

Sayyidah 'A'ishah's Critique of the Hadīth of Ibn 'Abbas on Rukyatullah in al-Zarkashi's *al-Ijabah*

Kritik Sayyidah 'A'isyah terhadap Hadīth Ibnu 'Abbas tentang Rukyatullah dalam Kitab al-Ijabah karya al-Zarkashi

ABSTRACT

This study critically analyzes a hadīth narration by Ibn 'Abbas regarding *rukyatullah* (seeing Allah in the afterlife) that was rejected by Sayyidah 'A'ishah, as quoted in the book *al-Ijābah li Īrād Mā Istadrakathu 'A'ishah 'ala ash-Shahābah* by al-Zarkasyī. This book compiles various criticisms by 'Ā'isyah against the hadīths of the Companions, covering aspects of creed, etiquette, and law. This study uses a qualitative approach based on literature review with the method of hadīth criticism from the aspects of *sanad* and *matan*. The study begins with the process of *takhrij* on the hadīth of Ibn 'Abbās, followed by the hadīth of 'Ā'isyah who rejected it, then a comparative analysis and exploration of the *al-jam'u* (reconciliation of evidence) method to reconcile the contradictions in the content of the hadīth. The results of the study indicate that both hadīths have authentic chains of transmission, so that reconciliation approaches such as *takhshīṣ* and contextual division are prioritized over *tarjih* or *naskh*. This research also highlights Sayyidah 'Ā'isyah's intellectual contribution to hadīth criticism discourse and the importance of reconciliation methodology in addressing differences in narrations within classical Islamic creed discourse.

Keywords: Criticism of Hadīth, Rukyatullah, Sayyidah 'A'isyah, Ibn 'Abbās, al-Ijabah, al-Zarkasyi

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menganalisis secara kritis satu riwayat hadis daripada Ibn 'Abbas berkenaan rukyatullah (melihat Allah pada hari akhirat) yang ditolak oleh Sayyidah 'Aisyah, sebagaimana yang dinukilkan dalam kitab al-Ijābah li Īrād Mā Istadrakathu 'A'ishah 'ala al-Shahābah karya al-Zarkasyi. Kitab ini menghimpunkan pelbagai kritikan Sayyidah 'Aisyah terhadap hadis-hadis para sahabat, meliputi aspek akidah, adab, dan hukum. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berasaskan kajian kepustakaan dengan menerapkan metode kritikan hadis dari aspek sanad dan matan. Kajian dimulakan dengan proses takhrij terhadap hadis Ibn 'Abbas, diikuti dengan takhrij hadis Sayyidah 'Aisyah yang menolak riwayat tersebut. Seterusnya dilakukan analisis perbandingan serta penerokaan kaedah al-jam'u (penghimpunan dalil) bagi mengharmonikan percanggahan kandungan antara kedua-dua hadis tersebut. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua hadis memiliki sanad yang sahih, justeru pendekatan kompromi seperti takhshis dan pembahagian konteks lebih diutamakan berbanding dengan tarjih atau naskh. Kajian ini turut menonjolkan sumbangan intelektual Sayyidah 'Aisyah dalam wacana kritikan hadis serta kepentingan metodologi al-jam'u dalam menangani perbezaan riwayat dalam wacana akidah Islam klasik.

Kata kunci: Kritikan hadis; rukyatullah; Sayyidah 'Aisyah; Ibn 'Abbas, al-Ijābah; al-Zarkasyi

INTRODUCTION

Hadīth has an important position as one of the sources of Islamic law (Mazid, n.d., p. 29). However, Hadīth can only be used as a reference if its authenticity is proven to have come from the Prophet ﷺ. Since that time, the scholars, starting from the Companions, then the Tabi'in, and the next generation, have always tried to maintain the purity of the Hadīth by saving, sorting, and treating it from all forms of distortion that could shake its authenticity as a source of Islamic law (Abu Shuhbah, 1403 H, p. 58). The critical attitude towards the Hadīth, which aims to maintain its purity and distinguish between valid and weak Hadīth, as well as giving confidence to the narrators, is known as *naqd al-hadith* (Hadīth criticism) (al- 'Umari, n.d., p. 11). This phenomenon of Hadīth criticism is not something new; since the death of the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions have carefully tested the compatibility of each Hadīth with the Qur'anic text and clear principles of Shari'ah. If there was a contradiction between a Hadīth and more authentic evidence, the Hadīth was rejected and not relied upon.

This study will examine a little Hadīth criticism during the time of the Companions and Tabi'in. It will also focus its analysis on the debate over the Hadīth of *ruk'yatullah*, which shows the difference in views between Ibn Abbas and Sayyidah A'isyah, and illustrates the importance of a critical approach in understanding the scientific heritage of Hadīth. The author's main reference in taking the Hadīth of A'isyah and Ibn Abbas is the book *Al-Ijabah li 'Irād Mā Istadrakathu 'Ā'isyah 'ala Ash- Shahābah* by Az-Zarkasy.

Al-Ijabah contains a collection of hadīths from the Companions that were rejected by 'Ā'isyah. Aisha criticized eleven narrations of Abu Hurairah, eight narrations of 'Umar b. Khatab, ten narrations of Ibn 'Umar, eight narrations of Ibn 'Abbas, two narrations of 'Ali, one narration of 'Abdullah b. Amru b. 'Ash, one narration of Marwan, two narrations of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri and other companions criticized were Abu Musa al-'Ash'ari, Zaid b. Sabit, Zaid b. Arqam (al-Zarkasyi, n.d., pp. 201–202). The issues that A'isyah criticized also varied, there were issues of belief, manners and more related to fiqh (al-Suyuti, 1988, p. 83), Az-Zarkasy explained that he collected everything that was uniquely stated by Sayyidah A'isyah either in the form of differences of opinion that she conveyed, sunnahs that were clear to her, additional accurate knowledge, rebuttals to the opinions of her contemporaries, or fatwas or views that were considered stronger. Az-Zarkasy states that he has transcribed and organized all the information he obtained from A'isyah's choice and the narrations of her narrators in a neat and systematic way, so that this book is expected to become "a necklace of precious gems" and "a luminous horizon" for anyone who wants to understand the debate about Hadīth among the Companions. Titled "*Al-Ijabah*" in reference to A'isyah's explanation of the Companions' narration, the book not only provides a *matan* Hadīth critique, but also highlights the theological dimensions underlying the differences in interpretation among the Companions.

The author here reviews the takhrij of the hadīth of Ibn Abbas first rather than the hadīth of A'isyah, because this is the order in *Al-Ijabah*, which mentions the hadīth of the Companions that A'isyah rejected first, followed by the hadīth of A'isyah that rejected it. Another purpose is to analyze the contradiction between these two hadīths, whether they should be reconciled by looking at the strength of the *sanad* and *matan*, or if they have the same strength, then they should be reconciled on the part of the *matan* that appears contradictory.

In this study, it was found that both hadīths have valid *sanads*, so the most important approach in addressing the *matan* contradiction is to reconcile the two (*al-jam'u bayna al-dalilayn*). This step is preferred because it allows both hadīths to be applied without negating one of them. But if reconciliation is not possible, then *tarjih* or other steps are taken.

Reconciliation (*al-jam'u*) in such cases can be done in several ways. The most important way is by takhshish (specification), i.e. if one hadīth has a more general scope and the other is more specific, then the more specific hadīth takes precedence in the context, while the more general hadīth remains valid in other cases. However, if both have the same scope and cannot be specified, then a reconciliation is made by dividing the context based on circumstances, time, or place.

As explained by Dr. Muhammad Sulaiman Al-Asyqar, the reconciliation approach is preferred because other measures such as *tarjih* or *naskh* may lead to the overruling of one of the propositions,

which is basically to be avoided as long as there is still the possibility of practicing both (al-Ashqar, n.d., pp. 193–195). Therefore, in this case, the author tries to find a way to understand the two hadīths in a framework that does not negate each other, both by looking at the *takhshish* aspect and the possible differences in the circumstances behind each narration.

METHODOLOGY

This research is library research with a qualitative approach that uses the Hadīth criticism method, both in terms of *sanad* and *matan*. The main source of this research is Kitab Al-Ijābah, while secondary sources include other literature relevant to the theme of Hadīth criticism and the debate on *rukyatullah*. This study takes one hadīth of Ibn Abbas regarding *rukyatullah* that was rejected by 'Ā'isyah, as quoted in Kitab *Al- Ijābah li Īrād Mā Istadrakathu 'Ā'isyah 'ala Ash-Shahābah* by Az Zarkasy. The author presents and criticizes the hadīth of Ibn 'Abbas by first mentakhrij the hadīth through the books of *al-Jamawī*, *al-Sunnan*, *al-Masanid*, *al-Mushannafat*, *al-Mustakhrajat*, and *al-Mustadrakat* (Abu Sya'ar, 2010, p. 7). Next, the author presents the hadīth of Aisha criticizing the hadīth of Ibn Abbas, also by doing takhrij first, then explaining the reasons for the rejection, summarizing the two hadīths, and expressing the opinion of the kalam scholars regarding *rukyatullah*. Finally, the author analyzes and concludes the results of the study based on the author's own assumptions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Hadīth Criticism of the Companions

To understand the context and depth of the criticism carried out by Sayyidah 'A'isyah, it is important to first review the general critical attitude that characterized the Companions in receiving and narrating hadīth. The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ paid great attention to receiving the Prophetic Hadīths directly from the source without intermediaries, as far as possible. In Hadīth science terms, this is known as attention to the *sanad* and efforts to achieve a high *sanad* (*'uluw al-isnād*) (Bayanuni, n.d., p. 150). One form of this attention can be seen in the life of the Prophet ﷺ, where the Companions were very eager to attend his gatherings so as not to miss any of his words. In fact, some of the Companions, who were poor, chose to stay in the mosque so that they could always be close to the Prophet ﷺ and receive his Hadīth directly. and among them the most famous was Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه who was known for his closeness to the Prophet ﷺ. Meanwhile, other Companions who were busy with their work and trade also did not want to be left behind in attending the gatherings of the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, they arranged their schedules alternately so that they could still hear the Hadīths of the Prophet ﷺ directly and not miss important information from him (Ater, n.d., p. 51).

After the death of the Prophet ﷺ, attention to the Hadīth did not diminish in the era of the Khulafā' Rāshidīn, although their approach to preserving the Hadīth underwent some adjustments (Bayanuni, n.d., p. 152). The caliphs, particularly Abu Bakr and Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنهما showed caution in the transmission and recording of Hadīth. Abu Bakr collected a number of Hadīth but later burned them (al-Dhahabi, 1998, p. 10), while Umar bin Khattab planned to write a book on the Sunnah but eventually abandoned his intention after asking the opinion of other Companions (al-Baghdadi, n.d., p. 50). Umar feared that writing down the Hadīth would distract the people from the Qur'ān, as had happened with the ancients who focused more on their books than on the primary revelation. In addition to being strict about recording Hadīth, the caliphs were also very careful about accepting narrations. For example, Abu Bakr did not give his grandmother her share of the inheritance except after two companions testified that the Prophet ﷺ had indeed given her that share (Abdul Latif, n.d., p. 79).

From these events, it can be concluded that the Companions' caution in accepting the Hadīth was not because they rejected recording the Sunnah, but rather because they were concerned that the Hadīth would not replace the main position of the Qur'an. This is in accordance with the view of Ismail bin Ibrahim bin 'Aliyah narrated by al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, that they were reluctant to write down the Hadīth for fear that the people would focus more on books other than the Qur'an, as happened to the previous people (al-Baghdadi, n.d., p. 57). However, when it was discovered that

many other Companions continued to support the recording of the Hadīth and began to write them down, it can be understood that the strict attitude towards the Hadīth was initially more preventive than absolute rejection (Bayanuni, n.d., p. 153). This critical attitude towards the Hadīth also shows that the Companions were very careful in narrating the words of the Prophet ﷺ. They developed a method of Hadīth criticism that focused on the reliability of narrators, comparing the narration with the Qur'an, tracing the causes of the emergence of Hadīth, and confirming the validity of the narration by seeking additional information from experts (Ater, n.d., pp. 51–55). Thus, the role of the Companions in Hadīth criticism is not only as narrators, but also as the main filter in maintaining the authenticity of the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. This critical attitude and filtering methodology became the foundation for the Companions, including Sayyidah 'A'isyah, in examining the narrations they received, as will be demonstrated in the specific analysis of the hadīth of *rukyatullah*.

Hadīth of Ibn Abbas

As we know before, in the study of hadīth science, criticism of narration has been going on since the time of the Companions and Tabi'in, one of which is the hadīth of Ibn Abbas about *rukyatullah*. The author mentions the hadīth of Ibn 'Abbas about *rukyatullah* first, because in the book of *Al-Ijabah* mentioning the hadīth of the companions who were rejected is discussed first, then followed by mentioning the hadīth of 'Aisha who rejected it.

This hadīth of *rukyatullah* from Ibn 'Abbas is narrated by several muhaddis, including those narrated by At-Tirmidhi (al-Tirmidzi, n.d., p. 316), and Ibn Abi 'Ashim (Abi 'Asim, n.d., p. 190), through the route of Al-Hakam bin A'ban, from 'Ikrimah, from Ibn 'Abbas:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَمْرٍو بْنِ نَبْهَانَ بْنِ صَفْوَانَ التَّقْفِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ كَثِيرٍ الْعَنْبَرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سَلْمُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، عَنِ الْحَكَمِ بْنِ أَبَانَ، عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: «رَأَى مُحَمَّدٌ رَبَّهُ قُلْتُ: أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ يَقُولُ: {لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ} قَالَ: وَيُحَكِّ ذَاكَ إِذَا تَجَلَّى بِنُورِهِ الَّذِي هُوَ نُورُهُ، وَقَدْ رَأَى مُحَمَّدٌ رَبَّهُ مَرَّتَيْنِ

Meaning:

Narrated to us Muhammad bin Amr bin Nabhan bin Shafwan Ats-Tsaqafi, who said: Yahya bin Katsir Al-Anbari narrated to us, he said: Salam bin Ja'far, from Al-Hakam bin A'ban, from 'Ikrimah, from Ibn Abbas, has narrated to us:

"Muhammad ﷺ has seen his Rabb."

I (the narrator) said: Didn't Allah say: {Sight cannot reach Him, while He can see all sight} (Sūrat al-An'am: 103)?

He (Ibn Abbas) replied: Woe to you! That (not being able to see Allah) happens when He appears with His light, which is His own light. Indeed, Muhammad ﷺ has seen his Rabb twice.

From this hadīth we can conclude that Ibn Abbas was of the opinion that the Prophet ﷺ had actually seen Allah. This view contradicts the opinion of some other Companions, such as Sayyidah 'A'isyah r.a., who rejected the possibility of seeing Allah in the world, which will be detailed after reviewing the *sanad* of the hadīth of Ibn Abbas first.

Critique of the *sanad* of the hadīth of Ibn Abbas

It can be seen from the Hadīth, that the method of each narrator of the Hadīth in *tahammul* (bearing) the Hadīth he narrated between using the words "*hadatsana*" and "*an*". Starting from the narrator Tirmidhi, then to Muhammad bin Amr bin Nabhan bin Shafwan Ats-Tsaqafi, then to Yahya bin Katsir Al-Anbari, then to Salm bin Ja'far, all of them used the word "*hadatsana*" which is the highest level of *tahammul* (bearing) in narrating Hadīth, indicating that the narrator really heard directly from the previous narrator (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, 2011, p. 124). While after that, the narrator Hakam bin Aban who was a *tabi'in*, then Ikrimah who was a *tabi'in*, until ending with the Companion Ibn Abbas, all used the *tahammul* sighth "*an*" (*an'anah*) which indicates that the narrator received the hadīth from his teacher without explicitly explaining how it was received. This can include direct transmission (*sima'*) as well as through other forms such as a diploma or even without hearing directly (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, 2011, p. 170). In order for *an'anah* hadīth to be accepted as having a

continuous *sanad*, there must at least be evidence that the narrator and the teacher were contemporaries (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, 2011, p. 122).

Therefore, to prove that each narrator, especially those who narrated with the *shigat tahammul "an"* were in the same era and it was possible to meet, the author will explain a brief biography of the narrators of the Hadīth and the comments of other scholars on it:

1. Muhammad bin Amr bin Nabhan bin Shafwan Ats-Tsaqafi: he was one of the most prolific narrators of Hadīth, and he was of the middle class (narrators who were between the senior and junior classes) among the narrators who took knowledge from the *Tabi'ut Tabi'in*, but did not meet the *Tābi'in*. and was the teacher of *Tirmidhi* (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d., p. 378). Yahya bin Katsir Al-Anbari: He was one of the *Sighar Atba' At-Tabi'in*. Abu Hatim said: 'he is sound in hadīth (al-Mizzi, n.d., p. 500). ' Ibn Hajar said: 'he is *Tsiqah* (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d., p. 595),' as did Adh- Dzahabi (al-Dhahabi, n.d., p. 373).
2. Salam bin Ja'far: He is of the middle class among the *Atba' At-Tabi'in*. Ibn Hajar said: He is *Shaduq* (truthful) (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d., p. 245). In the book of *Ash-Shayrifini* it is mentioned that Nu'aym bin Hammad narrated from him and said: *He is a tsiqah (trustworthy)*. And *At-Tirmidhi* rated his Hadīth *as hasan*, as did *Ath-Thusi* (al-Mizzi, n.d., p. 124).
3. Al-Hakam bin A'ban, Abu 'Isa, he was among the contemporaries of the *Shigar Tabi'in*. Ibn Hajar said: *"Shaduq (truthful) and an 'abid (worshipper), but he has wahm (errors in narration)* (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d., p. 174). " *Adz-Dzahabi* said: *"Tsiqah (trustworthy) and ṣāhibu sunnah (i.e., someone in whom the attributes of Ahlus Sunnah are collected)."* (al-Dhahabi, n.d., p. 343).
4. 'Ikrimah Al-Qurashi Al-Hashimi, Abu 'Abdillah Al-Madani, maula (freed slave) of 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas-a native of the Berber tribe in the Maghrib. He belonged to the middle class of the *Tabi'in*. Sa'id b. Abi 'Arubah narrated from Qatadah, who said: *"Among the most knowledgeable of the Tabi'in were four men: 'Atha' ibn Abi Rabah was the most knowledgeable in the rituals of Hajj, Sa'id ibn Jubayr was the most knowledgeable in tafseer, 'Ikrimah was the most knowledgeable in the narration of the Prophet ﷺ, and Al-Hasan (Al-Bashri) was the most knowledgeable in halal and haram."* (al-Mizzi, n.d., p. 265) Ibn Hajar said: *"He is tsiqah (trustworthy), tsabat (firm in memorization), and a scholar of tafseer. There is no authentic report of him lying to Ibn 'Umar, nor is it proven that he had any innovations"* (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d., p. 397).
5. Ibn 'Abbas: 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas bin 'Abdil Muththalib bin Hashim bin 'Abd Manaf Al-Qurashi Al-Hashimi, Abu Al-'Abbas Al-Madani the cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He was a Companion who was known by the nicknames *Al-Hibr* (the scholar) and *Al-Bahr* (the sea of knowledge) because of his vast knowledge. The Prophet ﷺ once prayed for him to be granted wisdom twice (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d., p. 397).

Based on the biographies of the Hadīth narrators and the scholars' comments on them that the author mentioned earlier, it can be concluded that the *sanad* of this Hadīth consists of narrators who are generally considered *tsiqah* (trustworthy) or *shaduq* (honest) by Hadīth scholars. All the narrators in this *sanad* are within the same generation, which makes it possible for them to meet, although there are some who only use the *shigat tahammul 'an'ana* (عن).

From the point of view of the science of *jarh wa ta'dil*, none of the narrators in this *sanad* is considered *matruk* (abandoned) or accused of lying. There are narrators who have some weaknesses in narration, such as *al-Hakam bin A'ban* who is said to have *wahm* (error in narration), but this weakness does not make him *da'if* (weak) absolutely, moreover he is still considered *tsiqah* by *Adz-Dzahabi*. Therefore, it can be said that the *sanad* of this Hadīth has a good level of strength, with narrators who are considered *tsiqah* and *shaduq* by Hadīth critics.

In addition, the aspect of *tsabut al-mu'āsharah* (compatibility of the times between teacher and student) in this case after the author validates it, the author concludes that this *sanad* is acceptable because each narrator is in a generation that is possible to meet and narrate from his teacher. Thus, the hadīth narrated by Ibn Abbas has a strong basis for narration, and the author concludes that this hadīth is *sahih*, although it still requires further study of the validity of the *sanad* as a whole based on the rules of Hadīth science, one of which is At-Tirmidzi's own comment on the ruling of this hadīth, namely *hasan gharib* (al-Tirmidzi, n.d., p. 316). In fact, in the book *Al-Ijabah*, Az-Zarkasy who quoted the comments of his teacher, Sheikh Imaduddin Ibn Kathir about the *sanad* in this hadīth of Ibn Abbas said: "Muslim ibn Ja'far is not a well-known narrator, while Al-Hakam ibn A'ban was declared reliable by a group of scholars. However, Ibn al-Mubarak said about him: 'Discard his Hadīth!'" (al-Zarkasyi, n.d., p. 95).

The Shawahid of the Hadīth of Ibn 'Abbas

After examining the hadīth of Ibn 'Abbas quoted by Az-Zarkasy in *Al-Ijabah*, the author considers it to be general. This is because there are several other narrations from Ibn 'Abbas that specifically specify the meaning of vision referred to in the hadīth. Based on the existence of these more valid specific *sawahids*, it can be concluded that this hadīth of Ibn 'Abbas has strong support that makes it *sahih*, although it was previously rated *hasan gharib* by Tirmidhi. Among the specific *shawahid* to the hadīth is Muslim's narration in his *sahih* from the route of Abu 'Aliyah, from Ibn 'Abbas regarding the word of Allah surah An-Najm verses 11-12, he interpreted that the Prophet ﷺ saw his Lord with his heart twice (Muslim, 1955, p. 158).

{ما كذب الفؤاد ما رأى} [النجم 11]، {ولقد رأى نزلة أخرى} [النجم 13] قال: رأى بفؤاده مرتين

This hadīth about the meaning of verse 11 of surah An-Najm was also narrated by Tirmidhi on the authority of Simak, from Ikrimah, from Ibn Abbas (al-Tirmidzi, n.d., p. 316), An-Nasai in *Sunan Al-Kubra* on the authority of Ziyad, from Abul Aliyah, from Ibn Abbas (al-Nasa'i, n.d., p. 275).

In another narration narrated by Muslim, from 'Atha' from Ibn 'Abbas, he said: "He saw Him with his heart." (Muslim, n.d., p. 158).

رأه بقلبه

An even clearer narration is that issued by Ibn Mardawaih on the authority of 'Atha' also from Ibn Abbas, which states explicitly: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not see Allah with his eyes, but he saw Him with his heart."

Also, Al-Hakim in his *Mustadrakat*, mentioned several other narrations of Ibn Abbas to support the hadīth (*syawahid*) (al-Hakim, n.d., p. 509), including: from the path of Mu'adz bin Hisham, who said: My father narrated to me from Qatadah, from 'Ikrimah, from Ibn Abbas, who said:

(أتعجبون أن تكون الخلة لإبراهيم، والكلام لموسى، والرؤية لمحمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وصلوات الله عليهم أجمعين)

Meaning: "Do you wonder that Allah's beloved is Ibrahim, that Allah spoke directly to Moses, and that Muhammad ﷺ saw Him?"

Al-Hakim said: "This hadīth is *sahih* based on Bukhari's conditions, although Bukhari and Muslim did not narrate it" (al-Hakim al-Naisaburi, n.d., p. 509). This hadīth was also narrated by An-Nasa'i in *Sunan al-Kubra* (al-Nasa'i, n.d., p. 276) with the same narration.

Al-Hakim also narrated it through the route of Isma'il ibn Zakariya from 'Ashim, from Ash-Shay'bi, from 'Ikrimah, from Ibn 'Abbas, who said:

رأى محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم ربه

Meaning: "Muhammad ﷺ saw His Rabb". (al-Hakim, n.d., p. 134).

Also, through the route of Ibn Juraij, from 'Atha', from Ibn 'Abbas, who said:

رأه مرتين

Meaning: "He saw Him twice." (al Hakim, n.d., p. 134).

These two *shawahids*, narrated by al-Hakim in his *mustadrakat*, say that all the hadīths mentioned are *sahih* (al Hakim, n.d., p. 134).

In another hadīth narrated by Ibn Abbas, there seems to be a difference with the previous narration which states that the Prophet ﷺ saw Allah, without a detailed explanation of how the vision occurred. However, after further investigation, it was found that Ibn Abbas also narrated a hadīth in *Sahih Muslim*, which explicitly states that the Prophet ﷺ saw Allah with his heart (*rukyah bil-fu'ad*), not with his eyes (Muslim, n.d., pp. 158–177).

After the author presents the hadīth of Ibn Abbas, which has two sides, namely general and specific history, the author will present the refutation (criticism) of A'isyah quoted by Az-Zarkasyi in his work *Al-Ijabah*.

Criticism of the *Matan* of the Hadīth of Ibn Abbas by A'isyah

The difference of opinion among the Companions regarding the Hadīth of *rukyatullah* narrated by Ibn Abbas earlier, became an important debate in Hadīth studies. A'isyah bint Abu Bakr categorically rejected the hadīth narrated by Ibn Abbas, and stated that the Prophet ﷺ did not see Allah, but saw Jibril in his original form. A'isyah's view is narrated in many *sahih* hadīths and has become the main guide for scholars in understanding this issue.

The author will present here A'isyah's criticism of the Hadīth as quoted by Az-Zarkasyi in *Al-Ijabah* (al-Zarkasyi, n.d., pp. 94–99). A'isyah's criticism is supported by the opinions of several other Companions, so that it becomes strong evidence in rejecting Ibn Abbas' claim that the Prophet ﷺ saw Allah directly.

This hadīth was narrated by many muhaddis through various channels, with different wording, which was used as a criticism of A'isyah against Ibnu Abbas according to Az-Zarkasyi in *Al-Ijabah*, but the author here only mentions the hadīth of A'isyah narrated by Bukhari and Muslim, because its *sanad* and *matan* have been confirmed as valid:

1. Bukhari narrated on the authority of Al-Qasim, from A'isyah, who said that whoever claims that the Prophet saw his god has lied a great lie:

من زعم أن محمدا رأى ربه فقد أعظم ولكن قد رأى جبريل في صورته وخلق ساد ما بين الأفق

"Whoever claims that Muhammad ﷺ saw his Lord, then indeed he has lied a great lie. Rather, he saw Jibril in his true form with his form filling the firmament." (al-Bukhari, n.d., p. 115).

Also from the line of 'Āmir, from Masrūq, with a hadīth of the same meaning, but here A'isyah mentions a verse that corroborates her own opinion:

قلت لعائشة رضي الله عنها: يا أمته، هل رأى محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم ربه؟ فقالت: لقد قف شعري مما قلت، أين أنت من ثلاث، من حدثكم فقد كذب، من حدثك أن محمدا صلى الله عليه وسلم رأى ربه فقد كذب، ثم قرأت: { لا تدركه الأبصار وهو يدرك الأبصار وهو اللطيف الخبير }، { وما كان لبشر أن يكلمه الله إلا وحيا أو من وراء حجاب }

"I said to A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her): "O my mother, did Muhammad ﷺ see his Rabb?" She replied: "My hair stands up at your question! Where are you from these three things? Whoever tells you one of them has lied: Whoever tells you that Muhammad ﷺ saw his Lord has lied. Then he recited the words of Allah: "Vision cannot reach Him, but He reaches all vision. He is the Most Gentle, the Most Knowing." ("And it is not possible for a man that Allah speaks to him except by revelation or from behind a veil." (Sūrat Ash-Shūrā: 51)" (al-Bukhari, n.d., p. 140).

2. Muslim also narrates a hadīth from Masrūq, but through the route of Ash-Shābī, with the same meaning as the hadīth of A'isyah narrated by Bukhārī through the route of Masrūq (Muslim, n.d., p. 158). This hadīth confirms A'ishah's emphatic rejection of Ibn 'Abbās' hadīth. In the Hadīth that will be mentioned, A'isyah gives a very clear reason for rejecting the Hadīth of Ibn 'Abbās.

كنت متكنا عند عائشة ، فقالت: يا أبا عائشة، ثلاث من تكلم بواحدة منهن فقد أعظم على الله الفرية، قلت: ما هن؟ قالت: من زعم أن محمدا صلى الله عليه وسلم رأى ربه، فقد أعظم على الله الفرية، قال: وكنت متكنا فجلست، فقلت: يا أم المؤمنين، أنظريني ولا تعجليني، ألم يقل الله عز وجل: {ولقد رآه بالأفق المبين}، {ولقد رآه نزلة أخرى}، فقالت: أنا أول هذه الأمة سأل عن ذلك رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: إنما هو جبريل، لم أره على صورته التي خلق عليها غير هاتين المرتين، رأيتُه منهبطا من السماء سادا عظم خلقه ما بين السماء إلى الأرض، فقالت: أولم تسمع أن الله يقول: {لا تدركه الأبصار وهو يدرك الأبصار وهو اللطيف الخبير} أولم تسمع أن الله يقول: {وما كان لبشر أن يكلمه الله إلا وحيا أو من وراء حجاب أو يرسل رسولا فيوحي بإذنه ما يشاء إنه علي حكيم}؟

In this Hadīth, A'isyah asserts emphatically that anyone who claims the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw his Rabb has lied in the name of Allah. When Masrūq presented evidence from the Qur'ān, A'isyah explained that she was the first to ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about it, and he ﷺ confirmed that what he saw in its original form was Gabriel, not Allah. A'isyah then corroborated her rejection of the claim with Qur'anic verses stating that human vision cannot reach Allah and that Allah's communication with humans only occurs through revelation, from behind a veil, or through a messenger. This hadīth provides a very clear reason for A'isyah's rejection of Ibn 'Abbās' hadīth.

Az-Zarkasy mentions in his book *Al-Ijabah* that Ibn Khuzaymah doubted this hadīth narrated by A'isyah, also explaining that Ibn Khuzaymah argued that the Prophet ﷺ's answer to A'isyah was adjusted to her level of understanding, this opinion of Ibn Khuzaymah is a claim that concludes that A'isyah did not understand this issue in depth (ibn Khuzaymah, n.d., p. 561). However, this claim is weak because there are reports from other Companions (*Shawahid*), such as Abdullah bin Mas'ud and Abu Dhar, which show that the Prophet ﷺ did reject the possibility of seeing Allah directly, not only to 'Aisha, but also to other Companions.

The narration from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud explains the meaning of the verse "قوسين أو أدنى فكان" (QS. An-Najm: 9) he said the verse indicates that the Prophet ﷺ saw Jibril in his original form with six hundred wings, not Allah (al-Bukhari, n.d., p. 141). From this it can be understood that, what is associated with the Prophet's meeting is with Jibril, not with Allah. Ibn Hibban also explained the meaning of surah An-Najm by quoting the words of Abu Hatim, that verses 5-10 of surah An-Najm referred to is Jibril, not Allah SWT.

Similarly, in the narration of Abu Dzar, although there are differences in the narration of Abu Dzar, because here the Prophet ﷺ did not see Allah SWT but saw the light. This narration of Abu Dzar occurred when he asked the Prophet ﷺ about whether he saw Allah SWT, the Prophet ﷺ replied, "*I see light, how can I see Him?*" This confirms that light becomes a veil that prevents the vision of Allah directly (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, n.d., p. 420).

In this case, it should be noted that the narration stating that the Prophet ﷺ saw Allah came from Ibn Abbas, while the rejection came from Aisha and several other companions. In hadīth science, if there is a difference between companions, the *tarjih* method or the *plural* method is needed to reconcile the two seemingly contradictory hadīth. Ibn Abbas himself had both general and specific reports. Therefore, the general hadīth must be interpreted in accordance with the more specific one. In this context, Aisha's rejection of *rūkyah* is supported by several other companions, who asserted that human vision cannot reach Allah, as stated in QS. *Al-An'am* verse 103. Meanwhile, the narration of Ibn Abbas stating that the Prophet ﷺ saw Allah can be interpreted as a form of non-physical vision, namely through the heart. This is also supported by another narration of Ibn Abbas which states that the Prophet ﷺ saw Allah with his heart, not with his eyes.

Thus, the difference of opinion between Ibn Abbas and 'Aishah can be reconciled by understanding that 'Aishah rejected *rūkyah* with the eyes, while Ibn Abbas stipulated it in the form of *rūkyah qalbiyyah* (vision with the heart). The meaning of "seeing with the heart" here is not simply knowledge or understanding of Allah, because the Prophet ﷺ already knew Allah before this event. Rather, what is meant is that Allah created a special form of vision in the Prophet ﷺ's heart, just as He created vision in the human eye. This shows that the *rūkyah* does not depend on one particular mechanism of the mind, although in human custom, vision generally occurs through the eyes. This difference in understanding the mechanism of *rūkyah* is one of the roots of the differences in views among the scholars about *rūkyatullah*, which will be explained further.

Scholars' Opinions on the Possibility of Seeing Allah (*Rukyatullah*)

Hadīth - Hadīth A'isyah and Ibn Abbas earlier is a discussion of *rukyah* or seeing Allah which is one of the important topics in *kalam* science that has become a debate among scholars, however, the author in this sub chapter will only explain some of the opinions of scholars in general, without detailing it, which theological debate about *rukyatullah* has started since the period of the companions.

In language, *rukyah* (seeing) means looking with the eyes or with the heart (Ibn Manzur, n.d., p. 291). Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah are of the opinion that *rukyah* is a power that Allah has created in His creatures, which does not require the contact of light, does not require a face-to-face position between the seer and the seen, and is not bound by any other conditions. This is because *rukyah* is one of the forms of perception that Allah creates whenever and for whatever He pleases (al-Laqani, n.d., p. 202).

The issue of seeing Allah is a matter of dispute between Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah (both the Ash'ariyah and Maturidiyah) and other groups such as the Mu'tazilah, Karramiyah, Shi'ah, Ibadhiyah and Mujassimah (al-Furqan, n.d., p. 2). As for Ahlus Sunnah, they have agreed that seeing Allah is possible and that reason does not consider it impossible for servants to see their Lord (al-Aini, n.d., p. 133). The Ash'ariyah school is of the opinion that *rukyah* does not necessarily lead to *tashbīh*. They stipulate that God can be seen, but not in the way we see things in this world (al-Asy'ari, n.d., p. 35). The way of seeing that we know today is only one of many possible ways. Allah has the power to make *rukyah* without the need to follow the physical mechanisms of this world. Several scholars, interpreted the hadīth of *rukyatullah*, including, Imam Abu Hanifah explained that Allah can be seen in the afterlife without a certain comparison or size, and without distance between Allah and His creatures (Abu Hanifah, n.d., p. 53). Then, Imam at-Thahawi in his *akidah at-Thahawiyah* also states that seeing Allah for the inhabitants of heaven is without certain limitations or mechanisms (Ibn Abi al-Izz, n.d., p. 189). Also, Imam Nawawi emphasized that seeing Allah is possible for the believers, although this is opposed by the Mu'tazilah and Khawarij, he said (Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, n.d., p. 447). Imam al-Maturidi in the book *at-Tauhid* also explained that seeing God in the afterlife without physical mechanisms or other properties (al-Maturidi, n.d., p. 85).

Meanwhile, the group that rejects *rukyah* argues that seeing Allah requires the image of a visible object imprinted in the retina of the eye. Among them The Mu'tazilah group argues that God cannot be seen with the eyes, either in the world or in the hereafter (al-Asy'ari, n.d., p. 55). According to the Mu'tazilah, the belief that God can be seen implies that God has a physical nature (*jismiyyah*). This is because if Allah can be seen, then the laws that apply to physical objects will also apply to Him, while physical properties contradict the concept of monotheism (al-Maturidi, n.d., p. 137). Also, the Karramiyah and Mujassimah groups, they allow seeing Allah directly (*muwājahah*), because they believe that Allah is in a certain direction and place, This belief is contrary to the faith of the Muslims as a whole. It requires that the object to be seen must be in a certain direction in order for the eye to be directed towards it (al-Tahanawi, n.d., p. 338). In fact, it is well known that Allah is not a body and is not limited by any direction. Thus, they understand *rukyah* in the same way as the perception of creatures, which requires the existence of direction, facing position, and other factors that have consequences for *tashbīh* (likeness), whereas Allah is Exalted from all forms of likeness.

From this, the author concludes that there are differences in views on *rukyatullah*, not only from the method of interpreting the verses of the Qur'an and the theological approach of each group, but also from the hadīth of Aisha and Ibn Abbas. The Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah, Ash'ariyah and Maturidiyah groups base their views on several arguments, one of which is QS. *Al-Qiyāmah*: 22-23:

وَجُودٌ يُؤْمِنُ نَاصِرَةً. إِلَى رَبِّهَا نَاطِرَةً

In the interpretation of the Ash'ariyah, the word *nāzirah* (looking) in this verse is interpreted as seeing directly in a way that only Allah knows the nature of it (al-Asy'ari, n.d., pp. 36–38). They reject the Mu'tazilah interpretation which states that *nāzirah* means waiting (*nadhara al-intizār*), arguing that if the meaning of *nadhara* in this verse is waiting, then it should not use the conjunction *ilā*

(الى), because in Arabic, the word *nadhara* which means waiting is not followed by *ilā*. This is supported by the evidence from the linguistic rules in other verses, such as QS. *Ṣāffāt*: 49:

مَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً

In this verse, the meaning of *yanzhurūn* is waiting, and it does not use the conjunction *ilā*, which proves that the use of *ilā* in QS. *Al-Qiyāmah* is more accurately understood as seeing with the eyes (al-Shahrastani, n.d., p. 45). Also, the hadīth of Ibn 'Abbas is used as evidence by Ahl al-Sunnah to establish the possibility of *rukyah*, but they understand that this vision is not similar to human vision of physical objects. On the other hand, the hadīth of 'A'ishah is used as evidence by the Mu'tazilah to reject the concept of *rukyah* absolutely, because they understand that vision is only possible in physical form, which contradicts the nature of Allah, who is Most Pure from the likeness of creatures. Thus, this difference of opinion is rooted in differences in methods of understanding religious texts, both in terms of language, principles of creed, and approaches in accepting or rejecting certain hadīths as proof in Islamic theology.

In this study, the author found that the differences of opinion regarding *rukyatullah* do not only stem from differences in the methods of interpretation of Qur'anic verses and theological approaches of each group, but also from hadīths that appear to be contradictory. The narration stating that the Prophet ﷺ saw Allah comes from Ibn Abbas, while the rejection comes from Aisha and several other companions. In hadīth science, when there are differences among the companions, the method used is *tarjih* to choose the stronger evidence or *plural* to reconcile the seemingly contradictory hadīths. The author finds that in this case, the reconciliation method is preferred over *tarjih*. The narration of Ibn Abbas stating that the Prophet ﷺ Allah can be interpreted in the form of non-physical vision, namely *rukyah qalbiyyah* (vision with the heart). This understanding is in accordance with another narration from Ibn Abbas

And in this study, the author also found that the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah group, namely Asy'ariyah and Maturidiyah, based their beliefs on several arguments, one of which was QS. *Al-Qiyāmah*: 22-23. And the hadīth of Ibn Abbas. In their interpretation, the word *nāẓirah* is interpreted as seeing directly in a way that only Allah knows. They reject the Mu'tazilah interpretation that understands *nāẓirah* as waiting (*nadhara al-intizār*), arguing that in the rules of Arabic, if the meaning of *nadhara* in this verse is waiting, then it should not use the conjunction *ilā*, because in Arabic, the verb *nadhara* which means waiting is not followed by *ilā*. In addition to this verse, the author concludes that Ahlu Sunnah, namely the Ash'ariyah and Maturidiyah also use a hadīth from Ibn Abbas as their proof. This hadīth becomes the basis for them to establish the possibility of *rukyah*, but they understand that the vision is not similar to human vision of physical objects. They hold to the principle that God can be seen in the Hereafter, but this form of vision is beyond the limits of human experience in this world. Thus, they do not understand *rukyah* in the physical sense in which humans see objects in the world, but in a way that only Allah knows the nature of it. In contrast, the author concludes that the Mu'tazilah group used Aisha's hadīth as evidence to reject the concept of *rukyah* absolutely. They understand that seeing Allah requires His existence in a physical form, which contradicts the principle of monotheism according to them. Therefore, they interpreted all arguments that seemed to support *rukyah* metaphorically or allegorically.

From this research, the author concludes that a reconciliation approach in understanding these hadīths is preferable, because it allows both narrations to be practiced without negating one of them. By understanding that the hadīth of 'A'isha rejects *rukyah* in the form of physical sight, while the hadīth of Ibn Abbas stipulates it in the form of *rukyah qalbiyyah*, there is no contradiction between these two narrations. The meaning of "seeing with the heart" here is not simply knowing or understanding the existence of Allah, because the Prophet ﷺ already knew Allah before this event. Rather, what is meant is that Allah created a special form of vision in the heart of the Prophet ﷺ, just as Allah creates vision in the human eye. In other words, *rukyah* does not necessarily have to occur through a physical mechanism as humans know it, because Allah is all-powerful to create vision in a form that only He knows the nature of. Therefore, the author concludes that this difference in understanding the mechanism of *rukyah* is one of the main roots of the differences in views among

scholars about *rukyatullah*. This difference is not just a matter of the strength of the hadīth *sanad*, but also relates to the method of interpretation, theological approach, and understanding of the nature of Allah in various schools of Islamic belief.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the enduring importance of Hadīth criticism (*naqd al-ḥadīth*) as a scholarly discipline rooted in the earliest generations of Islam. By examining the debate between Ibn Abbas and Sayyidah A'isyah over the Hadīth of *rukyatullah*, it becomes evident that differences among the Companions were addressed through a principled methodology that prioritized both textual integrity and theological soundness. The work of Az-Zarkasy in *Al-Ijābah* serves as a key reference, meticulously documenting A'isyah's critical engagement with narrations from her contemporaries, not merely as a matter of disagreement, but as a constructive process aimed at safeguarding the authenticity and accuracy of the Prophet's ﷺ legacy. By analyzing both *sanad* and *matan*, this study found that the two narrations possess valid chains of transmission. Consequently, the preferred method of addressing their apparent contradiction is *al-jam'u bayna al-dalilayn* (reconciliation between the two evidences). This approach allows both narrations to be upheld without negating either, primarily through *takhṣīs* (specification) or contextual differentiation based on circumstances, time, or place. Such a method aligns with the principle articulated by scholars like Dr. Muhammad Sulaiman al-Asyqar, who emphasized reconciliation over *tarjīh* or *naskh* whenever possible. Ultimately, this case reflects the intellectual maturity of early Hadīth scholarship and underscores the enduring importance of critical yet balanced approaches in preserving the integrity of prophetic traditions.

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