

## When Women Disrupt Prayer? Rethinking a Controversial Hadith through Al-Adlabi's Matan Criticism

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### ABSTRACT

*The hadith that mentions women, donkeys, and dogs can cancel prayers when passing in front of people who pray has caused controversy, mainly because it is considered to contain gender bias. This study aims to examine the validity of the matan hadith through the approach of matan criticism according to al-Adlabi in *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulamā' al-Hadīth al-Nabawī*. The method employed is a literature study that involves tracing the hadith in *al-Kutub al-Tis'ah* and analyzing it based on four criteria: conformity with the *Qur'an*, *sahih hadith*, the Prophet's *sirah*, rationality, and historical context, as well as editorial feasibility. The results of the analysis show that, although the sanad of the hadith is considered authentic, it contains problems: it is not in line with the *Qur'an*, it contradicts Aisha's history and the Prophet's practice, and it juxtaposes women with animals in the context of worship. This study emphasizes the importance of critically analyzing the hadith so that our understanding of it remains in harmony with the values of justice, common sense, and humanity in Islam.*

**Keywords:** Criticism of Matan, Hadith, Women, Prayer, al-Adlabi.

### ABSTRAK

Hadis yang menyebut perempuan, keledai, dan anjing dapat membatalkan shalat ketika melintas di hadapan orang yang shalat menimbulkan kontroversi, terutama karena dinilai mengandung bias gender. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji keabsahan matan hadis tersebut melalui pendekatan kritik matan menurut al-Adlabi dalam *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulamā' al-Hadīth al-Nabawī*. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi pustaka dengan menelusuri hadis dalam *al-kutub al-tis'ah* dan menganalisisnya berdasarkan empat kriteria: kesesuaian dengan Al-Qur'an, hadis sahih dan sirah Nabi, rasionalitas dan sejarah, serta kelayakan redaksional. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa meskipun sanad hadis tergolong sahih, matannya mengandung problematika: tidak sejalan dengan Al-Qur'an, bertentangan dengan riwayat Aisyah dan praktik Nabi, serta menyandingkan perempuan dengan hewan dalam konteks ibadah. Kajian ini menegaskan pentingnya kritik matan agar pemahaman hadis tetap selaras dengan nilai keadilan, akal sehat, dan kemanusiaan dalam Islam.

**Kata Kunci:** Kritik Matan, Hadis, Perempuan, Shalat, al-Adlabi.

## INTRODUCTION

The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the second source of Islamic teachings, after the Qur'an. He holds a central position in the development of Islamic law, morals, spirituality, and the guidance of Muslim social life. Therefore, authenticity and understanding of hadith are crucial aspects in Islamic studies (Mutammimah et al., 2023). In the classical Islamic scientific tradition, the study of hadith places great emphasis on sanad criticism to assess the validity of hadith. However, in the context of modern scholarship and the needs of contemporary society, attention to eye criticism has become increasingly important, especially in assessing the relevance and conformity of the hadith content with maqāṣid al-sharī'ah and the universal values of Islam (Hikmah et al., 2023).

One of the hadiths that is highlighted in the study of matan criticism is the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah and several other companions, which states that "three things cancel prayer: women, black dogs, and donkeys when they pass in front of people who are praying without restrictions." This hadith is found in several authoritative hadith books such as *Sahih Muslim* and *Sunan Abu Dawud*. This hadith textually gives the impression that the existence of women is parallel to that of animals in canceling prayers, thus raising big questions regarding the position and dignity of women in Islam. Even in its history, this hadith has invited criticism from some companions, such as 'Aisha ra, who questioned the meaning and logic behind the redaction of the hadith. This hadith controversy is increasingly relevant in contemporary Islamic discourse that demands a fairer reading of gender, as well as the reinterpretation of religious texts that seem biased. In this case, the eye criticism approach is one of the important analytical tools to respond to problematic texts. Matan's criticism not only highlights the irregularities in the content of the hadith but also takes into account the historical, cultural, and social context behind the emergence of this historical narrative (Syaikhudin, 2011).

There is a lack of in-depth analysis of specific hadiths regarding women canceling prayers, especially from the perspective of matan criticism, using the method employed by Shalahuddin Ibn Ahmad Al-Adlabi. The urgency of this research is crucial due to the need to provide a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the status of these controversial hadiths. This can prevent misunderstandings or misinterpretations that have the potential to hurt worship practices and people's views of women in Islam. In addition, this research also contributes to enriching the scientific treasures of hadith by applying relevant matan criticism methods to answer the challenges of contemporary gender discourse. Therefore, this approach

opens up the possibility of reinterpreting problematic hadiths without having to deny the authority of the hadith as a whole.

This research is important because previous studies related to women's hadith that canceled prayers mostly used a gender or sociological approach without an in-depth analysis of the hadith itself. For example, in the Journal entitled "*Sutrah dalam Shalat: Pemahaman Kaum Feminis terhadap Hadis yang Menyetarakan Perempuan dengan Hewan*" (Ridwan, 2023), which appears in the Journal Riset Agama, feminist responses to suthah hadiths are discussed, highlighting the need for contextual interpretations to avoid generalizing the text in a misogynistic manner. On the other hand, classical hadith studies tend to focus on critiquing the sanad and pay less attention to the matan. Matan that is considered valid in sanad is not necessarily based on the principles of justice and maqāṣid al-shari'ah. By applying the method of criticism developed by Matan Shalahuddin al-Adlabi, which combines philological, historical, and maqāṣidī approaches, this study fills the existing methodological gaps. It offers a fairer and more relevant framework for understanding the problematic hadiths in substance, especially those related to women's issues.

This study aims to examine the hadith about women who cancel prayers through the perspective of matan criticism offered by Shalahuddin al-Adlabi. With this method, the researcher will assess the feasibility of hadith from various aspects: the validity of the editorial, the conformity of the meaning with the teachings of the Qur'an, the socio-historical context, and its normative implications on the Islamic view of women. This research not only seeks to uncover the irregularities that may be contained in the matan hadith, but also offers a framework for understanding an alternative that is more fair and proportionate. It is hoped that this study can contribute to the development of a more critical, inclusive, and contextual understanding of hadith, as well as strengthen the spirit of justice in interpreting Islamic teachings.

## METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing *the library research* method. The primary sources analyzed are the hadiths that discuss women, donkeys, and dogs as things that can decide prayer, as listed in the main hadith books (*al-kutub al-tis'ah*), such as *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *Sunan al-Tirmizī*, and *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*. The analysis was carried out using the *critical approach* developed by al-Adlabi in his book *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulamā' al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī*. The benchmarks used include four aspects: (1) the conformity of the hadith with the verses of the Qur'an; (2)

conformity with authentic hadith and the Prophet's head; (3) its consistency with reason, sensory reality, and history; and (4) the feasibility of editorial in terms of language and speaking style of the Prophet. In the process of analysis, the author traces the path of the sanad, assesses the quality of the narrator, and compares various intersecting and contradictory narrations to gain a comprehensive understanding of the validity and meaning of the matan hadith.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Methodology of Criticism of Matan Shalahuddin Ibn Ahmad Al-Adlabi

The application of al-Adlabi's method does not stop at theoretical testing alone, but aims to foster a critical frame of mind when interacting with hadith texts. In practice, al-Adlabi emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between the revelation of the nature of *tasyri'* (normative) and words that are *Insaniyah* (Humanity) of the Prophet SAW. He realized that not all the words of the Prophet should be understood as provisions of eternal law, because some hadiths were born in response to specific situations (*Asbāb al-Wurūd*) and therefore cannot be generalized absolutely (Fata et al., 2023). By proposing a separation between the prophetic and the human dimension in the words of the Prophet, al-Adlabi opens up space for the reinterpretation of hadith that seem to contradict the universal values of Islam.

One of the other important aspects of al-Adlabi's method is the concept of balancing between *NAQL* (text) and *'aql* (intellect). He does not place reason as the ruler of the text, but makes it a tool for understanding, weighing, and evaluating the text within the framework of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. In this context, reason does not contradict the text, but becomes a partner to uncover the moral message contained in the hadith. This method strengthens the responsible *ijtihād* approach, which is *ijtihād* that still relies on the main principles of the religion but does not rule out the possibility of a renewed understanding in light of changing times (Baharuddin, 2014).

Al-Adlabi is also known as a figure who broke with the textualist approach that tended to ignore social dynamics and the development of science. He rejects an approach that interprets the hadith literally without considering the dimensions of humanity, ethics, and logic. This aligns with the approach of earlier progressive scholars, such as al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, who also emphasized the importance of *maqāṣid* and *maslahah* in religion. In al-Adlabi's view, hadith should not be a source of fear, oppression, or injustice, because the words

of the Prophet SAW, in reality, bring blessings and enlightenment to humanity (Al-Adlabi, 1983).

One of the methodological approaches in assessing and criticizing hadith from the aspect of matan was developed by Shalahuddin Ibn Ahmad al-Adlabi. This approach is contained in his work entitled *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulamā' al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī*, which has been translated into Indonesian by Qodirun Nur and Ahmad Musyafiq under the title *Methodology of Criticism of Matan Hadith*. In the work, al-Adlabi explained that four main categories can be used as a reference in testing the validity of the hadith:

1. The matan of the hadith does not contradict the verses of the Qur'an;
2. It is not contrary to the saḥīḥ hadith and the Saḥīḥ Nabawī head;
3. It does not contradict reason, senses, and history;
4. The matan of the hadith does not show haphazard expressions, nor does it show low meaning (Musyafiq & Nur, 2004).

The theoretical framework on the validity of matan hadith developed by al-Adlabi was chosen in this study because it offers a more balanced approach, especially amid the tradition of 'ulūm al-ḥadīṣ studies, which have focused more on sanad research. Although there are works that discuss aspects of the eye, such as *al-Manār al-Munīf* by Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751 AH) and *al-Ijābah fīmā Istadrakathu al-Sayyidah 'Āisyah 'alā al-Ṣaḥābah* by al-Zarkasyī, the discussion is still limited when compared to the methodological needs of a more comprehensive critique (Al-Jawziyyah, 1970). In this context, al-Adlabi's work is considered to provide a more adequate and systematic theoretical foundation. The application of this Theory in research aims to prevent the tendency to focus solely on criticizing the sanad and overlook the matan, or, conversely, to prioritize the matan without considering the sanad proportionately. A balanced approach between sanad and matan is important so that the analysis of hadith is not trapped in a reduction in understanding of its authenticity and validity.

A balanced approach between sanad and matan is important so that the analysis of hadith is not trapped in a reduction in understanding of its authenticity and validity. Al-Adlabi emphasized that sanad and matan are two components that complement each other in judging a hadith. The sanad provides information about the narrator's reliability. At the same time, the matan offers an overview of the consistency and relevance of the hadith's content to the basic principles of Islam. By integrating sanad and matan criticism, al-Adlabi's method offers a comprehensive approach to the study of hadith. This is crucial to ensure that the hadith used as

the basis for the law and a guide for life is truly valid, relevant, and in line with universal Islamic values (Maihula & Abdulkadir, 2022).

The al-Adlabi method also makes a significant contribution to establishing a harmonious relationship between religious teachings and the needs of modern society. By distinguishing between the normative and contextual aspects of hadith, Muslims are invited to understand Islam as a teaching that is not rigid, but flexible and responsive to changing times. For example, hadiths related to social, economic, or political affairs during the Prophet's time can be seen as part of the Prophet's humanitarian dimension, which responded to the needs of Arab society at that time. This separation creates space for a reinterpretation that not only respects Islam's fundamental values but is also relevant to contemporary realities. Furthermore, the al-Adlabi method also emphasizes the importance of understanding *asbāb al-wurūd*, which is the historical and social context behind the birth of a hadith (Kholishuddin, 2020). By understanding specific causes, Muslims can distinguish between universal teachings and situational teachings, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of their faith.

However, this method is not without its challenges. One of the criticisms that is often directed at al-Adlabi's approach is the risk of subjectivity in interpreting the hadith. The separation between the prophetic and humanitarian dimensions requires a deep understanding of the science of hadith, including an awareness of the historical context and the ability to distinguish between universal and temporal teachings (Siregar, 2018). Therefore, al-Adlabi emphasizes the importance of using this method scientifically and responsibly, referring to the basic principles of Islam and established scientific traditions. In addition, it is essential to note that al-Adlabi's approach also makes a significant contribution to addressing the challenges of globalization and modernization, which often raise new issues that were never encountered during the time of the Prophet (Tangngareng, 2016). By distinguishing between the prophetic and humanitarian dimensions, Muslims can develop a more inclusive and progressive mindset. For example, in issues such as technology, human rights, the environment, and religious pluralism, this approach provides a broader space to explore Islamic values that align with the demands of the times without compromising religious principles.

### **Takhrij Hadith About Women Who Cancel Prayers**

The hadith that states a person's prayer can be interrupted if a woman, donkey, or dog passes in front of them is one of the hadiths that remains a topic of debate to this day. Feminist thinkers often consider this hadith to have misogynistic tendencies and contain discriminatory elements against women (Irfan, 2020). Based on the author's research, the hadiths about the

interruption of prayer due to the passage of the three creatures are recorded in numerous books of the main hadith (*Al-Kutub Al-Tis'ah*), which number approximately 34. The details are as follows: 2 hadiths are found in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4 in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2 in *Sunan al-Tirmizī*, 3 in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 2 in *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, 5 in *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 1 in *Sunan al-Dārimī*, and as many as 15 hadiths are listed in *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* (Syaikhudin, 2011).

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, one of the hadith editors states that a person's prayer can be cancelled or interrupted (يَقْطَعُ) if a woman, a donkey, or a dog passes in front of them. The editorial of the hadith reads as follows:

وَحَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ أَحْبَرَنا الْمَحْزُومِي حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَاحِدِ وَهُوَ ابْنُ زِيَادٍ حَدَّثَنَا عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْأَصَمِّ حَدَّثَنَا يَزِيدُ بْنُ الْأَصَمِّ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقْطَعُ الصَّلَاةَ الْمَرْأَةُ وَالْحِمَارُ وَالْكَلْبُ وَيُقِي ذَلِكَ مِثْلُ مُؤَخَّرَةِ الرَّحْلِ

*"Narrated to us Ishaq ibn Ibrahim, narrated to us al-Mahzumi, narrated to us 'Abd al-Wahid, i.e., Ibn Ziyad, narrated to us Ubaidullah ibn Abdillah ibn al-Asam, narrated to us Yazid ibn al-Asam, from Abu Hurairah. He said that the Prophet SAW said: "It is possible to decide on prayer, namely women, donkeys, and dogs. And it remains the size of a vehicle." (Al-Ḥajjāj, 1991).*

Hadith edits similar to those found in Muslim narrations are also present in Sunan Ibn Mājah, number 940, and Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, numbers 9126 and 7642. From the side of the sanad, there are no negative notes (*Jarḥ*) against the narrators of the hadith by the scholars of hadith experts. All of his narrators received positive ratings (*ta'dīl*), so that this hadith is considered acceptable based on its sanad (Anshori, 2016). The same condition also applies to the hadith conveyed through the path of the companions of 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mughaffal. Based on the author's analysis, the narrators in the sanad of this hadith are all considered reliable (*thiqqah*), without any criticism or reproach from the scholars.

The content of the hadith narrated by Ibn al-Mughaffal shares similarities with the hadith from Abu Hurairah, which states that a person's prayer will be interrupted if a woman, donkey, or dog passes in front of them. This hadith can be found in Sunan Ibn Mājah, number 941, and Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, number 19663. The editorial contained in Musnad Aḥmad reads as follows:

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْأَعْلَى حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدٌ عَنْ فَنَادَةَ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ عَنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مُعَقَّلٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ  
يَقْطَعُ الصَّلَاةَ الْمَرْأَةُ وَالْحِمَارُ وَالْكَلْبُ

"Narrated to us Abd al-A'la, narrated to us Sa'id, from Qatadah, from al-Hasan, from Abdullah ibn Mugaffal, from the Prophet (peace be upon him). He said: "It is possible to decide on the prayer, namely women, donkeys, and dogs" (Hanbal, 2001).

Meanwhile, in another narration from the companions of Ibn 'Abbās and listed in Sunan Abī Dāwūd, there is a difference in the editorial. In the hadith, it is stated that those who can cancel the prayer are women who are menstruating and dogs, without listing the donkey as the cause of the interruption of prayer.

حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى عَنْ شُعْبَةَ حَدَّثَنَا فَنَادَةُ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ جَابِرَ بْنَ زَيْدٍ يُحَدِّثُ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَفَعَهُ شُعْبَةُ قَالَ  
يَقْطَعُ الصَّلَاةَ الْمَرْأَةُ الْخَائِضُ وَالْكَلْبُ قَالَ أَبُو دَاوُدَ وَقَفَهُ سَعِيدٌ وَهَشَامٌ وَهَمَّامٌ عَنْ فَنَادَةَ عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ زَيْدٍ عَلَى ابْنِ  
عَبَّاسٍ

"Has narrated to us Musaddad, narrated to us Yahya, from Shu'bah, has narrated to us Qatadah. He said (that) I heard Jabir ibn Zaid narrate from Ibn Abbas, which Shu'bah added, that he said: "It is permissible to decide on prayer, namely menstruating women and dogs. Abu Dawud said that Sa'id, Hisham, and Hammam prevented him from Qatadah, from Jabir ibn Zaid over Ibn 'Abbas (Al-Sijistānī, 2009).

However, in the narration of Ibn Majah, still through the companions of Ibn 'Abbas, he was added with a black dog.

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ خَلَّادِ الْبَاهِلِيُّ حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ حَدَّثَنَا فَنَادَةُ حَدَّثَنَا جَابِرُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ  
عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ يَقْطَعُ الصَّلَاةَ الْكَلْبُ الْأَسْوَدُ وَالْمَرْأَةُ الْخَائِضُ

"Narrated to us Abu Bakr ibn Khallad al-Bahili, narrated to us Yahya ibn Sa'id, narrated to us Shu'bah, narrated to us Qatadah, narrated to us Jabir ibn Zaid, from Ibn Abbas, from the Prophet SAW. He said: "It is possible to decide on the prayer, namely the black dog and the menstruating woman" (Mājah, 2004).

From the side of the sanad, the path of narration of the hadith from the companions of Ibn 'Abbās also does not show any defect (*jarh*) according to the assessment of the hadith scholars. Therefore, like the previous hadiths, this hadith is also considered acceptable in sanad, because all the narrators are considered credible (Suparman & Kosasih, 2025). However, the validity of a good sanad does not automatically make a hadith acceptable without a record. In the study of hadith, not only is the sanad the object of study, but the matan, or content, of the

hadith itself also needs to be critically analyzed. This means that even though a hadith is considered valid in terms of sanad, it is not necessarily free from problems.

One of the important examples in this regard is the narration in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and several books in the *al-Kutub al-Tis'ah* another, which contains a story about Aisha—the wife of the Prophet Muhammad SAW—who criticizes the content of the hadith about women, donkeys, and dogs that are said to be able to cancel prayers. Aisha firmly expressed her objection, saying, "Do you equate us with donkeys and dogs? By Allah, I once saw the Prophet SAW praying while I was lying on the bed, my position was between him and the Qibla" (Rofiq, 2015). Aisha's complete statement is a crucial record in studying the hadith from the perspective of matan. Aisyah's lawsuit in full is as follows:

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ خَلِيلٍ حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُسْهِرٍ عَنِ الْأَعْمَشِ عَنِ مُسْلِمٍ يَعْنِي ابْنَ صُبْحٍ عَنِ مَسْرُوفَ عَنْ عَائِشَةَ  
أَنَّهَا ذَكَرَتْ عِنْدَهَا مَا يَقْطَعُ الصَّلَاةَ فَقَالُوا يَقْطَعُهَا الْكَلْبُ وَالْحِمَارُ وَالْمَرْأَةُ قَالَتْ لَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُونَا كَذَابًا لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ  
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصَلِّي وَإِنِّي لَبَيْنَةٌ وَبَيْنَ الْقِبْلَةِ وَأَنَا مُصْطَجِعَةٌ عَلَى السَّرِيرِ فَتَكُونُ لِي الْحَاحَةُ فَأَكْرَهُ أَنْ أَسْتَقْبِلَهُ  
فَأَنْسَلُ السِّلَالًا وَعَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ عَنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنِ الْأَسْوَدِ عَنِ عَائِشَةَ نَحْوَهُ

"Ismail ibn Khalil narrated to us, narrated to us Ali ibn Mushir, from al-A'mash, from Muslim, i.e., Ibn Subaih, from Masruq, from 'Aisha: Indeed it was said (a question) near 'Aisha about what can decide prayer? The Companions (the audience) replied that dogs, donkeys, and women can decide to pray. Then Aisha said: "You have indeed made us (women) like dogs. Suddenly, I saw the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) praying, and I was lying on the bed between the Prophet and the Qibla (in the presence of the Prophet). Then there was a need for me, and I did not want to deal with him, so I backed away slowly." (Al-Ḥajjāj, 1991).

Some of the criticisms raised by Aisha above suggest that from the outset, the hadith regarding women's ability to decide on this prayer is indeed problematic, particularly in terms of its content or matan. Therefore, it is not surprising that differences in interpretation and conclusions emerge among scholars later. Some of them took the hadith of Abu Hurairah, and others took the opinion of Aisha.

### Research on Matan Hadith Women Who Cancel Prayer

This study of Matan hadith refers to the approach of *the Methodology of Criticism of Matan Hadith* compiled by al-Adlabi in his work entitled *Manhaj Naqd al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulamā' al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī*.

## 1. Matan Hadith Is Not Contrary to the Verses of the Qur'an

The hadith that states that women can cancel prayers when they pass in front of people who are praying has no explicit basis in the Qur'an. There is not a single verse in the Qur'an that states that the presence or crossing of a woman, let alone one associated with menstrual status, can cancel a person's worship.

On the contrary, the Qur'an shows the noble position of women as mukallaf beings (who are burdened with the shari'a), equal in the obligation of worship, as in Q.S. al-Ahzab [33] verse 35:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْحَائِضَاتِ وَالْحَائِضَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

*Meaning: Indeed, Muslims and Muslims, believers and believers, obedient men and women, righteous men and women, patient men and women, solemn men and women, men and women who give alms, men and women who fast, men and women who keep their genitals, men and women who call on Allah many (names), for whom Allah has prepared forgiveness and great rewards. (RI, 2019).*

This verse explicitly affirms equality in religion and spiritual closeness to God between men and women. If only because a woman passes by in front of the prayer can cancel it, then this gives the impression that women are the cause of defects in worship, which is contrary to the spirit of equality and glory instilled in the Qur'an. Furthermore, the Qur'an does not categorize menstruation as a cause of "moral impurity" or as a source of cancellation of other people's worship, but only mentions that menstruating women are not required to pray and if menstruating women are considered capable of canceling other people's prayers just by passing through, then this will cause negative and unfair perceptions, because there is no Qur'anic evidence that shows that women's biological conditions can interfere with quality spiritual worship of others (Umam et al., 2024). Furthermore, the basic principle of the Shari'ah is not to burden a person due to external causes beyond his control, as stated in Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]:286:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۗ

*Meaning: Allah does not burden a person, except according to his ability. (RI, 2019).*

Therefore, making women's trajectory as a canceller of other people's prayers means making women an unjust disruptive factor, which is contrary to the principles of justice and the benefit of Islamic law itself.

## 2. **Matan Hadith Is Not Contrary to Sahîh Hadith and Sahîh Nabawiyah Sirah**

In the narration of Şahîh al-Bukhārî narrated by 'Āisyah r.a., it is narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) performed the prayer while Aisha was lying between him and the qibla, and he continued his prayer without interruption or repetition. Aisyah even said that when she needed to get out of bed, she would slip slowly so as not to disturb the Prophet (SAW), who was praying (Al-Bukhārî, 2000). This demonstrates that the existence and movement of women do not automatically invalidate prayer, as mentioned in the hadith that is the subject of this criticism.

This narration is not only valid in terms of sanad, but also strong in terms of context and coherence with the behavior of the Prophet (SAW), who is known for being very careful in matters of worship. If indeed the existence of a woman in front of a person who prays is considered a canceling thing, the Prophet SAW will certainly prohibit Aisha or at least choose a different place to pray. However, in reality, this is not the case. Furthermore, in various other sahih hadiths, women are also found participating in congregational prayers in mosques with the Prophet SAW (Muhammad Habib Zainul Huda, 2022). In this situation, it is very possible that they walked across the male safe, both when coming and leaving. However, no record shows that the Prophet told men to repeat the prayer because of it, or that women were considered to have canceled the congregational prayer.

Similarly, in the Sirah Nabawiyah, there is no mention of the Prophet's actions that indicate the prayers of his companions are invalid or must be repeated simply because they are interrupted by women. In fact, in daily social life in Medina, interaction between men and women continues to occur within reasonable limits, including in worship activities such as congregational prayers and mosque attendance. Even in another hadith, the Prophet forbade his people to prevent women from going to the mosque, which indirectly shows that women are not considered a source of disturbance of worship, including in prayer. He said:

"Do not forbid the female servants of Allah to go to the mosques of Allah." (HR. Muslim) (Al-Ḥajjāj, 1991).

Thus, the hadith about women canceling the prayer is contrary to other authentic narrations, both from the Prophet and from his wife, and is not in harmony with the practices

shown by the Prophet in daily life. This is a strong basis for questioning the validity of the hadith in terms of content (matan), even though the sanad is valid.

### **3. Matan Hadith Does Not Contradict Reason, Senses, and History.**

If viewed rationally and based on the nature of humanity, equating women with dogs and donkeys as something that can decide the validity of prayer is unacceptable to common sense. Women are human beings who are intelligent, dignified, and have a high spiritual position in Islam. Putting them in the same position as animals, especially in the context of canceling worship as great as prayer, has implications for the reduction of women's dignity and has the potential to cause unfounded theological stigma (Yunita, 2016).

In the historical context, throughout the Prophet's life, there has never been a prohibition or denial of women's presence in areas of worship, both in mosques and in scientific assemblies. Even the Prophet himself ordered that women should not be prevented from going to the mosque, as stated in many authentic narrations. This suggests that the presence of women in the worship space is acknowledged and valued, rather than being seen as a factor that undermines religious rituals (Syafi, 2011). Furthermore, empirically (sensory), the presence of women in the worship space has become a social reality since the prophetic period until now. Muslims in various parts of the world carry out congregational prayers in mosques that women also attend, and there are no sharia provisions or the collective consciousness of Muslims that view the existence of women as a barrier to the validity of prayer. These facts show that the religious experience of Muslims in general does not correspond to the literal implications of the matan hadith.

Thus, in terms of intellect, real experience, and historical evidence, the matan hadith that states women cancel prayers if they pass in front of people who are praying is contrary to the principles of rationality, justice, and social development among Muslims throughout history. This is a crucial reason to review the meaning of the hadith in its contextual and critical context.

### **4. Matan Hadith Does Not Show Haphazard Expressions, Does Not Show Low Meaning**

One of the main characteristics of the words of the Prophet (SAW) is the glory of language, the nobility of meaning, and the caution in conveying the message, especially when it relates to human dignity. Therefore, when there is a hadith editorial that juxtaposes women with donkeys and dogs as creatures that are said to be able to cancel prayers, then it needs to be seriously examined. Expressions like this contain a derogatory impression of women because editorially they are placed in the same row as two animals that are generally

not sacred in Arabic culture or Islamic teachings. Of course, this kind of thing does not reflect the Prophet's speaking style, who, during her life, was known to be full of affection, respect for humanity, and to uphold the honor of women. In fact, on many occasions, the Prophet gave a special place to women, both in the spiritual, social, and intellectual realms (Hamisan@khair, 2022).

Moreover, the use of diction in the hadith does not seem to reflect the nobility of the prophetic mission, which aims to perfect morals and spread grace to all nature. If the matan hadith is understood literally, then it seems to be contrary to prophetic ethics, which are full of gentleness and justice. Meanwhile, the stylistic point of view (language style) and the values of prophetic manners make this hadith seem disproportionate, which can even lead to wrong interpretations and have the potential to spread a negative image of Islamic teachings, especially regarding the position of women. Therefore, it is necessary to take a contextual and critical approach in understanding the intention of the hadith editorial so as not to violate the spirit of mercy and justice in Islamic treatises (Anggraeni, 2024).

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that although the hadith about women, donkeys, and dogs canceling prayers is considered valid from the point of view of sanad, it contains several substantial problems. If tested using the framework of matan criticism from Shalahuddin ibn Ahmad al-Adlabi—which includes conformity with the Qur'an, authentic hadith, common sense, and proper redaction—then the matan hadith indicates that it does not meet the four criteria in its entirety. The absence of explicit support from the Qur'an, contrary to the saheeh narration of Aisha, as well as the inconsistency with the common sense and speaking style of the Prophet, are strong reasons to re-examine the textual meaning of this hadith. Thus, critical analysis needs to be positioned as an important method in comprehensively understanding hadiths, especially in the context of hadiths that have the potential to cause stigma or bias against certain groups, such as women. This study emphasizes that the validity of hadith is not only determined by the strength of the sanad, but must also be considered deeply from the perspective of matan, so that the values of Islamic teachings are maintained within the framework of justice, humanity, and wisdom.

As a recommendation, considering the above issues, it is highly recommended that the study of hadith not only rely on the validity of the sanad, but also pay great attention to the

contextual and methodological analysis of the matn. A comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach is necessary for understanding hadith, particularly about sensitive issues such as gender, to avoid misunderstandings or discrimination against specific groups. Academics, educators, and hadith researchers are expected to continue developing critical criticism by paying attention to the principles of the Qur'an, maqāsid al-sharī'ah, and the universal values of Islam that uphold human justice and dignity.

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