

**REVEALING THE METHODS AND COMMENTARY FEATURES OF
AL-QAULUL BAYAN FI TAFSIR AL-QUR'ĀN
BY SYEKH SULAIMAN AR-RASULI**

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Abstract

This article discusses the book of Tafsir al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'ān by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli. This book is interesting to study because it is very rare to find interpreters using Minangkabau Malay Arabic. Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli have specificity in writing his commentary because in his muqaddimah, it is stated that this book does not aim to explain and issue law. This expression is somewhat different from the purpose of the interpretation expressed by the commentators. This discussion aims to reveal the interpretation methods and patterns used by this book. The method used is content analysis: the purpose is to discuss in depth the written content or information. After reviewing this book, it can be concluded that this book uses the ijmal method. The interpretive style used is linguistic and Sufism feature. The feature of lughawi is to explain the meaning of the verse of al-Qur'ān with a linguistic approach, and the Sufism feature means to explain the meaning of the verse of al-Qur'ān with theories in Sufism or with a spiritual approach of the mufassir.

Keyword: Method, Feature, Commentary, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas tentang kitab Tafsir al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'ān karya Syekh Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli. Kitab ini menarik untuk dikaji karena sangat jarang dijumpai kitab tafsir yang menggunakan Arab Melayu Minangkabau. Syekh Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli memiliki kekhasan dalam menulis kitab tafsirnya karena dalam muqaddimah-nya disebutkan bahwa kitab ini tidak bertujuan untuk menjelaskan dan mengeluarkan hukum. Ungkapan ini agak berbeda dengan tujuan penafsiran yang dikemukakan oleh para ulama tafsir. Pembahasan ini bertujuan mengungkap metode dan corak penafsiran yang digunakan oleh kitab ini. Adapun metode yang digunakan adalah content analysis atau analisa isi, maksudnya adalah membahas secara mendalam terhadap isi atau informasi yang tertulis. Setelah melakukan penelaahan terhadap kitab ini, dapat disimpulkan bahwa kitab ini menggunakan metode ijmal. Adapun

corak penafsiran yang digunakan adalah corak lughawi dan tasawuf. Corak lughawi maksudnya menjelaskan makna ayat al-Qur'ān dengan pendekatan kebahasaan, dan corak tasawuf maksudnya menjelaskan makna ayat al-Qur'ān dengan teori-teori dalam ilmu tasawuf atau dengan pendekatan spiritual mufassir.

Kata Kunci: Metode, Corak, Tafsir, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli

Introduction

Interpreting al-Qur'ān means dissecting, explaining and understanding the meanings contained, and exploring the laws and wisdom contained in it.¹ Al-Suyuthi in his book "*Al-Itqan Fi Ulum al-Qur'ān*" mentions three reasons for the importance of interpreting al-Qur'ān. *First*, because al-Qur'ān has a text that is very high in the quality of its language which is sometimes difficult for the general public to understand. Further, interpreting the truth requires interpretation, and this can only be done by people who have the ability to do so. *Secondly*, because of the al-Qur'ān's words are *muhkam, mutasyabih, muthlaq, muqayyad* and so on, the interpretation can be made from people who are experts in this field. *Third*, because al-Qur'ān has many verses appear in global forms that need explanation.²

The development of era and problems faced by humans which are increasingly complex make the level of need to know and understand the content of al-Qur'ān higher. This is one of the reasons why the *mufassir* tried to explain the meaning of the verse of al-Qur'ān in such a way, interpreting al-Qur'ān by focusing on certain disciplines, such as jurisprudence, theology, poetry, law and so forth.³ Not a little ink of the Islamic thinkers or scholars who are scratched just to explain the content of the holy book that became a miracle of the Prophet, so that it can be a guide for mankind wherever and whenever.

The *mufassir* came from different educational backgrounds and regions, some from the Arabian, Persian and surrounding areas, some even from outside of Arabia, particularly Indonesia.

Indonesia is one country where thinkers or scholars also contribute ideas to the world through their interpretations of al-Qur'ān. Many commentaries have been written by Indonesian scholars who we are very proud of to this day. One of them is the commentary book of "*Al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'ān*," written by a prominent cleric in West Sumatra named Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli or known as "Inyiak Canduang", originating from the village of Candung (about 10 KM east of the city of Bukittinggi).

The existence of the *al-Qaulul Bayan* commentary book Tafsir al-Qur'ān "has become a valuable scientific treasure, especially for Muslims in West Sumatra. This commentary can be found in Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah (MTI) and has not been much highlighted by commentators, perhaps because of the existence of this book which is stored only. This book is written using Minangkabau Malay Arabic.

In his *muqaddimah*, on this commentary book, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli explained that this book was written by the background of a request from the public to make a commentary. At first he was hesitant, but finally, he granted it by writing a commentary written in Minangkabau Malay Arabic. Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli chose the verses in the 30th Juz because the letters were often read in prayer, so knowing the interpretation could increase the solitude in prayer.⁴

¹al-Zarkasyi, *al-Burhan fi Ulumi al-Qur'ān* (Mesir: Dar al-Kutub al-Arabiyyah, 1376/1975), 13.

²Jalaluddin al-Suyuthi, *al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr, t.t), 174

³Ahmad Mushthafa Hadna, *Problematika Menafsirkan al-Qur'ān* (Semarang: Dina Utama, 1993), 9.

⁴Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli, *Risalah al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'ān* (Bukittinggi: Mathba' al-Islamiyah, 1929), 1.

In addition, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli also stated that this book was interpreted not to explain or issue law. While az-Zarkasyi explained that the definition of interpretation was knowledge to understand the *Kitabullah* which was revealed to the Prophet, explained its meaning and issued a law or wisdom from it. From this expression, it can be understood that Shekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli has distinctiveness in writing his commentary.

It is interesting to do a further study of this interpretation, to see how the interpretative approach used by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli is both in terms of the method of interpretation and the style of interpretation used so that he achieves the expectation that the interpretation of al-Qur'ān can add deepness prayer, but by not issuing the laws contained in the verses of al-Qur'ān.

Method and Commentary Features

The word “method” comes from the Greek “*methodos*”, which means the way.⁵ In English, the word is written “method”, and Arabic translates it with “*thariqat*” and “*manhaj*”. Az-Zahabiy, in *Tafsir wa al-Mufasssirun*, states that *manhaj* is a method that brings to the opening of truth from science in a certain way to reach a complete conclusion.⁶ Whereas in Indonesian, the word implies: “an orderly and thoughtful way to achieve purpose [in science and so on]; systematic ways of working to facilitate the implementation of an activity to achieve a specified goal.”⁷

In this connection, the interpretation of al-Qur'ān is inseparable from the method, which is an orderly and thoughtful way to achieve a correct understanding of what Allah intended in the verses of al-Qur'ān which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. If someone interprets the verses of al-Qur'ān without using a method, it is certainly not impossible that he will be mistaken

in his interpretation.

According to ‘Abd al-Hayy al-Farmawy, citing Sayyid Qummi’s opinion, and also cited by Mursi Ibrahim al-Fayumi, that the interpretation method has four types, namely the *tahlili* method, the *ijmali* method, the *muqarin* method, and the *maudlu’i* method. This division is in line with the demands of the times and the needs of Muslims to know the contents of al-Qur’ān and the courage to interpret the interpretation of al-Qur’ān, in accordance with the scientific discipline they use in interpreting al-Qur’ān. This is a logical consequence of the development of the science of interpretation.

1. *Tahlili* Method

What is meant by the *tahlili* method (analysis) is interpreting the verses of al-Qur’ān by describing all aspects contained in the verses that are interpreted as well as explaining the meanings contained in it according to the expertise and inclination of the *mufasssir* who interprets the verses.⁸ Thus, the *tahlili* method seeks to explain the meaning of the verses al-Qur’ān from various aspects, based on the order of the verse or surah in the *Mushaf*, by highlighting the content of the *lafadz*, the relationship of the verses, the relation of the *surahs*, the reasons of the revelations, the hadiths related to it, the opinions of the previous *mufasssir* themselves are colored by their educational background and expertise.

2. *Ijmali* Method

Ijmali method is to interpret the al-Qur’ān in a short and global way without extensive explanation. The *Ijmali* Method, also known as the global, is to explain al-Qur’ān’s verses in a concise manner, but includes language that is popular, easy to understand and readable. The systematic writing follows the arrangement of verses in the *Mushaf*. The presentation is not too

⁵Fuad Hassan dan Koentjaraningrat, “Beberapa Asas Metodologi Ilmiah,” dalam Koentjaraningrat [ed.], *Metode-metode Penelitian Masyarakat* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1977), 16.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Tim Penyusun, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, cet. Ke-I (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1988), 580-581.

⁸M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan al-Qur’ān* (Bandung: Mizan, 1992), 37.

far from the style of al-Qur'ān language.⁹ Thus, the characteristics and types of *Ijmali* method follow a sequence of verses according to the order of the *Mushaf*.

3. *Maudhu'i* Method

Maudhu'i method is a method that discusses verses of the al-Qur'ān according to the theme or title that has been set. All related verses are collected, then studied in depth and thoroughly from various aspects related to it, such as *asbab al-nuzul*, vocabulary, and so on. All are explained in detail and thoroughly, and are supported by arguments or facts that can be scientifically accountable, both arguments originating from the al-Qur'ān, hadith, and thought.¹⁰ In this method, the interpretation of al-Qur'ān is not done verse by verse. However, studying al-Qur'ān by taking a theme specifically from various doctrinal, social, and cosmological themes discussed by al-Qur'ān. For example, he studies and discusses the doctrine of monotheism in al-Qur'ān, the concept of *nubuwwah* in al-Qur'ān, al-Qur'ān approach to the economy, and so on.

According to M. Quraish Shihab, the *maudhu'i* method has two meanings. *First*, the interpretation involves one letter in al-Qur'ān by explaining its objectives in general and which is a variety of themes in the letter with each other and also with the theme, so that one *surah* with various problems is an inseparable unity. *Second*, the commentary that began with collecting the verses of al-Qur'ān discussed one particular problem from various *ayah* or verses of al-Qur'ān and wherever possible may be sorted according to the descending order, then explain the comprehensive understanding of these verses, in order to draw al-Qur'ān's instructions in full about the problem discussed.¹¹

⁹Nashruddin Baidan, *Metodologi Penafsiran al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Pelajar Offset, 1998), 13.

¹⁰Ibid., 151.

¹¹M. Quraish Shihab, 74.

4. *Muqaran* Method

Muqaran method (comparative) is the interpretation of a group of verses of al-Qur'ān that speak in a problem by comparing between verses with verses or between verses with hadith both in terms of content and editorial or between the opinions of the commentators by highlighting aspects certain differences of objects compared. So what is meant by the *muqaran* method are: [a] comparing the texts (*nash*) of the verses of al-Qur'ān which have similarities or editorial similarities in two or more cases, and or have different editors for the same case, [b] comparing the verses of al-Qur'ān with the hadith which naturally appear to be contradictory, and [c] compare the various opinions of the commentators in interpreting al-Qur'ān.¹²

Interpretation of al-Qur'ān using this method has very broad coverage. The scope of the study of each aspect is different. Some are related to editorial studies and relation to the connotations of the words or sentences they contain. Then, M. Quraish Shihab stated that "in this method in particular which compares between verses with verses [also verses with hadith], *mufassir* usually explains things related to the differences in the content intended by each verse or difference in the case of the problem itself.¹³ What is meant by the features of interpretation is the tendency of a *mufassir* in writing his interpretation which is motivated by knowledge, insight and circumstances of the *mufassir* himself, so that there are many kinds of interpretations.

According to Quraish Shihab, there are six features of interpretations of the verses of al-Qur'ān which are known so far, namely:

- a. *Lughawi* feature, what is meant by *lughawi* is interpreting the verses of al-Qur'ān with the rules of language (Arabic), or by other definitions explaining the verses of al-Qur'ān with linguistic issues covering all the intricacies of Arabic, both related to *nahwu*,

¹²Nashruddin Baidan, 60.

¹³Ibid., 65.

sharf, and *balaghah*. With this, a *mufassir* explains the meaning of the pronunciation, or a sentence by revealing the meaning contained in it or explaining a sentence that is meaningful/synonymous or *muradif*.

- b. The philosophical feature, what is meant by philosophical feature, is the interpretation of the verse of al-Qur’ān which uses a philosophical approach by reflecting and living the verses interpreted, then studying them radically (rooted), systematic and objective.¹⁴ The philosophical approach here can also be understood by involving theories that are in philosophy, such as *emanasi*, *wahdatul wujud*, and so on.
- c. According to *Tafsir al-Mizan fiy tafsir al-Qur’ān*, philosophical interpretations are a matter of how philosophers bring philosophical thoughts when understanding the verses of al-Qur’ān. Among the philosophical interpreters are al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Brotherhood al-Şafa, and Fakhruddin al-Razi.
- d. Scientific interpretation feature, what is meant by the style of scientific interpretation, is the interpretation in which the modern cosmic sciences are involved, both the nature and nature of the theories to explain the intent and purpose of the verses of al-Qur’ān. As for those covered in the modern cosmos, sciences are physics, geology, chemistry, biology, medical science, and others. Including social sciences such as psychology, economics, geography, and so forth.¹⁵
- f. *Fiqh* or law feature. *Fiqh* or law feature arises because of the development of *fiqh* and the formation of schools of *fiqh* which each group tries to prove the truth of its opinion through

the interpretation of legal verses.¹⁶ In other words it can be defined as the style of or law is to interpret the verse of the Qur’ān with the process of *istinbath* law or with the opinions of the *imams* of the *fiqh* school.

- i. Sufism feature, what is meant by sufism feature is to explain the meaning of the Qur’anic verses with the spiritual *mufassir* approach or what is called the interpretation feature and explain the verses of al-Qur’ān with theories in Sufism or known as Islamic Sufism.
- g. Community culture literature feature. M. Quraish Shihab also explained that this style was born and driven by the desire of the *mufassir* to explain the instructions of al-Qur’ān which are directly related to people’s lives so that al-Qur’ān can act as an effort to overcome the problems of the people by presenting Qur’anic instructions in a language that is easy to understand and pleasant to hear. This feature of interpretation begins with Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridho in their commentary book of al-Manar.¹⁷

In addition to the above features, Muhammad Amin Suma added several more features, namely: *tarbawi* (education) style and the *akhlaqi* feature.¹⁸ In determining the interpretation feature of an interpretation book, the dominant thing in the interpretation is highly considered.

Biography of Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli

Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli was born in Canduang in 1871 AD. He came from a religious family; his father was a cleric at that time named Angku Muhammad Rasul. His mother was named Siti Buli’ah.¹⁹ As a child of a cleric who was respected by the people of his day, the intelligence

¹⁴Yuyun Zunairoh, “Penafsiran al-Qur’ān dengan Filsafat: Telaah Kitab Mafatih al-Ghaib Fakhruddin ar-Razi,” *Jurnal Emperisma* 24, no. 1 (2015): 122; Said Agil Husin Al-Munawwar, *Al-Qur’ān Membangun Tradisi Kesalehan Hakiki* (Jakarta: Ciputat Press, 2002), 102.

¹⁵Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, *Bagaimana Berinteraksi dengan al-Qur’ān* (translation) (Jakarta: Pustaka al-Kautsar, 2000), 421.

¹⁶M. Quraish Shihab, 73.

¹⁷Ibid., 43.

¹⁸Muhammad Amin Suma, *Studi Ilmu-Ilmu al-Qur’an* (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2001), 5.

¹⁹<http://ulama-minang.blogspot.co.id/2010/01/syekh-sulaiman-ar-rasuli.html>, retrieved on 5. September 2017.

of Sulaiman ar-Rasuli had been seen since he was a child, both spiritual and emotional intelligence. This is the capital of being a charismatic cleric.

Sulaiman ar-Rasuli has historically been noted as a diligent young man in demanding knowledge and honing his abilities, as evidenced by the many he learned from various cleric figures. Since his youth, he has begun to study with the scholars. The first time he studied al-Qur'ān, namely studying with Tuan Syekh Muhammad Arsyad in Batu Hampar. After completing his study of al-Qur'ān, he went on to study soft skills, such as Arabic, *Ushul Fiqh*, Qur'anic Sciences, Hadith to Syekh Tuanku Sami' Biaro. Some time at Biaro, he continued his studies at Sungayang. In Sungayang he learned from scholars namely Tuan Syekh who is famous for the name Tuanku Kolok (grandmother of Prof. Mahmud Yunus) who was very pious with the science of *fiqh* especially the science of *Faraidh*. After the death of Tuanku Kolok, Sulaiman ar-Rasuli continued his studies with Tuan Syekh Abdussalam in Banuhampu. After a while, he moved to the Sungai Dareh Situjuah Payakumbuh. After sometimes in Situjuah, Sulaiman ar-Rasuli according to the instructions of his teacher and father, left for Halaban. In Halaban he studied with the famous scholars in Tigo Luak, namely Tuan Syekh Abdullah "He is Halaban" (d. 1926). He was in Halaban for 7 years. Here, he won the trust of Sheikh Abdullah to become a "guru tuo", until he was taken as a son-in-law by Tuan Syekh. Seeing the knowledge possessed is qualified, Sulaiman ar-Rasuli was told to go home by Tuan Syekh Abdullah to develop the knowledge he had obtained in his hometown, Candung. After that Sulaiman ar-Rasuli returned and taught in his hometown for 6 months, then he went to Mecca to fulfill the fifth pillar of Islam and to increase his knowledge. In Mecca, Sulaiman ar-Rasuli studied with prominent scholars, such as Syekh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi, Syekh Mukhtar 'Atharid as-Shufi, Sayyid Ahmad Syatha al-Makki, Syekh Usman as-Sarawaki and Syekh

Muhammad Sa'id Ba Bashil Mufti Syafi'i.²⁰

From the description above, it can be seen that Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli traveled or moved from one area to another, even outside his country to seek knowledge, in the tradition of the scholars of the hadith known as *rihlah fiy thalab 'ilmi*. Making this trip is a testament to the seriousness and sincerity of him, so that in the end managed to become a person who is capable of knowledge.

In 1907 Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli returned to the land of Minang after enriching religious knowledge for three and a half years in the Holy Land. After returning from Mecca then he continued his struggle. First he continued *halaqah* in his hometown. *Halaqah* is growing rapidly by visiting students who are busy from various parts of the country. In 1928, this *halaqah* was later changed to *madrrasah* under the name *Madrrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah*. This change was followed by other *halaqahs* in prayer houses in Minangkabau.

As for the religious school, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli in the school of *aqidah of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*. While his *fiqh* school Syafi'i. With regard to this Syafi'i school, he was a very strong figure in defending the school. In addition, Syekh Sulaiman also adheres to the *Tarikat Naqsyabandiyah*.

Regarding this matter, at first, he was an anti-*tarekat* like his teacher Syekh Ahmad Khatib. But after his meeting with Tuan Syekh Arsyadi Batu Hampar, they did dialogue and exchanged thoughts. Then he declared mistakes and repented in front of Tuan Syekh Batu Hampar with tears in his eyes. After that he performed *suluk* with the guidance of his teacher in 1341 H and got a diploma in the term Naqsyabandiyah. After the *khalwat*, he was very strict in maintaining the Naqsyabandiyah appeal, both in *tabligh*, written works and in open debates, such as the deliberations with Syekh Thaher Jalaluddin al-

²⁰Apria Putra dan Chairullah Ahmad, *Bibliografi Karya Ulama Minangkabau Awal Abad XX: Dinamika Intelektual Kaum Tua dan Kaum Muda* (Padang: Indonesia Heritage Centre, 2011), 108.

Falaki at the Jami Jami' Pasia mosque.²¹

Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli is known as a scholar who is quite productive in writing and creates works that are quite famous. As many as 22 works, namely: (1) *Siraj fil Isra' wal Mi'raj* (Mi'raj of the prophet); (2) *Tasmaratul Qulub Ihsan fi Wiladah Saidil Insan* (Maulid of the prophet); (3) *Dawaul Qulub fi Qishshah Yusuf wa Ya'cub* (History of the prophet); (4) *Risalah al-Aqwalul Wasithah fidz dzikir war Rabithah* (Sufism); (5) *al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* (Tafsir Science); (6) *al-Jawahirul Kalamiyah* (Ushuluddin); (7) *Sabilus Salamah fi Wirid Saidiyah Usman* (Prayers); (8) *Kisah Muhammad Arif* (Sufism); (9) *Perdamaian Adat dengan Syara'* (Custom); (10) *Pertalian Adat dan syara' di Minangkabau* (Custom); (11) *Pengangkatan Penghulu di Minangkabau* (Custom); (12) *al-Aqwal al-Mardhiyah*; (13) *Dha'us Siraj fil Isra' wal Mi'raj*; (14) *Tanbihul Ghafilin fi Wafati Sayyidil Mursalin*; (15) *al-Aqwalul Washithah fiz Zikri war Rabithah* (Sufism); (16) *al-Aqwalul 'Aliyah fi Thariqatin Naqsyabandiyah* (Sufism); (17) *Jawahirul Kalamiyah fi I'tiqat Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah*; (18) *al-Qaulul Bayan fi Fadhilati Lailati Nishf Sya'ban*; (19) *Sabilus Salamah fi Wiridi Sayyidil Ummah*; (20) *Pedomam Islam Tiang Keamanan*; (21) *Tablighul Amanah fi Izalatil Munkarat wasy Syubhah*; (22) *Kisah Mu'az dan Nabi wafat*.²²

From the works above, we can see that Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli wrote various fields of science; the field of Sufism, *fiqh*, *aqedah*, *sirah*/history, commentary, science of *kalam*, and several books on custom. However, there are only one work in the field of interpretation/science of interpretation; *al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*.

At the end of his life Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli remained in his Islamic boarding school, namely; Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah Candung, until he passed away on August 1, 1970 AD at

²¹Ibid., 110.

²²Ibid., 6.

Candung, Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. His body was buried near the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah Candung of Bukittinggi. At the time of his death, there were many people who had been mourning. He left several wives and children, his wives and widows are 17 people in total and his children are 17 people in total and those who have passed away are 7 people.²³

The Book of Tafsir al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an

1. The History of the Writing of the Book

The book is named after "*al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*."²⁴ This naming is clearly stated in the commentary, except that there is no explanation for the reasons for naming it.

The commentary book of *al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* is a commentary written in Minangkabau Malay Arabic. In this commentary, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli explained that the background of the writing of this book is the request of people around him to compose interpretive books using Malay. At that time, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli was hesitant to fulfill the request, because according to him there was no benefit. But then Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli re-thought that the public would not be able to understand al-Qur'an without them understanding the tools of science such as Arabic, the knowledge of al-Qur'an, the science of hadith, and other sciences including the devices of *ijtihad*.²⁵

Understanding of the al-Qur'an is able to increase the solemnity of heart and perfection of prayer, so of course it is very useful if there are interpretations that can be read by all people, especially Minangkabau people. Therefore, finally, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli lost his doubts and decided to compose the commentary book in Malay according to the people's request.²⁶ The

²³Ibid., 5.

²⁴Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli, *Risalah al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* (Bukittinggi: Mathba' al-Islamiyah, 1929), 2.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

Malay language used is Minangkabau Malay, because of Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli, a native Minangkabau cleric.

This commentary only interprets the verses that are in the 30th juz which start from the verse of an-Naba', an-Nazi'at and so on. This book is 130 pages. The reasons for choosing these short verses are because these verses are often read in prayer so that they can increase the solemnity in prayer when understanding the meaning and purpose of the verses (interpretation). Furthermore, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli also explained that the writing of this commentary was not intended to issue Shari'a laws.²⁷ This statement seems to mean that the commentary he wrote did not use the framework of *fiqh*, which included the legal *istinbath* process and the issuance of compulsory, permissible, *sunat*, and haram laws.

This book was published in 1929 AD, meaning that this book was written before that year.²⁸ The language used is the Malay language used in that year.

2. The Examples of the Commentary by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli

For example, the author will present the interpretation of the Chapter of an-Naba' verses 1-7. Before explaining the interpretation of the Chapter of an-Naba', Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli explained about the category of an-Naba's verses. His expression is:

*This verse was sent down before the emigration of our Prophet from Mecca to Medina, therefore, it is called makiyah, and is the number of 40 verses and 173 sentences and 970²⁹ letters.*³⁰

It means that an-Naba's verse was revealed before the migration of the Prophet Muhammad, therefore this letter is classified as *Makiyah's* letter. This letter

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸There is no information on the year of the writing the book.

²⁹In the list of error can be seen page 97, but the correct one is 970.

³⁰Ar-Rasuli, 7.

consists of 40 verses, 173 words, and 970 letters.

This explanation is quite interesting because Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli highlighted this letter to the number of words and the number of letters. This is rarely a concern for *mufasssir*. Furthermore, ar-Rasuli always starts with the words of *Bismillahirrahmanir rahim*.

In addition, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli began the interpretation of a letter by explaining the classification of letters in terms of *Makiyah* or *Madaniyah*. The definitions of *Makiyah* or *Madaniyah* are used, namely, *Makiyahs* are verses that went down before the Prophet migrated to Medina, while *Madaniyahs* were verses that came down after the Prophet moved to Medina.

This interpretation of an-Naba' verse also began by ar-Rasuli explaining the historical verses, such as the following explanation:

*When calling upon the prophet SAW the polytheists to monotheism, unite Allah and believe in the prophet SAW by raising then died and recited the Prophet SAW the al-Qur'an, so they ask among them saying half of them what Muhammad brought then mentioning Allah – what do they do – say Allah Almighty.*³¹

That is, this letter came down when the prophet Muhammad conveyed the call of *tawhid* to the non-believers (Mecca). Their Prophet recited al-Qur'an to them, then they became wondering, as the word of God:

عَمَّ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿١﴾ عَنِ النَّبِإِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢﴾

*The meaning: "About what are they asking one another?, About the great news" (Q.S. an-Naba'/78: 1-2).*³²

Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli explained this verse with the following explanation:

When calling upon the prophet SAW the

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

polytheists to monotheism, unite Allah and believe in the prophet SAW by raising then died and recited the Prophet SAW the al-Qur’ān, so they ask among them saying half of them what Muhammad brought then mentioning Allah- what do they do-say Allah Almighty.³³

That is, this letter came down when the prophet Muhammad conveyed the call of *tawhid* to the non-believers (Mecca). Their Prophet recited al-Qur’ān to them, then they became wondering.

Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli has his own opinions and views in understanding al-Qur’ān, not just following previous opinions. Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli interpreted *an-Naba’ al-‘Azhim* as meaning al-Qur’ān. This is different from other commentators, such as al-Maraghi, Wahbah al-Zuhaili, Az-Zamakhsyari, who interpreted *an-Naba’ al-‘Azhim* with the Day of Resurrection, the Day of Resurrection or the Day of Judgment. In an-Naba’ verses 3 Allah says:

الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٣﴾

This verse is explained by Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli with the following phrase:

This means that those who started preaching were guilty of them, so half of them said that al-Qur’ān was magic, and half said the knowledge of sya’ir, and half said the science of divination – so glittered – then rebuked Allah Ta’ala, so said Allah Ta’ala.³⁴

The point is, they disagree about al-Qur’ān, there are those who argue that al-Qur’ān is witchcraft, poem, and fortune telling.

In an-Naba’ verses 4-5, it is explained that:

كَلَّا سَيَعْمُونَ ﴿٤﴾ ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْمُونَ ﴿٥﴾

“It means that they will know that they will end up denying them on the Day of Judgment, that is, doom, so that they will know that, then mention Allah Ta’ala for some astonishing problems because that shows this to one

and to His power over holding nature and eliminating it later in existence and making it once again to rise up and be reckoning and reply, then say Allah Ta’ala.”

That is, so that they know the consequences of the lies they have committed, namely they will get the punishment on the Day of Judgment. This is also to show His power; able to make and eliminate nature, and to re-establish it to be raised, abused, and to receive a reply.

Therefore, in verses 6-7 an-Naba’ explains:

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا ﴿٦﴾ وَالْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا ﴿٧﴾

“The meaning is not to make Us earth be a stretch over all the treads, and to make Us a hill to be a stake for the earth so that the earth will not move, meaning that We make it like that.”³⁵

That is, not We (Allah) make the earth except the expanse and We make the hill/mountain that serves as a stake for the earth so that the earth becomes sturdy and does not move/shake.

In terms of the language used the influence of Arabic is very thick. This can be seen, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli always translates *waw ibtida’* which is contained in verses in Malay with the words “and”. For example when interpreting verse 7 (*wal jibala autada*).

In addition, in the interpretation of Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli, the influence of Arabic-language interpretations such as the use of *أى تفسيرية* (*ay tafsiriyah*),, the word *ay*, serves as interpretation.

3. The Method of The Commentary of *Tafsir al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur’ān*

The method of interpretation can be understood as a procedure adopted by an interpreter in presenting and discussing the meaning of the verses of al-Qur’ān. The method of interpretation,

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., 8.

³⁵Ibid.

in general, can be classified into 4, namely the *ijmali* method, the *tahliliy* method, the *maudhu'iy* method, and the *muqaran* method.

After observing it can be understood that Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli used the *ijmaliy* method. The classification of the *ijmaliy* method has several reasons: *First*: because it expresses the contents of the al-Qur'ān by explaining the meaning of the verse in general, using a short, solid, simple language, without detailed, concise or no analysis, with language that is popular and easy to understand. The benchmark for this global method is the pattern or systematic discussion of the verses of al-Qur'ān. With this method, the *mufassir* wants to talk to his readers in the easiest, most convoluted way with the target that the reader will be able to understand the contents of al-Qur'ān as scripture that provides guidance on life. *Second*: The presentation is not too far from the style of the al-Qur'ān language because it expresses synonyms or *muradif* of the sentence described. Third: in interpreting the letters in the 30th juz discussing the verses of al-Qur'ān in accordance with the order of the verses in the *mushaf*, which begin with an-Naba's, an-Nazi'at, 'Abasa verses and so on.

4. The Feature of the Commentary Book of *al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'ān*

In the interpretation methodology, it is explained that the commentary can be classified into several styles, namely *lughawi*, *fiqh*, philosophy, Sufi, *ilmi*, and *adab al-ijtima'iy*.

After an assessment of the book, it can be explained that the book uses 2 (two) features of interpretation, namely;

1) *Lughawi* Feature.

The use of *lughawi* feature can be seen in the commentary example of al-Muthaffifin verse 1:

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ ﴿١﴾

It means to start wail - the abyss of hell for people who are bad at weighing (if

*they weigh for themselves it fills them, and when weighing for others, so badly).*³⁶

The point is that the *wail* is the abyss of hell that is a place for people who cheat in weighing. The purpose of cheating in measuring is that if it is measured for itself, then it will measure correctly, but if it is measured for others, then this is where they act fraudulently by reducing their scales.

In the interpretation of the verse above, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli explained the meaning contained in the word *wail* in the verse, which is an abyss in hell which is a place for those who cheat in measuring. Furthermore, he also explained the meaning of weighing fraudulently.

Another example lies in al-Insiyiqaq verse 12:

وَيَصَلَّىٰ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾

*The meaning: and we put you in the abyss of hell which is very hot.*³⁷

That meaning is: Allah will put in a burning hell or a very hot hell. This interpretation explains the synonym or paradigm of the sentence in the verse.

2) The Sufism Features

Sufism Features can be seen when he interprets al-Balad verse 4:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ ﴿٤﴾

We have made man in exhaustion, that is, the exhaustion of the world and the afterlife of all kinds of exhaustion, like all matters, and all the pain and sorrow that we cannot eliminate. (Here we can know that this world is a place of pain while people who make it claim that it is, so whoever seeks pleasure in this world will waste their efforts, while those who mean

³⁶Ar-Rasuli, 42.

³⁷Ibid., 51.

*will never be able to reach the edge of the grave, not yet got the pleasure that was understood by the experts of the mind.*³⁸

The verse above explains that humans are created with difficult conditions, humans are given difficulties both in the world and in the hereafter. The tribulation is not easy to eliminate. Furthermore, this verse is understood with an explanation of the world as a place of struggle, so that humans do not need to seek the pleasures of the world, because it is a waste.

The essence of the verse above shows the concept of *zuhud* in Sufism theory. This *zuhud* is the second station, that is, a Sufi will leave the world and the material³⁹ so that this world becomes a place of trouble for them. The pleasure they meet in the world is useless and meaningless. So, it can be understood that the feature of interpretation used is the *nazhari* Sufism feature, namely explaining the verses of al-Qur'ān with Sufism theory.

Another example can be seen from the way he interprets al-Fajr verse 29-30:

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾ وَأَدْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ﴿٣٠﴾

*Then enter the number of their righteous followers, and enter my Hell together with them.*⁴⁰

The above verse contains an order to the believers to join the pious people, and vice versa the ungodly person is ordered to enter into hell. In explaining the meaning of the verse, Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli connected his interpretation with the prayer اللهم اجعلنا منهم, then continued with "O Allah make it possible for us to be half of them," or meant he prayed that Allah made him in the line of

pious people.

The above interpretation is an interpretation with the *mufasssir* spiritual approach so that it can be said that the style of interpretation is called the style of interpretation of *isyari* Sufism Isariah.

Conclusion

Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli in the book of *al-Qaulul Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'ān* uses an interpretive approach with the *ijmaliy* method. The *ijmaliy* method means to explain the meaning of the verses of al-Qur'ān by presenting the contents of al-Qur'ān through general (global) discussion, without any description or even a long and broad discussion, also not carried out in detail, using short language, solid, concise, and simple. This book is classified into the *ijmaliy* method because Syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli explains the meaning of the verse in general, short sentences, such as expressing synonyms of the texts contained in the verse. Explanation of verses is only from one aspect, so there is not much information given by the book.

The interpretation feature contained in this commentary is the *lughawi* feature and Sufism style. The feature of *lughawi* is the interpretation of syekh Sulaiman ar-Rasuli explaining the verses of al-Qur'ān with the rules of language (Arabic) such as explaining the meaning of *mufradat* and synonyms (*muradif*). In addition, the style used is the Sufism pattern, the meaning is to explain the verses of al-Qur'ān with the spiritual approach of the *mufasssir* or with theories that are in Sufism.

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³⁸Ibid., 74.

³⁹Harun Nasution, *Islam ditinjau dari Beberapa Aspek* (Jakarta: UI Press, 1986), 67.

⁴⁰Ibid., 73.

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