

Law Foundation Study of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's Thought in Characteristics of Allah

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Abstract –*Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal is very famous in traditions collector of Prophet Muhammad, but there are statements related to characteristics of Allah that stated by him. Therefore, it is very important to understand Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's thought in characteristics of Allah. It is history study that explains a short biography of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and his statements about characteristics of Allah. Based on the literature study that Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal believes the characteristics of Allah are based on the Koran and collection of traditions of Prophet Muhammad. The characteristics of Allah believed by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal are suitable to Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah. Copyright © 2016 Penerbit Akademia Baru - All rights reserved.*

Keywords: Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, faith, tawhid, characteristics of Allah

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal was born in Baghdad in *Rabiulawal*, 164 H/ 780 M, when the government of Bani Abbasiyah was led by Muhammad al-Mahdi [1, 2]. This case is also stated by [3] who explained that Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal was born on a not strange date for our ear, it was on *Rabiulawal*, exactly in one hundred sixty four from *Hejira* year of Prophet Muhammad.

His full name is Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hanbal Ibn Hilal Ibn Asad Ibn Idris Ibn Abdullah Ibn Hayyan Ibn Abdullah Ibn Anas Ibn Auf Ibn Qasith Ibn Mazin Ibn Syaiban Ibn Dzahal Ibn Tsa'labah Ibn Akabah Ibn Sha'ab Ibn Ali Ibn Bakar Ibn Wa-il Ibn Qasith Ibn Hanab Ibn Aqsha Ibn Da'my Ibn Juwailah Ibn Asad Ibn Rabi'ah Ibn Nizar Ibn Ma'ad Ibn Adnan [4]. His more famous name is Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, he is partner of Muhammad Ibn Hanbal Ibn Hilal and Shafiyyah Ibn Maimunah Ibn Abdul Malik Asy-Syaibany [5, 6].

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal is a Muslim scholar in Islamic law, faith, and he is more famous in tradition collector of Prophet Muhammad. Some researchers have been studied about Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in term of his Islamic law, faith and tradition collection of Prophet Muhammad.

The biography of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal that starting from his born day, look for knowledge, a challenge during his life till death time are explained by [7]. In the explanation is stated that

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's followers were very explicit and sincere group. They did not want to decide to follow their self, but always follow the Koran and *Sunnah*.

The school of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal is called Hanbali *Madhhab*. It is built by four main issues, the first is a legal law and understanding, the second is background social and politic, the third is theology controversy and the last is social activity and moral view [8]. In the third issue is explained that the Hanbali *Madhhab* is based on the controversy between Muktaizilah's thought who stated that the Koran is creature.

The biography of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal is also explained by [9]. He is an Imam in *Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah* who believe the faith. It is explained that in the Baghdad government was led by Harun ar-Rasyid dan Khalifah al-Makmun, there was debate between Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and Muktaizilah *Madhhab*. The debate was around *ilahiyyat* concept.

Ilahiyyat is everything related to Allah [10]. It consists of existence argument of Allah, substance of Allah, characteristics of Allah and *rukyyat* Allah [10, 11, 12].

The study of *ilahiyyat* concept has been booked by [13]. It was explained that Muktaizilah *Madhhab* stated that the universe is proof of existence of Allah. Muktaizilah *Madhhab* did not believe about the characteristic of Allah. They also stated that Allah cannot be seen in the beyond. This explanation is also stated by [14] that Mukatzilah *Madhhab* did not believe that Allah can be seen by Muslim in the heaven. Because, if Allah can be seen, it means Allah is in a place.

This paper presents Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's thought in characteristics of Allah. To obtain this objective, the literature study is done. This study is related to some books that written by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, especially the book entitle "*Ushul as-Sunnah*".

2.0 METHODOLOGY

In the research study, there is two methods can be applied, they are qualitative [15] and quantitative [16]. This study is history study that explains biography of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, also his speaking and writing in characteristics of Allah. It is also explained by [15] that a method used in history study is qualitative study, because the study is look for a true facts that descriptive the last event. The qualitative study use content analysis that it is an analysis form to printed media, journal, book and writing report [17, 18].

This content analysis is used because Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal was death but his thought has been printed in books, thus his explanations can be studied until now. His main book used in this study is entitle "*Ushul as-Sunnah*".

It is due to this book explanation is short, thus it is important to relate it to other Imams of *Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah*, they are Ibn Taimiyyah al-Harrani, Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziah (because these *Madhhabs* were built by Hanbali *Madhhab* who stated that their view followed Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal) and Imam Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari (because in his faith always follow Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal).

3.0 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The law foundation is a method that should be referred in the study of characteristics of Allah. This method has been referred by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and the other Imams who scholar of *Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah* for deciding the content and thought of characteristics of Allah. The law foundation that has been referred by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal as thought foundation in study of characteristics of Allah is Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad.

Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad are the first foundation for *Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah* in Islamic law decision. They are due to one and only law source to study Islamic faith. The understanding of *Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah* cannot be changed by the other source. Therefore, everything has been decided in the Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad should be loyal and appreciate in the life.

It is suitable by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal who use the Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad are as the first law foundation in study of *characteristics of Allah*. Argument to proof the characteristics of Allah are always based on the Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad. Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal gives more priority to the Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad that the mind. Moreover, he goes far to the logic and mind that can give *bid'ah* and disagreement.

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's thought is suitable to Allah's command who order to Muslim for believing to the Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad. It is noted in *an-Nisa*: 59 of Koran;

...فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

“Meaning: ...then if ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day: That is best, and most suitable for final determination. (*an-Nisa*: 59) “

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal started to study the characteristics of Allah with sentences in Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad. He did not want to understand the sentences following the logic and philosophy. He and *Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah* stated that arguments which are compulsory to believe the Koran as the faith source are noted in *al-Baqarah*: 1- 2;

الْم. ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

“Meaning: *Alif Laam Miim*. This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah. (*al-Baqarah*: 1-2)

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's commitment to *Sunnah* Muhammad for law foundation in study of characteristics of Allah as stated in his book entitle “*Ushul as-Sunnah*”. He stated in this book that *Sunnah* is [2, 19, 20]

الْتَّمَسَاكَ بِمَا كَانَ عَلَيْهِ أَصْحَابُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. وَالْإِقْتِدَاءُ بِهِمْ.

“Meaning: Stick to what it was the Messenger of Allah , peace be upon him. And emulating them.”

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal stated that every one who follow the Messenger of Allah that they will be safety in the world and beyond. Especially in the study of characteristics of Allah, he always gives huge signal to the *Sunnah* Muhammad.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the literature study can be concluded that the law foundation of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's thought in the study of characteristics of Allah is Koran and *Sunnah* Muhammad. The characteristics of Allah believed by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal are suitable to *Ahli Sunnah wal Jamaah*. Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal stated that everyone who follow the Messenger of Allah that they will be safety in the world and beyond. Especially in the study of characteristics of Allah, he always gives huge signal to the *Sunnah* Muhammad.

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