *Tawhīd Rubūbiyyah*, because the historical facts enshrined in the Quran said that the infidels actually recognized that Allah is the creator of the universe, but they were not categorized as believers, because they did not worship Allah Almighty.

What is meant by *Tawhīd Asmā wa Ṣifāt* is to believe that the name and attribute of Allah Almighty is only owned by Him, if someone believes in the existence of a human being who can know the supernatural, then he has disbelieved, such as Sufi experts belief about *mukāshafah*.³⁵ Among the ayah about *Tawhīd Asmā wa Ṣifāt* is as follow:

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِيَّ اسْمَائِهِ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ

And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them. And leave [the company of] those who practice deviation concerning His names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing. (Al-A'raf: 180)

Regarding the attribute, salafi more textualism,³⁶ they did not interpret the attributes of Allah, they just believe it, this can be seen from the statement of Ibn Taymiyyah:

“And among the parts of faith in Allah Almighty is to believe in the attribute of Allah Almighty which He describes in His book (Quran) and which is described by His Messenger Muḥammad *peace be upon him* without any *tahrif* (change), *ta'til* (negation), *takyif* (ways and circumstances) and *tamtsil* (likeness)”.³⁷

³⁵Id, *al-Da'wah al-Salafīyah wa Mauqifuhā min al-Harakāt al-Ukhrā*, 18.

³⁶Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 218.

³⁷The text is as follow:

ومن الإيمان بالله: الإيمان بما وصف به نفسه في كتابه وبما وصفه به رسوله محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم من غير تحريف ولا تعطي, ومن غير تكيف ولا تمثيل

See Muḥammad Ibn Ṣalih Uthaimīn, *Sharhu al-Aqīdah al-Wasaṭiyyah*, 5 ed. (Riyadh: Dār Ibn al-Jauzī, 1998), 72, 86.

The four keywords in understanding the attribute of Allah Almighty are always repeated by Ibnu Taymiyyah in some of his works, he accepted the meaning of the text about the attribute of Allah Almighty without interpreting it, but it is not appropriate if he is assumed to be a *mujassimah* because he himself rejected Allah Almighty as a *jism*.³⁸ It is proved that the salafi has textual understanding about the verses and Hadiths regarding the attribute of Allah Almighty, they refuse to use reason to understand it, let see the verse that says God has a hand,³⁹ *istiwa*⁴⁰ and Hadith that Allah comes down to earth in a third night,⁴¹ they accept it all as one the attribute of Allah Almighty without interpreting the meaning of *yad*, *nuzūl* and *istiwa*, but although they accept the arguments textually but they still believe that *yad*, *nuzul*, *istiwa* of Allah Almighty is not the same as being.

Takfīr

if we examine further the teachings of previous salafi figure such as Ibn Taymiyyah we can understand that it is not so easy to consider someone as infidel, there should be certain conditions that make *takfīr* legal to be done, in the book *hakadha taḥaddatha Ibn Taimiyah*, 'A'id Ibn Sa'ad al-Dusarī explains the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah including the rules of *takfīr*, while rejecting the

³⁸Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 221.

³⁹Allah Almighty said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۖ فَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ
اللَّهُ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Indeed, those who pledge allegiance to you, [O Muḥammad] - they are actually pledging allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hands. So he who breaks his word only breaks it to the detriment of himself. And he who fulfills that which he has promised Allah - He will give him a great reward. (Al-Fath: 10)

⁴⁰Allah Almighty said:

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ

The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established. (Thaha: 5)

⁴¹Prophet Muḥammad peace be upon him said:

ينزل ربنا تبارك وتعالى كل ليلة إلى السماء الدنيا حين يبقى ثلث الليل الآخر يقول من يدعوني فأستجيب له من
يسألني فأعطيه من يستغفرني فأغفر له

*Your almighty Lord descends every night into the sky of the world in the final third of the night saying: "Whosoever prays to me, I will grant and who asks me, I will give, whoever asks forgiveness from me, I will forgive". See Muḥammad Ibn Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥih Bukhārī*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dār Ibnu Katsir, 1987), 1: 384*

accusations of some people that Ibn Taymiyyah's dakwah is full by *takfīr*.⁴² According to Ibn Taymiyyah a person who is believed to be 100% muslim cannot be considered as disbeliever just because he did something wrong, he further explained:

“It is not permissible for someone to disbelieve a Muslim even though he did something wrong until strong evidence is found, someone who has confirmed his faith with confidence cannot be eliminated only by doubt”⁴³

From this we can understand that *takfīr* in salafi theologians is not an easy thing to be done, if it is still doubtful it would be better not to do it, until there is strong evidence of its deviation.⁴⁴ But it cannot be denied that there are some contemporary salafi who regard the *tawassul* with the righteous people who have died as infidels.⁴⁵ But apart from that all, *takfīr* among the salafi happened because when they see social phenomena that are not in the Quran and Hadith then these are things that should not be done, and more important than that is not all textualists require *takfīr* movements, due to the fact that Ibn Taymiyyah himself, who was a very important figure in salafi geneology, was not easy to disbelieve someone.

Tawassul

One of the difference between the Salafi theology with other theology is about *tawassul*,⁴⁶ Ibn Taymiyyah explained this in *Majmu' Fatāwā*:

⁴²A'id Ibnu Sa'ad al-Dusari, *Hakadhā Tahaddatha Ibnu Taymiyyah*, 1st ed. (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islami, 2007), 155.

⁴³Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū' Fatāwā* (Saudi Arabia: Majma' Mālik Fahd, 1995), 12: 466.

⁴⁴Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 267.

⁴⁵Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 169.

⁴⁶Among *dalīl* about *tawassul* as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“O you who have believed, fear Allah and seek the means [of nearness] to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed”. (Al-Ma'idah: 35)

عن عثمان بن حنيف، أن رجلاً ضربير البصر أتى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: ادع الله أن يعافيني قال: إن شئت دعوت، وإن شئت صبرت فهو خير لك. قال: فادعه، قال: فأمره أن يتوضأ فيحسن وضوءه ويدعو بهذا الدعاء: اللهم إني أسألك وأتوجه إليك بنبيك محمد نبي الرحمة، إني توجّهت بك إلى ربي في حاجتي هذه لتقضى لي، اللهم فشفعه في

“So *tawassul* to Allah with the Prophets is *tawassul* with their faith and obedience to them, as with the blessings and salutations, love and *muwālāh*, or with their prayers and *shafā'at* (help), and *tawassul* with their substance does not accelerate the achievement of wishes”.⁴⁷

The post-Ibnu Taymiyyah salafi figures such as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, then Ibn Bāz, also Albāni agreed that *tawassul* with the names of Allah Almighty and righteous deeds are permitted, and *tawassul* with people who have died is not permissible in religion.⁴⁸ According to them, there is no Qur'anic ayah and Hadith that state it allowed.

Salafi's Fiqh

Isbāl

According to salaf *Isbal* or wearing clothes under the legs is prohibited, this is because *isbāl* is a sign of someone concealing themselves with the clothes he has, further Ibn Taymiyyah explained in *Majmū' Fatāwā*:

“It is strictly forbidden for us to wear silk, and gold, vessels made of gold and silver which are the most luxurious jewelry in the world, and Allah Almighty also forbids proud and arrogant including clothes that show pride and arrogance such as lengthening clothing (*isbāl*)”.⁴⁹

One of the propositions used by Ibn Taimiyah to strenghten his opinion is the following Hadith:

من جر ثوبه خيلاء لم ينظر الله إليه يوم القيامة

“It was narrated from 'Uthman Ibn Hunaif that a blind person came to the Prophet and said: “Pray to Allah Almighty for my healing!” Then he replied: “If you want me to pray, I will do it, and if you want to be patient it is better for you”. The person said: “just pray for me” then the Prophet peace be upon him ordered him to perform ablution perfectly and pray with this words: “O Allah, I ask you and I face you with your Prophet Muḥammad the prophet of grace, actually I am facing you (Muḥammad) to my God because of my intention to be granted immediately, O Allah help him (Muḥammad) to help me”. See al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, 5: 569.

⁴⁷ The text is as follows:

فالتوسل إلى الله بالنبيين هو التوسل بالإيمان بهم وبتواضعهم كالصلاة والسلام عليهم ومحبتهم وموالاتهم أو بدعائهم وشفاعتهم. وأما نفس ذواتهم فليس فيها ما يقتضي حصول مطلوب العبد

See Taimiyah, *Majmū' Fatāwā*, 27: 133.

⁴⁸Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan, Geneologi dan Ajaran Salafi*, 263–265.

⁴⁹Taimiyah, *Majmu' Fatawa*, 22: 127.

“Whoever extends his clothes because he is arrogant then Allah will not see him on the Day of Judgment” (Narrated by Bukhāri)⁵⁰

Salafi scholars are very textual to understand this Hadith, they didn't see *sabab wurūd* or social context when the Hadith delivered by the prophet Muhammad *peace be upon him*.

Lengthen the Beard and Cutting the Mustache

Extending the beard and cutting the mustache in fact is required and recommended by the Prophet Muḥammad in his hadith:

خالفوا المشركين وفروا اللحى وأحفوا الشوارب

“Be different from the musrikin, and let the beard and cut the mustache” (Narrated by Bukhari)⁵¹

Based on this hadith lengthen the beard and trimming the mustache is something highly recommended among Salafi, and become symbols of pride for them, and there are more typical of Salafi in matters of fiqh, such as forbidding music, forbidding *mawlid*, and so on which clearly show their textualism in understanding the Quran and Hadith.

Conclusion

Salafi textualism in understanding the Quran and Hadith can be clearly seen from Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal's attitude who strongly rejected the Mu'tazilah doctrine which used ratio frequently during the leadership of al-Ma'mun, Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal's attitude was followed by his students, because their textualism salafi is often considered to be old-fashioned, but despite all that they have a very important role in the development of Islamic sciences, in the end the differences in methods of understanding the Quran and Hadith are not a big problem, instead it is a *mercy* for muslim.

⁵⁰al-Bukhāri, *Ṣaḥih Bukhāri*, 3: 1340.

⁵¹al-Bukhāri, *Ṣaḥih Bukhāri*, 5: 2209.

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