

ATTITUDES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MUSLIM INTELLECTUALS IN QS. AZ-ZUMAR VERSE 18 AND QS. FUSSILLATE VERSE 53

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ABSTRACT:

This study examines the attitudes and intellectual responsibilities of Muslims as presented in Qur'an Surah Az-Zumar verse 18 and Surah Fussilat verse 53. The research aims to analyze the Qur'anic concepts of critical thinking, openness to knowledge, and intellectual responsibility in the pursuit of truth. Using a qualitative approach with library research methods, the study employs thematic (maw ḍ ū'ī) and descriptive-analytical approaches to interpret relevant Qur'anic verses supported by classical and contemporary tafsir literature. The findings indicate that Surah Az-Zumar verse 18 emphasizes the importance of listening carefully to various viewpoints and following the best guidance based on wisdom and sound judgment. Meanwhile, Surah Fussilat verse 53 highlights the necessity of observing the signs of Allah in both the universe and within oneself as a means of strengthening faith through rational reflection and empirical observation. Together, these verses depict the ideal Muslim intellectual as an individual who integrates revelation, reason, and scientific inquiry while maintaining ethical responsibility in seeking, evaluating, and disseminating knowledge. This study concludes that the Qur'an encourages a balanced intellectual attitude characterized by critical reasoning, openness to evidence, moral integrity, and accountability before Allah, making these values highly relevant to contemporary Islamic education and the development of Muslim scholarship.

Keywords: *Muslim intellectual responsibility; Qur'anic studies; Surah Az-Zumar 18; Surah Fussilat 53; critical thinking; Islamic education.*

INTRODUCTION

Islam is a religion that highly values knowledge. Since the first revelation revealed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through QS. Al-'Alaq verses 1-5, Allah SWT has emphasized that reading, thinking, and seeking knowledge are important parts of a Muslim's life. Therefore, from the perspective of Islamic education, intellectuality is not only understood as academic ability, but also as a means to know Allah SWT and develop the welfare of human life.

In today's modern era, the development of science and technology is taking place very rapidly. Easy access to information presents both opportunities and



challenges for Muslims. On the one hand, information can be a means of developing knowledge, but on the other hand, it can lead to the spread of hoaxes, disinformation, and distorted understanding if not handled critically and responsibly.

The Qur'an provides guidelines on how a Muslim should behave towards knowledge and information. One of the verses that explains the intellectual character of Muslims is in QS. Az-Zumar verse 18 describes people who listen to various opinions and then follow the best of them. This verse shows the importance of a critical, selective and objective attitude in receiving information.

Furthermore, Surah Fussilat, verse 53, explains that Allah SWT will demonstrate signs of His power both in the universe and in humans, thereby making the truth of the Quran even more apparent. This verse provides a foundation for the development of science and emphasizes humanity's intellectual responsibility in scientifically studying natural phenomena.

From these two verses, it can be understood that Islam not only encourages its followers to be intellectually intelligent, but also to be responsible in using knowledge for the benefit of the community. Therefore, the study of the attitudes and responsibilities of Muslim intellectuals from the perspective of Tafsir Tarbawi is very relevant to discuss.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interpretation of QS. Az-Zumar Verse 18

QS. Az-Zumar verse 18 is a verse that provides an overview of the ideal character of a Muslim in acquiring and managing knowledge. This verse emphasizes the importance of the ability to listen, understand, analyze, and choose the best opinion based on considerations of truth and benefit. From the perspective of Islamic education, this verse is an important foundation for developing a critical, objective and responsible intellectual attitude.

As Allah SWT says in QS Az- Zumar: 18

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ God willing



It means: "Those who listen to the word and follow the best of it. Those are the ones whom Allah has guided and those are the ones endowed with understanding." (QS. Az-Zumar: 18).

According to Ibn Kathir, this verse explains that those who receive guidance from Allah are those who are willing to listen to various opinions, views, and advice, then select those opinions by choosing the most correct, most in accordance with sharia, and most beneficial for life , (Ismail, 1998) . Such an attitude shows intellectual maturity and the ability to think that is not based on fanaticism or personal interests, but is oriented towards the search for truth.

Meanwhile, M. Quraish Shihab in his Tafsir Al-Misbah explains that this verse contains a message about the importance of open-mindedness *in* the life of a Muslim (M. Quraish Shihab, 2007) . This openness does not mean accepting all information without consideration, but rather a willingness to listen to various views objectively and then carry out a selection process based on the values of truth, logic, and the guidance of revelation. Thus, a Muslim is required to be able to be critical without losing politeness and respect for differences of opinion.

From the perspective of Tafsir Tarbawi, this verse demonstrates that the Islamic educational process is not solely oriented toward the transfer of *knowledge* , but also toward developing reflective, analytical, and evaluative thinking skills. Islamic education aims to produce individuals capable of wisely filtering various information and utilizing knowledge as a means to draw closer to Allah SWT.

This verse also introduces the concept of *Ulul Albab*, namely a group of people who have intellectual intelligence as well as spiritual maturity. They are not only able to understand various information, but also have the ability to assess, take wisdom, and apply the truth in everyday life. Therefore, the title of *Ulul Albab* is one of the ideal profiles that we want to achieve through Islamic education.

Educational Values contained in QS. Az-Zumar :18 .

1. Critical Attitude

Islam teaches its followers to have a critical attitude in receiving, understanding, and evaluating every piece of information they receive. A critical attitude does not mean being overly skeptical, but rather the ability to verify and



assess based on science and reliable sources . In this context, a Muslim is not permitted to accept information blindly without carrying out tabayyun (clarification) and in-depth analysis. This is in accordance with the word of Allah SWT. in QS. An-Nahl verse 43:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رَجَالًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ تَعْلَمُونَ

Meaning : "We did not send before you (Prophet Muhammad), but men to whom We gave revelations. So ask people who have knowledge if you do not know." (QS. An-Nahl: 43).

This verse contains an epistemological principle in Islam, namely the importance of referring to experts when facing problems that are not yet understood. Thus, a critical attitude becomes part of a Muslim's intellectual responsibility to avoid errors in thinking, the spread of erroneous information, and decision-making that is not based on knowledge.

2. Ability to Think Objectively

The ability to think objectively is one of the important characteristics that a Muslim intellectual must have. Objectivity requires someone to assess a problem based on facts, data , and rational arguments, not based on prejudice, emotions, personal interests, or social environmental pressure.

In an Islamic perspective, objectivity is a form of intellectual justice (*al-'adl al-fikri*), namely the ability to place something in accordance with reality. A Muslim is required to prioritize the truth, even if it conflicts with their own or their group's interests. The ability to think objectively will produce a wise, proportionate, and responsible attitude in addressing life's various issues. Therefore, developing objective thinking skills is a crucial part of developing a Muslim intellectual character with integrity and a focus on the pursuit of truth.

3. Openness to Knowledge

One of the educational values contained in Islamic teachings is openness to knowledge. Islam encourages its followers to continue to learn, study and gain

wisdom from various sources of knowledge as long as they do not conflict with the principles of sharia. Openness to knowledge shows an attitude of intellectual humility, namely the awareness that humans have limited knowledge and always need continuous learning.

In the context of academic life, openness to knowledge is also reflected in the willingness to accept differences of opinion based on strong scientific arguments. Differences of opinion are not seen as a threat, but rather as a means to broaden one's perspective and deepen one's understanding of a particular issue. Therefore, Islam values dialogue, discussion, and scientific study as part of the process of seeking truth. An open attitude to knowledge will produce a generation of Muslims who are adaptive, progressive, and capable of making positive contributions to the development of civilization.

4. *Ulul Albab* Character

The concept of *Ulul Albab* is one of the ideal characters often mentioned in the Qur'an to describe humans who have intellectual and spiritual depth. Etymologically, *Ulul Albab* means people who have clear minds and are able to use their thinking abilities optimally to understand the signs of Allah SWT's greatness, both those contained in revelations and natural phenomena.

The character of *Ulul Albab* is not only marked by intellectual intelligence, but also by the depth of faith, sharpness of analysis, and the ability to take wisdom from every event. They always integrate the activities of thinking (*fikr*) and dhikr (*dzikr*) in their lives. Thus, the knowledge possessed not only produces knowledge, but also gives birth to wisdom and moral responsibility.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the character of *Ulul Albab* is an important goal of Muslim intellectual development, namely to produce individuals who are able to think critically, objectively, and creatively, as well as having a spiritual commitment and noble morals. This character is expected to be able to answer the various challenges of the times without losing the Islamic values that are the foundation of their lives.

Interpretation of QS. Fussilat Verse 53



Surah Fussilat, verse 53, is one of the verses that provides an epistemological foundation for the development of knowledge in Islam. This verse explains that Allah SWT will reveal signs of His greatness both through natural phenomena and through humans, thereby making the truth of revelation increasingly apparent and comprehensible to the human mind.

Allah SWT said:

God willing may Allah bless him and give him peace of mind

It means: "We will show them Our signs in the earth and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that this is the truth." (QS. Fussilat: 53).

According to Tafsir Al-Tabari, this verse shows that Allah will shows various proofs of the truth of Islam through phenomena occurring in the universe and in human life (Abu Jafar, 2001) . This evidence serves as a means for humans to recognize the truth of the message brought by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The universe is seen as a verse of wisdom that can be studied and studied so that humans can understand the greatness of Allah more deeply.

Meanwhile, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili in *Tafsir Al-Munir* explains that this verse provides a strong encouragement for Muslims to develop knowledge and conduct scientific research , (Wahbah, 2009) . Various discoveries in the fields of astronomy, biology, medicine, psychology and other sciences are essentially part of the process of revealing the signs of God's power that exist in the universe and in humans.

From the perspective of Tafsir Tarbawi, this verse contains a very important educational message, namely that the search for knowledge is part of the effort to know Allah and strengthen faith. Therefore, the activity of thinking, researching, observing, and studying life phenomena is not only an intellectual activity, but also has the value of worship if it is done with the right intention and aims to obtain benefits.

Educational Values in QS. Fussilat Verse 53.

The Encouragement to Conduct Research and Observation.

This verse provides motivation for Muslims to observe natural phenomena and human life. Islam encourages the development of a tradition of scientific



thinking based on systematic observation, research and study. This scientific attitude is one form of implementation of Allah's command to pay attention to the signs of His power that are spread throughout the universe.

Development of Science and Technology

The study of the universe is one of the foundations for the development of science and technology in Islamic civilization. Various scientific disciplines were born from human efforts to understand the natural laws that God created. Therefore, the development of science and technology must not be separated from spiritual and moral values so that the progress achieved can provide benefits for human life.

Integration of Science and Faith

Surah Fussilat, verse 53, shows that there is no fundamental conflict between knowledge and faith. The more deeply one understands natural phenomena and life, the greater their opportunity to realize the greatness of Allah SWT. Thus, knowledge serves as a means to strengthen faith, while faith serves as a guide in the use of knowledge.

Responsibility in the Use of Science

Knowledge is a trust that must be used responsibly. Islam teaches that knowledge should not be used to cause damage, oppression, or harm to humans. On the contrary, knowledge must be directed towards realizing the common good, improving the quality of life, and supporting the creation of justice and social welfare.

Hadith on Intellectual Responsibility.

In addition to the Quran, the importance of intellectual responsibility is also emphasized in the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Islam places knowledge as a key element in shaping a Muslim's personality and makes it an obligation to be pursued throughout life. As the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said

God bless you



It means: "Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim." (HR. Ibn Majah No. 224).

This hadith shows that seeking knowledge is an individual obligation (*fardhu 'ain*) that must be carried out by every Muslim according to their needs and capacities. This obligation demonstrates the importance of knowledge in developing one's personal, social, and spiritual qualities. The Prophet Muhammad peace be upon) (himalso said:

مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ

It means: "Whoever follows a path in search of knowledge, Allah will make easy for him the path to Paradise." (HR. Muslim No. 2699).

This hadith provides strong motivation for Muslims to continue learning and developing their intellectual abilities. Seeking knowledge not only produces worldly benefits in the form of increased competence and insight, but also has spiritual value that can lead someone to Allah's pleasure and happiness in the hereafter.

Thus, intellectual responsibility in Islam does not only include the obligation to acquire knowledge, but also to practice, develop and disseminate that knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

Muslim Intellectual Attitudes According to the Tarbawi Tafsir Perspective.

Based on the content of QS. Az-Zumar verse 18 and QS. Fussilat verse 53, there are several Muslim intellectual characters that need to be developed in the Islamic education process.

Critical thinking.

A Muslim is required to possess critical thinking skills when receiving and processing information. This attitude is demonstrated through the ability to analyze, evaluate, and verify information before accepting it as truth or sharing it with others. Critical thinking serves as a bulwark against the spread of hoaxes, prejudice, and poor decision-making.

Truth-Oriented.

The primary goal of intellectual activity in Islam is to seek and establish the truth. Therefore, the Qur'an and Sunnah must serve as the primary sources of values

and guidelines in the thinking process, ensuring that the knowledge acquired remains within the bounds of Islamic teachings.

Have Scientific Integrity.

Scientific integrity is an attitude of upholding honesty, objectivity, and academic responsibility. A Muslim intellectual must avoid plagiarism, data manipulation, falsification of information, and various forms of scientific deviation that can damage the credibility of science.

Socially Responsible.

Science should not stop at personal interests alone, but must provide benefits to society. A knowledgeable Muslim has a moral responsibility to use his knowledge to help solve various social problems, improve the welfare of the community, and create common good.

Able to Integrate Faith and Science.

Islam teaches that knowledge and faith are two complementary aspects. Scientific research can be a means to understand the signs of God's greatness, while faith provides direction and purpose for the development of knowledge. The integration of the two will produce a generation of Muslims who are both intellectually intelligent and spiritually mature.

Relevance for Islamic Guidance and Counseling Students

The educational values contained in QS. Az-Zumar verse 18 and QS. Fussilat verse 53 has great relevance for Islamic Guidance and Counseling (BKI) students. As prospective Islamic counselors, students are not only required to have good academic abilities, but must also have intellectual and moral responsibility in carrying out their profession.

First, an Islamic counselor must be able to listen and understand various client problems objectively without being influenced by prejudice or subjective judgment. Second, counselors are required to have critical thinking skills in analyzing the root of the problem and determining appropriate assistance strategies. Third, the counseling process must combine a scientific approach with Islamic

values so that the solutions provided are not only psychologically effective but also have spiritual value.

In addition, a counselor is obliged to maintain professional ethics, client confidentiality, and be responsible for every recommendation given. The ability to integrate knowledge, professional skills, and Islamic values is one of the main competencies in forming Islamic counselors who are professional, have integrity, have scientific insight, and are able to make a positive contribution to society.

CONCLUSION

QS. Az-Zumar verse 18 teaches that a Muslim must have a critical, open, and selective attitude in receiving information. This character is a characteristic of Ulul Albab who received guidance from Allah SWT. QS. Fussilat verse 53 emphasizes that Allah shows signs of His greatness through the universe and human beings. This verse is the basis for the development of science and at the same time emphasizes the intellectual responsibility of Muslims in studying and utilizing knowledge correctly.

These two verses show that Islam highly values knowledge and demands that its followers use their reason responsibly for the benefit of humanity and to increase faith in Allah SWT.

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