



OPINION OF HADITH SCHOLARS ON THE UNDERSTANDING OF HADITH BY EXTREMISTS

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Abstract

More than 120 Muslim scholars around the world have rejected Al-Baghdadi's caliphate and condemned atrocities committed by ISIS through one open letter distributed at the end of September 2014. The scholars decided that the concept of the Islamic caliphate is not valid. The article seeks to uncover and deal with hadith concerns misinterpreted by ISIS and addressed by hadith scholars' views. This article uses library research techniques to gather a variety of ideas, facts, research findings, and expert opinions along with pertinent analysis. Among the causes of confusion and misunderstanding of hadith amongst Muslim is the development of technology, which allows people to obtain and interpret information about hadith without consulting religious experts, using logic of reason in interpreting the hadith, understanding the hadith without considering maqasid, misunderstanding of the contextual approach, and others. The results of this writing are expected to assist Muslim community in understanding the hadiths of the Prophet SAW well without any confusion that can distort their belief and practice.

Keywords: *Sunnah, Hadith, Extremist, ISIS, Syria.*

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INTRODUCTION

The Syrian revolution is included in the chain of uprisings in Arab countries (starting in 2011 in Tunisia) better known as the Arab Spring. It's just that the recipe in Syria is different from other Arab countries. In fact, the number of people who were killed and became refugees is more compared to other Arab countries such as Yemen and Iraq. Until 2015, the revolution that turned into a civil war which then became a war between proxies and colonialism has claimed more than 500,000 lives including civilians, fighters and others, (I am Syria, 2015).

After the outbreak of a civil war (after the Syrian revolution) planned by President Bashar al-Assad by fuelling it with Sunni and Shia battles where the al-Assad regime was supported by the Afghan Shia militia, a group of extremists called for *jihad*, especially in Syria. This appeal is further enhanced with social media applications such as YouTube, Facebook and websites developed specifically for this purpose. The extremists targeted are more extremists labelled as *jihadists* or militants. This group is more inclined to think of *jihad* in order to form an Islamic state and also defend it. Therefore, the nature of militancy is the basis of the soldiers of this group. This is the largest and mainstream extremist group in the world of war and especially in the Islamic world. Because the word Islamic state became the cornerstone of their struggle. The Islamic State of Iraq and its Colonies or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or with the name of the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham which is also known as DAISH (*al-Daulah al-Islamiah fil Iraq wal Sham*). ISIS managed to attract the attention of Muslim youth and it is estimated that more than 12,000 foreigners from 74 countries went and fought in Syria (Daily News Online, 2014).

While many prominent Islamic scholars do not allow Muslims from other countries to wage *jihad* on Syrian land, especially because the situation is not clear. Among them is Syeikh Abdullah Musthafa Rahhal, who believes that many young generations from Malaysia and Indonesia who are involved in Syria do not follow the way of *jihad* in Islam. He stated that the situation in Syria, despite coming with good intentions and a burning spirit, the intention may be distorted due to superficiality with the ins and outs and the situation in Syria thus prompting them to get caught up in a war scene that has nothing to

do with *jihad*. He further stated that ISIL uses the names of fake scholars who actually come from other countries including Russia and Iran for purposes whose status is unclear. Sheikh Usamah Rifaie stated that there is no need for young people from Malaysia to join the *jihad* mission, instead it is better to help the humanitarian mission to provide food, drink and medicine (Berita Harian Online, 2014).



Source: <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/isis-isil-or-daesh>

Dr. Zukifli al-Bakri, Mufti of the Federal Territories in an interview with Berita Harian stated, "based on the views and opinions of scholars, I think the same, which is the support and encouragement of ISIS contradicts the Sharia because they do not comply with the implementation of the Islamic state." In the official website of the Regional Mufti, he also stated that, "*jihad* abroad is included in the category of *jihad al-talab or al-hujum*. It has several conditions that must be met and cannot be implemented casually. Enthusiasm, sentiment and bravery alone cannot be an argument to justify someone's act of *jihad* abroad. *Jihad*, like other acts of worship, also has its own rules and laws. Everyone who wants to implement it needs to learn and know the details related to it so that what is done is in line with the Islamic law and more important than that, the act is accepted as worship by Allah SWT in the afterlife" (Zulkifli, 2018).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this text-based study, the researcher divided the data sources into primary and secondary sources. The Qur'anic interpretation and Yusuf al-Qaradawi's books are the main sources. The writing of the research subject serves as the secondary source. The writings of Taha Jabir al-Alwani and Umar Abdul Mun'im Salim were chosen as cross-check and supportive statements.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 A Brief Introduction to Hadith

حَدِيث (hadith) means conversations from His Prophet SAW, His Prophet SAW's habits and also includes brief information and dialogue of Rasulullah SAW (Almaany, 2019). Hadith means what comes from the Prophet SAW either in conversation or action or in the form of agreement (pledge) or it is in the form of character (Umar Abdul Mun'im Salim, 1997).

Hadith comes from the derived word, حَدَّثَ, يَحْدُثُ, حَدَّثًا, and based on the definition above, hadith can be divided into 3 main components. Conversational hadith is referred to as hadith *qauli* just like hadith, Meaning: "*If two Muslims meet with their swords, then the killer and the killed will be in hell*" (HR Bukhari)

While the hadith of action is referred to as the *hadits fi'liyah* such as prayer, hajj, war and others witnessed by the companions. And the hadith of agreement is referred to as *taqriri hadith*, which can be actions or words between the companions that the Prophet SAW agreed to. Indeed, the sunnah is a

practical interpretation of the Qur'an and local practices and also an example for Islam, so the Prophet SAW is also an enlightened of the contents of the Qur'an (Qaradhawi, 1990).

3.2 Obligations of Believers to the Sunnah

The Sunnah of the Prophet SAW is included in the important and main *manhaj* in the life of a Muslim and also the Muslim community. Because the sunnah, especially the hadith, is an explanation of the meaning of the Qur'an itself. Thus, Yusuf Qaradhawi said in regards to this obligation, "it is obligatory to understand it because it is a detailed prophetic method, with its comprehensive characteristics (*syumul*), complementing (*mutakamil*), consideration (*mutawazun*) and facilitating (*muyassar*) and also what explaining the sunnah towards the meaning of embedding a strong divine nature (*rabbaniah*), a diverse human nature (*insaniah*) and having a fertile heart from the heart (Qaradhawi, 1990).

3.3 Brief Factors Differences of Opinion in Understanding Hadith

Writing and discussing the interpretation of the Qur'an and the description of methodologies related to it is better compared to writing the methods of understanding the hadith. The understanding of hadith is more complex and needs more research because one element raised about hadith is its connection to the person and life of the Prophet Muhammad SAW himself. Naturally, the lessons from the Prophet SAW are for the people of the end of time whose demographic structure, social-cultural, place and time are diverse until the Day of Judgment. And generally, not all hadiths of the Prophet SAW have a reason for their decline (*asbabul wurud*) and this makes their specialization more difficult.

Taha Jabir al-Alwani explained about the factors leading to differences of opinion in understanding the hadith. First, when the hadith of the Prophet SAW is linked to the history and character of the Prophet SAW as a Messenger, national leader, judge, military commander or common man. Second, from the point of clear pronunciation (*sorih*) of the hadith. Third, the existence of hadith in the form of printed text which used to be fragments of conversation (*qaul*), action (*fi'il*) and *taqrir* memorized by the companions of RA. Fourth, the understanding of the hadith related to the verses of the Quran (Taha, 1991).

3.4 Hadiths Used as Arguments

Hadith 1: Hijrah to the State of Sham

From Abdullah bin Umar RA that the Prophet SAW said,

It will be the exodus after the exodus, and the people of the earth will need Ibrahim, and the people of the earth will be evil.

Meaning: *"There will be migration after migration. The best people on earth are those who live in the place of Prophet Ibrahim's migration (Sham). Then the rest of the earth (apart from Sham) will be as bad as Mausia. The earth will spew them out, God will hate them, and the fire will gather them together with apes and pigs."*

(HR Ahmad & Abu Daud)

This hadith shows that the best place to migrate is to Sham. In particular, when the heart is moved to wage *jihad*, then immediately migrate to the country of Sham because it is the best place to wage *jihad* there. Thus ISIS's view regarding the hadith is the recommendation of the Prophet Muhammad SAW to migrate to Sham which is now especially Syria. In fact, this view also obliges all Muslims to defend Syria which is recognized as one of the Islamic countries and needs to be secured because of the promotion of migration there.



Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b0/Syria_in_the_9th_century-es.svg/752px-Syria_in_the_9th_century-es.svg.png

This hadith is found in Musnad Ahmad and Sunan Abu Daud and seen from the aspect of its chain of transmission, the hadith of migrating to the land of Sham is considered weak by some scholars. Al-Dzahabi mentions in the history of Abu Daud that he found a narrator named Laits bin Abu Sulaim whose ability is still in doubt. He is known as an expert in Kufah hadith but his memorization is not very strong. Similarly, in the history of Ahmad, there is a narrator named Syahr bin Hawshid whose ability is still debated by most scholars. However, hadith critics still have different opinions about this Syahr because al-Bukhari assessed it as a good hadith (*hasan al-hadith*), al-Nasa'i called it a weak hadith (*laisa bil beghth*) and Ibn Adi stated that the hadith cannot be used holding (*la yuhtaj bihi*) (Al-Dzahabi, 1989).

The meaning of migration in this hadith cannot be interpreted as a mandatory law to migrate to the country of Sham, especially in the text of the hadith there is no word of command (*fi'il amr*) in the word hijrah. To look collectively, this hadith needs to be compared with the hadiths related to migration such as the method (*Jam'ul Ahaadith al-Waaridah fil Maudhu al-Waahid*). As found in the hadith of al-Tirmidhi's narration, it is mentioned that there is no longer any obligation to migrate after the conquest of the city of Mecca and at the same time contradicts the hadith of migrating to the country of Sham. Therefore, these two hadith narrations need to be understood based on their respective aspects. The hadith about migration narrated by al-Tirmidhi states that there is no more obligation to migrate after the conquest of the city of Mecca (*fathul Makkah*) and there is no more migration from Mecca to Medina because Mecca is already controlled by Muslims. Therefore, migration is required as long as Muslims feel insecure and are not free to perform their religious obligations. In conclusion, scholars agree that the advice of migration found in the hadiths of the Prophet SAW must be understood based on its context, which is peace and freedom of worship. People who are not threatened by these two factors, are not obliged to migrate for them (Abdul Karim Munthe, 2017).

Hadith 2: There is no Intention to jihad (Fight)

From Abu Hurairah RA that the Prophet SAW said: *"Whoever dies and has never fought and never crossed his mind to fight, then he dies as a hypocrite."*

(HR Muslim)

Based on this hadith, ISIS states that a person who never fought *jihad* during his life or at least did not intend to fight *jihad*, then he died in a hypocritical state. Those (not going out for *jihad* or not intending to wage *jihad*) mentioned earlier are equated with hypocrites because basically these hypocrites always

run away from the field of *jihad* like Abdullah bin Ubay who did not participate in the battle of Tabuk. Allah SWT said: *"Those who are weak and those who are sick, and also those who have nothing to spend, do not bear sin (for not participating in the war) if they act sincerely to Allah and His Messenger. There is no way to blame those who try to improve their practices; and God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

At-Taubah (9): 91

In general, this hadith is considered authentic by the majority of scholars and narrated by Muslims and others. However, this hadith of Muslim history cannot be understood in terms of text alone. It needs to be seen from the perspective of the background (*asbabul wurud*) of this hadith. However, in the discipline of jurisprudence, the meaning of *jihad* is actually broader and not as narrow as the understanding of ISIS. War is only a small part of *jihad* and can only be used in emergencies and in self-defense.

Imam Ibnu Mubarak said: "We think that this happened during the time of the Prophet SAW." Imam Nawawi said that Ibnu Mubarak took into account the possibility of a general meaning that refers to all times and also a special meaning that refers to hypocrites in the time of the Prophet SAW who turned away from the call of *jihad* because abandoning the call of *jihad* is one of the branches of *nifaq* (Official Website Regional Mufti, 2016). War is also only part of the instrument of *jihad* (*wasilah*) and not the goal of *jihad* (*ghayah*). Similarly, *jihad* is earnest in spreading the religion of Islam, teaching the knowledge of Sharia, protecting ordinary people, spreading kindness and peace (Sayyid Muhammad Syatha, 1999).

Jihad without fighting is more appropriate to be practiced in a peaceful society situation like the current situation. For example in some countries where relations between people of different religions are good where Muslims and non-Muslims get along well without affecting religious issues and are able to do social work despite different religions. In this situation, understanding *jihad* only by raising the sword will definitely be against the principles of Islamic teachings that uphold peace and non-violence. In conclusion, *jihad* hadiths that refer to war must be understood based on the discussion (*jihad* in war). And when the discussion is clear in the right context (*jihad* in war), then the explanation will be more focused on the needs of *jihad* jurisprudence in war.

Hadith 3: Separating Yourself From Tribes and Races

From Abu Hurairah RA, the Prophet SAW said: *"Islam began as a foreigner and will return to being a foreigner, for that is why those who are strangers are happy."*

(HR Muslim)

There is no doubt about the validity of this hadith. In fact, the line of narration is more than twenty companions (Salman Audah, 1989). Nevertheless, ISIS uses a hadith from the same theme narrated by other companions whose sanad has a debate. According to the hadith from Abdullah bin Mas'ud RA, the Prophet SAW said: *"Indeed, Islam came in a foreign state and it will return to being foreign as it was at the beginning of its arrival, so fortunate are the strangers. Then someone asked Rasulullah SAW, "Who do you mean by those foreigners?", Rasulullah SAW replied, "Those are the people who separated themselves from their tribes (tribes)."*

This hadith is directly related to the hadith of the migration to the land of Sham and the obligation of *jihad* which has been discussed. ISIS joins these three hadiths (including the hadith *ghuraba'*) as a strong chain so that it becomes a strong argument to succeed in their aspirations. ISIS refers to the *ghuraba'* group as those who migrated and waged *jihad* and left their relatives for the sake of a great cause in Islam that they believed in. After researching the hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Mas'ud RA, scholars found a problematic narrator, Abu Ishak al-Sabi'i. He is considered problematic because his memorization is not strong and often changes (Abdul Karim Munthe, 2017). Because of that, the hadith mentioned earlier cannot be used as evidence for the true meaning of the *ghuraba'* group. As for that, there is a hadith that has the level of hasan that was narrated from Anas bin Malik, the Prophet SAW

said: *"Indeed, Islam came in a foreign state and it will return to being foreign as it was at the beginning of its arrival, so fortunate are the strangers. The companions asked, "O Messenger, who are the strangers you mean?", the Prophet SAW replied, "They are the people who do good while others are destroying (the face of the earth)."*

(HR Al-Tabarani)

Therefore, scholars use the method (*Fahmul Sunnah fi dau' al-Quranul Karim*) when the hadith used by ISIS strongly contradicts the words of Allah SWT,

He said, *"I will not be ashamed of it, and it will be done. Meaning: "And (remember) when your Lord spoke to the Angels; "Indeed I want to make a caliph on earth". They asked (about the wisdom of God's decree by saying): "Do you (our God) want to create on earth people who will cause disaster and shed blood (kill each other), even though we are always glorifying you by praising you and sanctifying you?". God said: "Indeed I know what you do not know."*

Al-Baqarah (2): 30

The group of *ghuraba'* mentioned in this hadith are those who always do good, spread peace, uphold justice and call for the unity of Muslims in particular and also the unity of humanity in general. Because in this age, things that are haram become halal culture and vice versa. This is where the affective (effect) of people who want to return to the full and true faith and understanding of Islam, will feel isolated in the middle of society that is immersed in ignorance and arrogance towards Allah SWT.

Hadith 4: Islamic State

From Jarir bin Abdullah, the Prophet SAW said: *"I separate myself from every Muslim who lives in the midst of polytheists. Because the fire of war is difficult to unite."*

ISIS believes that the full implementation of Islamic law is necessary for an Islamic country. While countries that do not implement Islamic law are infidel countries (*darul kufr*). The above hadith is one of the hadiths used as their argument to develop an Islamic country, especially in Sham and also promote Sham as a truly Islamic country that fully implements Islamic law. The status of this hadith is sahih and so is the chain of transmission. Nevertheless, ISIS does not explain this hadith completely, the original narration is,

Meaning: *"The Prophet SAW sent a military force to the Khas'am people led by Khalid al-Walid. When the Muslim army arrived in the area of the Khas'am tribe, some of the people of the tribe continued to prostrate before Khalid al-Walid's army to signify that they surrendered. But the Muslim army still killed some of the Khas'am people. Finally this news reached the Prophet SAW and he ordered, "Pay half of the diat for those who have already prostrated." But I distance myself from every Muslim who lives in the midst of polytheists. Because the fire of war is difficult to unite"."*

From the overview of this hadith, it is clear that there is no hasty action for a Muslim to be forced to migrate to ISIS territory which they recognize as an Islamic country. In fact, the direction of the Prophet SAW to pay *diat* (half value only) for the death of some of the Khas'am people was because of the just attitude of the Messenger of God SAW to the actions of Khalid's army with the reason that if the Khas'am people were released, they might return to attack the Muslim army and it could be Their prostration was just a strategy to manipulate the Muslim army to be forgiven and then they would attack later. The dispute brought by ISIS is the implementation and freedom of Muslims to practice worship and also the Islamic system itself textually without looking at the reality and the general benefit of declaring their own Islamic state. While in reality, the general Muslim community can do charity and perform basic worship calmly and safely, while the implementation of larger laws requires detailed preparation and processes. For example in Malaysia itself, to uphold Islamic law as a whole is not as easy as enacting national policy alone, because the definition of an Islamic country is very broad and it does not even say that Malaysia is not an Islamic country. The concept of the Islamic state in the Qur'an is summarized in the description of its special characteristics. Every Muslim is obliged to understand it

from the perspective of the theory and appreciation of Islam itself in order to justify Islam as a moderate religion.

Among the principles of Al-Maududi's Islamic state is that the Islamic state is established on the basis of the awareness of a nation that is independent and willing to submit willingly to Allah SWT (Al-Maududi, 2007). It is in accordance with the preaching method (التأليف قبل الطفق). This also coincides with the words of Allah SWT: *"And on the other hand Allah s.w.t calls people to a safe and comfortable place of residence and He always guides whom He wills to a straight path."*

Yunus (10):25

Likewise, the Prophet SAW once ordered the companions of RA to migrate to the land of Abyssinia led by a Christian king (King Najasyi) for the sake of the safety of the companions of RA who were severely oppressed in Mecca by the polytheists of Quraish as the hadith narrated by Umm Salamah, the Messenger of God SAW said: *"In the land of Abyssinia, there was a king who did not oppress anyone. So migrate there until the situation calms down again and you can practice your religious teachings freely."*

(HR al-Baihaqi)

In conclusion, migrating to a conflict region (Sham) that is recognized as an Islamic country is in conflict with the concept of Islam, especially regarding the *maqasid syari'iyah* which prioritizes life as a burden to religious benefits. What's more, especially in Malaysia, all the people's rights are protected and especially Muslims get absolute privileges in this country. And the suggestion of migration and *jihad* does not fall under the mandatory law that is agitated by ISIS and is most feared, the perspective of dying in the path of Allah SWT through *jihad*, the understanding of ISIS is very doubtful. And in this regard the method (*Fahmul Ahaadith fi dau'i Asbabuha wa Mala Absaatuha wa Maqaasiduha*) is very important because it is necessary to look at the events and effects of the hadith for the benefit of Muslims.

Hadith 5: Reward of 72 Angels in Heaven

From Miqdam bin Ma'di RA, that the Prophet SAW: *"People who are martyred will get seven privileges from God; was forgiven from the beginning of his death, saw his place in heaven, was kept away from the punishment of the grave, saved from the terrible chaos, placed on his head a luxurious crown made of the best stone (jacuite) in the world, married to seventy-two angels, and given intercession as many as 70 people from his relatives."*

(HR Ahmad & Tirmidhi)

This hadith became the support of the ISIS group to further excite their struggle. It is none other than receiving the reward of heaven which is very synonymous with angels, especially seventy-two angels. At the same time, this group of ISIS recognizes that their struggle is similar to the struggle of the Prophet SAW and the companions of RA and are very confident that they will be awarded Paradise when there are many ethics of war that conflict with Islamic law. According to al-Tirmidhi, the level of this hadith is a *hasan* hadith. There are only some doubts about the narrator, especially Baqiyah bin Walid and his student, Nu'aim bin Hammad. Ibnu Hatim thinks that the hadith issued by Baqiyah can be written in the book or can be delivered but cannot be used as a basis for religious arguments (Abdul Karim Munthe, 2017: 112). However, the majority of hadith scholars accept the narration of Nu'aim and Tirmidhi and rate this hadith as *hasan*.

The focus of this hadith is the word الحور العين (*Hurul 'ain*) which means angel. In this regard, hadith scholars use the method approach (*At-Tafriq bainal Haqiqat wal Majaaz fil Fahmul Hadis*). From a linguistic point of view, the meaning of the word *hurul 'ain* consists of two words, *hur* meaning a woman with fluffy skin and *'ain* meaning a woman with beautiful round eyes. Thus, according to the parable given to the Arabs through the Prophet SAW, it is likened that a beautiful woman in the eyes of the Arabs is a woman with fluffy skin and beautiful round eyes (Abdul Karim Munthe, 2017: 114).

While the beauty of women on the men's side is too subjective because men in particular have different female characteristics. And the things that lead to the awarding of these angels are those who have fallen martyrs. The word martyr comes from *shahd*, *shahid*, *shahid* also means witnessing, witnessing and witnessing (Maududi). However, the meaning of martyr in terminology is a person who died in the path of God for defending the religion of God (Ibn al-Atsir, 1421H). Then martyrdom also has the same meaning as *jihad*, which means pouring out one's ability, effort and all one's energy. However, the context of *jihad* is getting wider. It is no longer related to war only. *Jihad* is also a good deed that has nothing to do with war. Not to mention the understanding of ISIS with the meaning of *jihad*, legitimizing the blood of innocent people and also threatening the welfare of the general public which can generally be listed as a wrong action in terms of the law.

In conclusion, the perverse understanding of ISIS regarding the reward of seventy-two angels is completely far from their reward. ISIS has misunderstood the meaning of *jihad* and death as a martyr' hence their death in a battle that is supposed to defend Islam, although the situation is very doubtful.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that there is still a group of people who do not fully comprehend the meaning of the hadith. This is because they just understand the hadith's surface meaning without considering the hadith's true context significance. They also omitted to refer to the experts' explanation of the description of a hadith, which may be gained from any hadith syrah book, such as Fath al-Bari, Sahih Muslim, and other hadith syrah books, whether past or contemporary.

They do not refer to academics who are experts in hadith and other subjects. They simply take the easy way out by only looking at the apparent translation of a hadith without studying the intricacies. Based on this literature, it is also possible to conclude that the study of hadith in the community is critical and cannot be overlooked. We cannot be light on this subject since errors in understanding the hadith will lead to us deviating from the real teachings of Islam and further away from the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger. All of these errors can be addressed with the essential revelation of hadith knowledge taken seriously by all levels of society.

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