

## The Wisdom of Polygamy of Prophet Muhammad SAW: An Examination of the Interpretation of Ali Al-Shabuni in the Book of *Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat al-Ahkam*

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### Abstract

This article aims to find out the wisdom of the Prophet Muhammad's polygamy according to Ali al-Shabuni in his book *Rawai' al-Bayan*. This is based on the fact that there are different perspectives where polygamy is considered a negative action. Apart from that, polygamy is also alleged to be an act that can hurt women and only favors men. However, Islam allows polygamy on condition that the husband can treat all his wives fairly. This refers to the QS explanation. al-Nisa' [4]: 3 which is seen as an argument for the legalization of polygamy. By using a qualitative-descriptive method, this article concludes that: *First*, Ali al-Shabuni views marriage as a form of sunnah, while for men who are polygamous with more than four wives it is forbidden. In other words, al-Shabuni allows polygamy as long as it meets the terms and conditions set by Islam. *Second*, the polygamous marriage practiced by the Prophet Muhammad according to Ali al-Shabuni contains four lessons that deserve attention, namely the teaching aspect, the legal aspect, the social aspect and the political aspect. From the four wisdoms mentioned by al-Shabuni, it appears that the Prophet's goal of polygamy was for the sake of religion and explaining religious law, especially to subdue the hearts of human opponents so that they could be attracted to embrace Islam and be able to establish good relations. In each of his marriages, the Prophet showed concrete evidence indicating his intelligence and courage, the height of his ideals and the beauty of his behavior. The Prophet's marriage was also not based on the satisfaction of sexual desire, because the Prophet when he was polygamous was not in his teens and the ones he married were not even girls.

**Keywords:** Ali al-Shabuni, Prophet Muhammad, polygamy, *Rawai' al-Bayan*

### Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hikmah poligami Nabi Muhammad SAW menurut Ali al-Shabuni dalam kitabnya *Rawai' al-Bayan*. Hal ini dilatarbelakangi oleh suatu fakta adanya perbedaan perspektif di mana poligami dianggap sebagai tindakan yang negatif. Selain itu, poligami juga disinyalir sebagai perbuatan yang dapat menyakiti kaum perempuan dan hanya berpihak pada kaum laki-laki semata. Meski demikian, Islam membolehkan berpoligami dengan syarat suami dapat berlaku adil terhadap semua istrinya. Ini merujuk pada penjelasan QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 3 yang dipandang sebagai dalil atas dilegalkannya poligami. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif-deskriptif, artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa: *Pertama*, Ali al-Shabuni memandang pernikahan sebagai bentuk kesunnahan, sementara bagi laki-laki yang berpoligami lebih dari empat istri dihukumi haram. Dengan kata lain, al-Shabuni membolehkan poligami selama memenuhi syarat dan ketentuan yang ditetapkan Islam. *Kedua*, pernikahan poligami yang dilakukan Nabi Muhammad menurut Ali al-Shabuni mengandung empat hikmah yang layak diperhatikan, yaitu aspek pengajaran, aspek penetapan hukum, aspek sosial dan aspek politik. Dari empat hikmah yang disebutkan al-Shabuni itu, tampak bahwa tujuan Nabi berpoligami adalah demi kepentingan agama dan menjelaskan tentang hukum agama, khususnya untuk menundukkan hati manusia yang menjadi lawannya sehingga dapat tertarik untuk memeluk

Islam dan dapat menjalin hubungan dengan baik. Dalam setiap pernikahannya, Nabi menunjukkan bukti konkret yang mengindikasikan kecerdasan dan keberaniannya, ketinggian cita-citanya dan keindahan tingkah lakunya. Pernikahan Nabi itu juga tidak didasarkan pada kepuasan nafsu seks, sebab Nabi ketika poligami tidak pada usia remaja dan yang dinikahi pun bukan yang gadis-gadis.

**Kata Kunci:** Ali al-Shabuni, Nabi Muhammad, poligami, *Rawai' al-Bayan*

## Introduction

Marriage is a sacred bond made by a man and a woman who are not muhrim to establish a strong covenant physically and mentally.<sup>1</sup> The Qur'an mentions it with the editorial *mitsaqan ghalida* (a strong agreement) which can later form an ideal couple in the form of husband and wife, as mentioned in QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 21. So important is marriage that the Qur'an discusses it from all sides with no less than 80 expressions, either with the editorial word nikah or *zawwaja*.<sup>2</sup>

Among the most frequently discussed forms of marriage in the Muslim context is polygamy. Polygamy is an act that is still a pro and con among the community.<sup>3</sup> This is due to the different perspectives in which polygamy is considered a negative act. In addition, polygamy is also allegedly an act that can hurt women and only favors men. However, Islam allows polygamy on the condition that the husband can be fair to all his wives. This refers to the explanation of QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 3, which is seen as an argument for the legalization of polygamy.<sup>4</sup>

In the current context, the verse is also understood as a proof that polygamy is not allowed, on the grounds that it is impossible for Muslims to be fair to their wives, especially since some of them have their own differences and tendencies that may not be in accordance with the husband's wishes. In other words, the explanation of QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 3 is actually a proposition that advocates the principle of monogamy for Muslims, not a proposition that polygamy is recommended or required. Polygamy is allowed only in urgent and emergency conditions.<sup>5</sup>

As for the polygamous marriage of the Prophet Muhammad, it cannot be said that it should also be emulated, because not necessarily what Allah obliges and prohibits the Prophet, is also obligatory and prohibited for his people, such as the obligation to perform night prayers and the Prophet is prohibited from receiving zakat. Polygamy ordered by the Prophet aims to preach in spreading the teachings of Islam.<sup>6</sup> In fact, the wives of Prophet

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<sup>1</sup> Eko Zulfikar, "Peran Perempuan dalam Rumah Tangga Perspektif Islam: Kajian Tematik dalam Alquran dan Hadis", *Diya Al-Afkar: Jurnal Studi al-Quran dan al-Hadis*, 7, no. 1 (2019), h. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Rahmi, "Poligami: Penafsiran Surat An-Nisa' Ayat 3," *Kafa'ah: Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Gender*, 5, no. 1 (2015), h. 115.

<sup>3</sup> Ach Faisol, "Poligami Dalam Berbagai Perspektif (Upaya Memahami Polarisasi Pro-Kontra Poligami-Monogami)", *Jurnal Ilmiah Abwal Syakshiyah*, 2, no. 2 (2020), h. 80.

<sup>4</sup> Mahfud dan Muhammad Qudwah Ptishom Billah, "Tafsir Ayat Ahkam Surah An-Nisa Ayat 3: Etika Poligami dan Hikmahnya Dalam Syari'at Islam," *Al-Fabmu: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 1, no. 1 (2022), h. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Agus Mahfudin dan Galuh Retno Setyo Wardani, "Asas Monogami dalam Surat An-Nisa' Ayat 3 (Studi Pemikiran M. Quraish Shihab)," *Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 3, no. 3 (2018), h. 125.

<sup>6</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Perempuan Dari Cinta Sampai Seks, Dari Nikah Mut'ah Sampai Nikah Sunnah, Dari Bias Lama Sampai Bias Baru* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2006), h. 168.

Muhammad were all widows except Aisha RA. This shows that the polygamy practiced by the Prophet had some special purposes and wisdom for the Prophet and the religion of Islam. This article will specifically review the wisdom of the Prophet Muhammad's polygamy in the view of Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni in his book *Rawai' al-Bayan*.

There have been many previous studies on polygamy. For example, research written by Siti Ropiah on the pros and cons of polygamy in Islam,<sup>7</sup> Eshter Masri, discusses polygamy in the perspective of Law number I of 1974,<sup>8</sup> Ahmad Faruqi on Polygamy in the perspective of QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 3,<sup>9</sup> Atik Wartini writes about polygamy from fiqh to legislation,<sup>10</sup> Riyandi discusses the implications of polygamy in the interpretation of the Qur'an,<sup>11</sup> Jendri discusses the application of limit theory to polygamy according to Muhammad Syahrur),<sup>12</sup> M Ichsan examines polygamy from a legal perspective,<sup>13</sup> Gandhi Liyorba discusses polygamy in tafsi *Mubadalah*,<sup>14</sup> Mokhamad Sukron discusses polygamy in the perspective of Wahbah al-Zuhaili,<sup>15</sup> and many more.

By answering two questions: how does Ali al-Shabuni view marriage? and how is the wisdom of polygamy in the Qur'an? This article is expected to complement previous studies and can provide a new understanding of the wisdom of polygamy according to Ali al-Shabuni. To obtain a comprehensive understanding, this article is developed from pure library research, which is a study conducted by referring to references in the form of verses of the Qur'an, Prophetic traditions, several books and books, journals, and other references that are still considered relevant to the theme discussed. This research also includes qualitative-descriptive research because it tries to describe and critically explain the meaning of the entire exposure contained in the discussion to find a new insight, namely about the wisdom of polygamy of the Prophet Muhammad according to Ali al-Shabuni in the book *Rawa'i al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat al-Abkam min al-Qur'an*.

The reference sources used by the author are primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are the main data that is the center of study in the discussion. This source is obtained from the verses of the Qur'an and the book of interpretation *Rawa'i al-Bayan* by Ali al-

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<sup>7</sup> Siti Ropiah, "Studi Kritis Poligami Dalam Islam (Analisa Terhadap Alasan Pro Dan Kontra Poligami)", *al-Afkar: Journal For Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2018), h. 89–104.

<sup>8</sup> Esther Masri, "Poligami Dalam Perspektif Undang-Undang Nomor I Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan Dan Kompilasi Hukum Islam (KHI)", *KRTHA BHAYANGKARA* 13, no. 2 (2019), h. 223-2411.

<sup>9</sup> Ahmad Faruqi, et al., "Poligami dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'aan (Analisis Tafsir Surat an-nisa' ayat 3)", *Al-Qorni: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 3, no. 1 (2018), h. 127-187.

<sup>10</sup> Atik Wartini, "Poligami: Dari Fiqh Hingga Perundang-Undangan", *Hunafa: Jurnal Studi Islam* 10, no. 2 (2013).

<sup>11</sup> Riyandi S, "Implikasi Poligami dalam Interpretasi Al-Qur'an: Pandangan Ulama, Tafsir Kontemporer, dan Perspektif Kementerian Agama RI", *Ameena Journal* 1, no. 3 (2023), h. 254–263.

<sup>12</sup> Jendri Jendri, "Aplikasi Teori Batas Terhadap Poligami (Studi Hermeneutika Muhammad Syahrur)", *Nun: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Tafsir di Nusantara* 6, no. 2 (2020), h. 145–162.

<sup>13</sup> M Ichsan, "Poligami Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam (Kajian Tafsir Muqaranah)", *Juris: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 17, no. 2 (2018).

<sup>14</sup> Gandhi Liyorba Indra, et al., "Poligami Dalam Tafsir Mubadalah", *Mahkamah: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 7, no. 2 (2022).

<sup>15</sup> Mokhamad Sukron, "Tafsir Wahbah Al-Zuhaili Analisis Pendekatan, Metodologi, Dan Corak Tafsir Al-Munir Terhadap Ayat Poligami", *Jurnal Pemikiran Pendidikan dan Kemanusiaan* 2, no. 1 (2018).

Shabuni. While secondary sources are obtained from library references, such as books or journals whose discussions are relevant to the theme of the study. While in analyzing the data, the author uses the content analysis technique, which is a mechanism that is functioned to examine a meaning in depth contained in library references.<sup>16</sup> In this stage, the author will analyze the results of al-Shabuni's interpretation in the book of *Rawai' al-Bayan* related to the wisdom of polygamy by the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Biography of Ali Al-Shabuni and the book of *Rawai' al-Bayan***

Ali al-Shabuni's full name is Muhammad Ali bin Jamil al-Shabuni. He was born in the city of Aleppo, which is located in Syria in 1928. Ali al-Shabuni since childhood grew up and was raised by a family who liked to study religious knowledge. His father named Jamil was an expert in science in Aleppo, as well as the first person to educate al-Shabuni in all fields of science, especially related to Arabic, inheritance and several other religious sciences. In his childhood, al-Shabuni has revealed the advantages and intelligence in understanding a science. This can be seen from his success in memorizing 30 juz of the Qur'an at a very young age.<sup>17</sup>

While learning religious knowledge from his father, al-Shabuni also studied with several famous scholars in Aleppo. In addition, to broaden his horizons, al-Shabuni also often attended several studies on science that were usually held in many mosques. After completing elementary school, al-Shabuni continued his studies at Khasrawiyya whose education focused on the field of shari'ah law and finished in 1949. Al-Shabuni then received a scholarship from the Syrian waqf department to continue his studies at the undergraduate level at the Faculty of Shari'ah at al-Azhar al-Syarif University, Cairo Egypt. His undergraduate studies were completed in 1952, and two years later he was able to complete his Masters in the concentration of Sharia Justice at the same University.<sup>18</sup>

After graduating from Cairo, al-Shabuni returned to Aleppo to teach in several schools. For approximately 8 years al-Shabuni served, starting from 1955 to 1962. Al-Shabuni then devoted himself as a lecturer at the Faculty of Shari'ah Ummul Qurra and the Faculty of Islamic Education at King Abdul Aziz University. He taught at this campus for 28 years while continuing his doctoral program at the Faculty of Shari'ah Ummul Qurra.<sup>19</sup> Because of his many advantages and so productive in compiling scientific works, al-Shabuni was once appointed dean of the Faculty of Shari'ah and confirmed as a professor in the field of tafsir at King Abdul Aziz University.

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<sup>16</sup> J. Lexy Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2005), h. 126.

<sup>17</sup> Ridho Riyadi, "Zina Menurut Ali al-Shabuni dalam Tafsir *Shafwatul Tafasir*", *Studia Quranika* 5, no. 2 (2021), h. 197.

<sup>18</sup> Shofaunnuha Faizatul Azizah, *Konsep Nusyuz Dalam Al-Qur'an (Studi Terhadap Rawai' al-Bayan fi Tafsir Ayat al-Abkam min al-Qur'an)*, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, 2020, h. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Laila Badriyah, "Kajian Terhadap Tafsir *Rawai' al-Bayan: Tafsir Ayat al-Abkam min al-Qur'an* Muhammad Ali ash-Shabuni", *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pranata Islam Syaikhuna* 8, no. 2 (2017), h. 136-37.

Not only active as a lecturer, al-Shabuni is also active in preaching by opening studies for the general public at the Grand Mosque and several mosques in the city of Jeddah. This activity as a preacher was carried out by al-Shabuni for about eight years, and every material presented in the study was recorded on cassettes. So that not a few of the results of the recordings of his studies were broadcast again through certain programs on national television. Al-Shabuni conducted public studies that were recorded and broadcast on television until 1998.<sup>20</sup>

Ali al-Shabuni is a Muslim intellectual who has extensive knowledge. He is known as a scholar who is a hafizh, fiqh expert, expert in the science of the Qur'an and tafsir, Arabic language expert and nahwu science, so that his scientific credibility can be trusted by the wider community.<sup>21</sup> Because he was very productive in writing scientific works, al-Shabuni was able to complete and have quite a lot of works. Among his works are: *Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat al-Ahkam min al-Qur'an*, *Shafwah al-Tafasir*, *al-Nubuwah wa al-Anbiya'*, *al-Mawarits fi al-Syariati al-Islamiyyah min Kunuzi al-Sunnah*, *al-Tafasir al-Wadhib al-Muyassar*, *al-Tibyan fi Ulum al-Qur'an*, *I'jaz al-Bayan fi Sumar al-Qur'an*, *Risalat al-Shalat*, *Durrat al-Tafasir*, *Qabasun min al-Nur al-Qur'an*, *Syarh Riyadh al-Sbshihin*, dan masih banyak lagi.

Of the several works produced by al-Shabuni, one of the most phenomenal and familiar among Muslims is the book *Rawa'i al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat al-Ahkam min al-Qur'an*. In language, *Rawa'i* is a plural of the word *rai'ah* which means beautiful again amazing, while *al-Bayan* means information or explanation. Therefore, the name *Rawa'i al-Bayan* can be interpreted as a beautiful explanation again amazing. From the naming of the book of tafsir can be known, that al-Shabuni strives to write his book packed with easy language in a way and reviews that can amaze the readers.<sup>22</sup>

The book of interpretation *Rawa'i al-Bayan* was successfully published into two volumes in 1990, where the first contains 40 chapters of discussion, while the second contains 30 chapters of discussion. All chapters are presented by al-Shabuni in accordance with the systematics he uses. Methodologically, the book of *Rawa'i al-Bayan* can be categorized as tafsir with legal nuances or *fiqhi* style, because the discussion only focuses on certain verses that contain legal explanations.<sup>23</sup>

As for the explanation of the legal verses discussed, al-Shabuni seems to use the *tablili* method. While interpreting legal verses that depart from certain topics, tafsir *Rawa'i al-Bayan* can be categorized using the *maudhu'i* method. The existence of a very high appreciation of the book of *Rawa'i al-Bayan*, making it one of the urgent books of interpretation to be studied because of the contributions made regarding the laws discussed by al-Shabuni are needed and relevant to contemporary society.

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<sup>20</sup> Ridho Riyadi, "Zina Menurut Ali al-Shabuni...", h. 198.

<sup>21</sup> M. Yusron, *Studi Kitab Tafsir Kontemporer*, (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2006), h. 49-50.

<sup>22</sup> Chaidir Abdul Wahab, *Membedah Metodologi Tafsir Ahkam*, (Bandung: Cita Pustaka, 2005), h. 77-78.

<sup>23</sup> Abdur Razzaq dan Andy Haryono, "Analisis Metode Tafsir Muhammad Ash-Shabuni dalam Kitab *Rawai' al-Bayan*", *Wardah* 18, no. 1 (2017), h. 60.

## **A Brief History of Polygamy**

The term polygamy is a term commonly applied to the form of marriage of a husband to more than one wife. In other words, a man in a household is obliged to give his time and love to the many wives he has, and this can put people's views on the moral ethics of people who practice polygamy.<sup>24</sup> Basically, polygamy, which in Arabic is expressed by *ta'addud al-ẓanjat*, is understood as a husband having more than one wife at the same time. There are no historical facts about polygamy at the time of its inception. Since hundreds of thousands of years ago, polygamy has been a common tradition in society.<sup>25</sup>

Based on the validity of the data, polygamy did not originate from the teachings of Islam, but originated in various countries that formally legalized multiple wives, such as Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, Denmark, Russia, Sweden, Belgium, England, and Germany, as well as the Hebrews and Arabs from the Middle East. Historical writings inform us that people in these countries practiced polygamy. This shows that the practice of polygamy existed before the advent of Islam, and that polygamy was widespread in other countries such as China, India, Japan and Africa, which are generally not Muslim.<sup>26</sup>

Polygamy is derived from the words *poly* and *polus*, which mean many, and *gemin* or *gamos*, which means marriage.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, the combination of the two words above can mean more than one marriage. This definition is in line with Islamic teachings that reveal polygamy as a marriage with more than one wife, and is generally limited to four wives. There are also Muslims who define polygamy as a marriage of up to nine wives. However, polygamy understood as marrying up to nine wives cannot be justified, because history shows that the Prophet prohibited his people from practicing marriage beyond four wives.<sup>28</sup>

In Christianity, the prohibition of polygamy is not even recorded in the Gospels. In other words, polygamy according to Christianity is not prohibited in the same way as the prohibition of marrying more than four wives in Islam. Meanwhile, the Greek and Roman religions strictly prohibit the practice of polygamy for their adherents, because they have been based on the teachings of their predecessors who forbade polygamy. The same goes for Christianity, which is predominantly practiced by Europeans, where they adhere to the monogamous teachings of their ancestors.<sup>29</sup>

In the view of Islam, polygamy is allowed on the condition that it must pay attention to the limits and conditions that have been set. If a Muslim wants to practice polygamy with up to four wives, for example, then he is obliged to be fair to all his wives with regard to maintenance, time-sharing, affection and housing. Islam emphasizes that if a Muslim who wants to practice polygamy cannot do justice, then he must remain monogamous, as mentioned in QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 3: "*So marry (other) women whom you please: two, three or four. But if*

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<sup>24</sup> Abdillah Mustari, "Poligami Dalam Reinterpretasi", *Sipakalebbi'* 1, no. 2 (2014), h. 253.

<sup>25</sup> Nasaruddin Umar, *Ketika fikih Membela Perempuan* (Jakarta: PT. Gramedia, 2014), h. 126.

<sup>26</sup> Andi Intan Cahyani, "Poligami Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam", *Jurnal Al-Qadau: Peradilan dan Hukum Keluarga Islam* 5, no. 2 (2018), h. 273.

<sup>27</sup> M. Ichsan, "Poligami Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam...", h. 153.

<sup>28</sup> Andi Intan Cahyani, "Poligami Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam", h. 273.

<sup>29</sup> Alhamdani, *Risalah Nikah: Hukum Perkawinan Islam*, (Yogyakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, 1972), h. 80.

*you fear that you will not be able to do justice, then marry only one, or a female slave whom you own. But if you fear that you will not be able to do justice, then marry only one, or a female slave whom you own.”*

Thus, it is clear that the history of polygamy did not originate from Islamic teachings. Instead, polygamy began and took root in European countries that still practice polygamy today. The arrival of Islam to allow polygamy does not mean following the traditions of Western countries, but as a foundation for teaching in raising the dignity of women. It must also fulfill the terms and conditions that have been set, as mentioned in QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 3, namely being fair to all his wives.

### **Ali Al-Shabuni's interpretation of the Law of Polygamy in QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 3**

Talking about polygamy is basically interesting to continue discussing. In addition to the reason that many Muslims today are competing in polygamy, it is also because religious texts about the law of polygamy are multi-interpretive so that they can be interpreted by mufasirs according to their interests and social conditions. Among the verses that reveal the law of polygamy is QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 3 as follows:

فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَى وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ  
ذَلِكَ أَذَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا

*“So marry any woman you like: two, three or four. But if you fear that you will not be able to do justice, then marry only one, or a female slave whom you own. But if you fear that you will not be able to do justice, then marry only one, or a female slave whom you own.”*

When understanding this verse, Ali al-Shabuni reviews the wording of the verse *fankihū* by giving the meaning of a permissible law, not to the point of obligatory law. According to him, the wording *fankihū* is the same as the command to eat and drink. In contrast, the Zhahiri school actually gives an obligatory law, because it is based on the form of *zahir* verse, namely *fiil amr* which indicates an order. While the original command is mandatory. However, al-Shabuni refutes the opinion of the Zhahiri school by mentioning QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 25:<sup>30</sup>

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ  
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَاَنْكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَأَتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ  
مُسَافِحَاتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ فَإِذَا أُحْصِنَ فَإِنَّ أَتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ  
الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ حَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

*“And whoever among you does not have the means to marry a believing free woman, then (it is permissible to marry) a believing woman from the slaves you own. Allah knows your faith. Some of you are the offspring of others, so marry them with the permission of their masters and give them a fair dowry, for they are chaste women, not adulterers nor women who take other men as their pets. But if they are married and commit fornication, then the punishment for them is half that of free*

<sup>30</sup> Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat al-Abkam min al-Qur'an*, (Beirut: Muassasah Manahil 'Irfan, 1974), Jilid I, h. 425-426.

women. (The permissibility of marrying a slave) is for those who fear hardship in guarding themselves (against adultery). But if you are patient, that is better for you. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

Ali al-Shabuni quotes Fakhruddin al-Razi when discussing QS. al-Nisa' [4]: 25, that in this verse Allah specifies that someone who does not marry because he cannot afford to do so is better off than getting married. This understanding shows that marriage is not sunnah, let alone obligatory. In addition, the discussion of the law of marriage as explained by al-Shabuni, in addition to the opinion of the Zhahiri school of thought that makes marriage obligatory, there is also the opinion of the Shafi'i school of thought that ruled it permissible and the Hanbali, Maliki, Hanafi schools of thought that ruled it sunnah.<sup>31</sup>

Of the rulings that have been described, al-Shabuni seems to choose the opinion that ruled marriage as a form of kesunnahan. This is because he relies on the Prophet's hadith as follows;

فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَنْتُمْ الَّذِينَ قُلْتُمْ كَذَا وَكَذَا أَمَا وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لِأَحْشَاكُمُ لِلَّهِ وَأَتَقَاكُمُ هُرْ لِكَيْيَ أَصُومُ وَأُفْطِرُ وَأُصَلِّي وَأَرْقُدُ وَأَتَزَوَّجُ النِّسَاءَ فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَن سُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي.

“The Prophet said: “You say this and that. I, by Allah, am the most fearful of Allah among you, and also the most pious. I fast and I break my fast, I pray and I sleep, and I marry women. Whoever hates my sunnah is not of my people.”<sup>32</sup>

Abu Bakr al-Jashshash agreed with what al-Shabuni said. He revealed that the ruling on marriage is sunnah based on scholarly consensus. According to al-Jashshash, the verse *fankihu* above is interpreted as a command that indicates the meaning of sunnah, not to the extent of obligation. Therefore, the general law of marriage is sunnah.<sup>33</sup> This is also supported by the following Prophetic tradition;

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ أَحَبَّ فِطْرَتِي فَلْيَسْتَنَّ بِسُنَّتِي وَمَنْ سُنَّتِي النَّكَاحُ.

The Rasullullah SAW said: “Whoever loves my fitrah, then follow my sunnah, and among my sunnah is marriage.”<sup>34</sup>

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: تَزَوَّجُوا الْوُدُودَ الْوُلُودَ فَإِنِّي مُكَاتِّرٌ بِكُمْ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

The Rasullullah SAW said: “Marry a woman whom you love and have many children, for I will be proud of you in the presence of the Prophets on the Day of Judgment.”<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan*..., Jilid I, h. 426.

<sup>32</sup> Muhammad bin Isma'il al-Bukhari, *Shahih al-Bukhari*, (Beirut: Dar Ibnu Katsir, 2002), Juz VII, h. 2, no. 5063. Abu al-Husain Muslim bin al-Hajjaj al-Naisaburi, *Shahih Muslim*, (Beirut: Dar al-Afaq al-Jadidah, t.th), Juz VI, h. 129, no. 3469.

<sup>33</sup> Abu Bakar Ahmad bin 'Ali al-Razi al-Jashshash, *Abkam al-Qur'an*, ed. Muhammad Shadiq Qamhawi, (Beirut: Dar al-Turats Ihya' al-Arabi, 1996), Juz V, h. 18.

<sup>34</sup> Abu Bakar Ahmad bin al-Husain bin 'Ali al-Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kabra*, (CD Room: al-Maktabah al-Syamilah, Digital), Juz VII, h. 78, no: 13833.

<sup>35</sup> Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Hanbal, *Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal*, ed. Ahmad Muhammad Syakir, (Kairo: Dar al-Hadis, 1995), Juz III, h. 158, no. 12634.



In Kiya' al-Harrasi's view, lafaz *fankihu* indicates an obligatory command (marry). This is because an order is initially obligatory, so the law of marriage in this context is also obligatory, and anyone who does not get married will be sinned against.<sup>36</sup> Of the three laws of marriage mentioned, it actually leads to a matter related to saving Muslims from sin. If Muslims are afraid of committing adultery if they do not get married, then the agreement of the scholars is that it is obligatory to get married. This is because avoiding sinful behavior such as adultery is obligatory, while the only way to get married is to get married.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, al-Shabuni discusses the law of marrying more than one by quoting the opinion of linguists, that the editorial verse *matsna, wa tsulatsa, wa ruba'a* is a sentence count, where each indicates the number mentioned. The word *matsna* means two, two; *tsulatsa* means three, three; and *ruba'a* means four, four. Therefore, the intended meaning of the verse is that it is permissible to marry any woman one likes, whether it is two-two, three-three or four-four, and it is addressed to the people.

For al-Shabuni, the law of marrying more than four based on this verse is forbidden. This is also in accordance with the scholarly consensus that cannot be shaken by the heretics, that according to them marriage with nine wives is permissible, because in the verse used *wawu li al-jam'* (wawu that functions to combine absolutely), namely combined:  $2+3+4=9$ . This is also supported by the *fi'liyab* hadith of the Prophet who married nine wives.<sup>38</sup>

Al-Shabuni further explains that among those who think it is permissible to marry nine wives are the Shi'ah Rafidhah and Zhahiriyah. In fact, al-Shabuni says there are those who are worse to marry twelve wives at once. This understanding is very deviant and contrary to what Islam teaches. Because, there was never among the Companions or Tabi'in who married more than four people at once. Rather, Islam commands divorcing more than the prescribed number of wives, as did Ghailan who had ten wives and the Prophet ordered him to choose four of them.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, it is clear that Ali al-Shabuni forbids marriage for men to more than four wives. In other words, the above verse explains the restrictions on marriage for Muslims, not to increase the number of wives more than one. Al-Shabuni does not explain further how the law of marrying more than one according to the explanation of the verse above. It seems that he agrees with the opinion that allows polygamy in Islam. But what is clear, al-Shabuni ruled marriage in general as a mustahabbility in accordance with the guidance of the Prophet and ruled it haram to marry more than four wives.

### **The Wisdom of the Prophet Muhammad's Polygamy according to Ali al-Shabuni**

In Ali al-Shabuni's view, the Prophet's marriage to more than one wife was not due to lust and lust. This is evidenced by the Prophet's marriage at an age that is no longer young,

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<sup>36</sup> 'Imaduddin bin Muhammad al-Thabari al-Ma'ruf Kiya' al-Harrasi, *Ahkam al-Qur'an*, (Beirut: Dar al-Turats Ihya' al-Arabi, 1996), Juz III-IV, h. 313.

<sup>37</sup> Eko Zulfikar, "Tinjauan Tafsir Ahkam Tentang Hukum Pernikahan Dalam Al-Qur'an Surat Al-Nur Ayat 32-33", *Mahkamah: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 5, no. 2 (2020), h. 215.

<sup>38</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid I, h. 426.

<sup>39</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid I, h. 427.

marrying widows and not girls. For al-Shabuni, there are at least four lessons that can be learned from the polygamy of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, namely:

a. Teaching aspect (*al-ta'limiyah*)

It cannot be denied that the Prophet of polygamy has the aim of providing education and teaching to women regarding religious problems. This is because not a few women are embarrassed to ask the Prophet directly about religious problems, especially those related to women's problems, such as menstruation, postpartum, jinabat, household affairs, and others. While the Prophet himself was a shy figure, especially when dealing with girls who did not allow the Prophet to be able to answer frankly every question asked. The Prophet could only answer with *kinayah* language (allusion) which most likely could not be understood by the women.<sup>40</sup>

In the narration of al-Bukhari and Muslim revealed, that Aisha told a woman who asked the Prophet a question regarding how to bathe after menstruation, then the Prophet taught how to bathe it, as he said:

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ عَنْ مَنْصُورِ ابْنِ صَفِيَّةَ عَنْ أُمِّهِ عَنْ عَائِشَةَ أَنَّ امْرَأَةً سَأَلَتِ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ غُسْلِهَا مِنَ الْمَحِيضِ فَأَمَرَهَا كَيْفَ تَغْتَسِلُ قَالَ خُذِي فِرْصَةً مِنْ مِسْكِ فَتَطَهَّرِي بِهَا قَالَتْ كَيْفَ أَتَطَهَّرُ قَالَ تَطَهَّرِي بِهَا قَالَتْ كَيْفَ قَالَ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ تَطَهَّرِي فَاجْتَبِذْهُمَا إِلَيَّ فُكُلْتُ تَتَّبِعِي بِهَا أَثَرَ الدَّمِ.  
"Dari 'Aisyah, "Seorang perempuan bertanya kepada Nabi SAW tentang cara mandi dari haid. Nabi lalu menyuruh perempuan itu bagaimana cara mandi. Nabi bersabda: "Ambillah sepotong kapas yang diberi wewangian lalu bersucilah." Perempuan itu bertanya, "Bagaimana aku bersucinya? Beliau menjawab: ""'A'ishah reported: A woman asked the Prophet about how to perform ghusl after menstruation. The Prophet then told her how to do ghusl. The Prophet said: "Take a piece of perfumed cotton and wash." The woman asked, "How do I purify? He replied: "Wash with that cotton!" The woman said, "How do I purify myself?" The Prophet said: "Purify with the cotton wool!" The woman asked again, "How do I purify myself?" The Prophet said, "Subhanallah. Purify yourself!" Then I pulled the woman towards me and said, "You clean the remaining blood with the cotton wool."<sup>41</sup>

Based on the above Hadith, it appears that 'A'ishah explicitly taught the Ansar woman who asked the Prophet how to clean menstrual blood. 'A'ishah instructed her to place the cotton wool in the place where the menstrual blood was discharged. This is because the Prophet was embarrassed to mention explicitly the answer he wanted to give, while there are very few women who can master their feelings and shame, then ask the Prophet openly about women's issues.

There are many other examples of the teaching given by the Prophet's wives in answering questions about women's issues. In this context, the wives of the Prophet have a high merit in teaching the teachings of Islam brought by the Prophet. They were the team that transformed the Prophet's instructions and at the same time became skilled teachers and

<sup>40</sup> 'Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 318.

<sup>41</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Shahih al-Bukhari*, Juz I, h. 85, no. 314. Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, *Shahih Muslim*, Juz I, h. 179, no. 774.

were known as women who were intelligent and strong in memorization. Thus, it is clear that the Prophet's marrying more than one wife was to propagate Islam and teach women about women's issues.<sup>42</sup>

b. Aspects of law enforcement (*al-tasyri'iyah*)

The next wisdom of the Prophet's polygamy is the aspect of determining the law that can be known from the annulment of child adoption as a bad *jahiliyah* tradition. Ali al-Shabuni exemplifies a fairly long story about the tradition of child adoption that has taken root in the *jahiliyah* era, namely the adopted child can inherit the property of his adoptive parents, and vice versa. In brief, the nullification of the law began with the Prophet adopting a child named Zaid bin Haritsah, so that the people of ignorance called him by the name of Zaid bin Muhammad.<sup>43</sup>

The story of the adoption of Zain bin Haritsah was narrated by al-Bukhari as follows:

حَدَّثَنَا مُعَلَّى بْنُ أَسَدٍ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ الْمُحْتَارِ حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ عُقْبَةَ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي سَالِمٌ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا أَنَّ زَيْدَ بْنَ حَارِثَةَ مَوْلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا كُنَّا نَدْعُوهُ إِلَّا زَيْدَ ابْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ حَتَّى نَزَلَ الْفُرْقَانُ {ادْعُوهُمْ لِآبَائِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ}.

“Abdullah ibn Umar reported that Zaid ibn Harithah, the adopted son of the Messenger of Allah (SAW), used to be called Zain ibn Muhammad, until the verse of the Qur'an was revealed: Call them by their fathers, which is more honest in the sight of Allah.”<sup>44</sup>

The story goes on to say that Zayd was married off by the Prophet to Zainab bint Jahsh al-Asadiyah, and had a household for some time. However, the family relationship did not last long and eventually divorced. Then Allah commanded the Prophet to marry Zainab with the aim of canceling the entrenched tradition of adoption as well as destroying the foundations of the jahiliyah tradition. As a result of this marriage, the Prophet was afraid of being ridiculed by the hypocrites and other disbelievers. So that a verse was revealed that was quite harsh in criticizing the Prophet's attitude, namely QS. al-Ahzab [33]: 37.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, the nullification of the law of child adoption that was rooted in the pre-Islamic period has been successfully overthrown. The Qur'an reinforces the annulment of the law of adoption by stating explicitly that the Prophet is a messenger of God and not the biological father of Zaid bin Haritsah, as Allah says in QS. al-Ahzab [33]: 40;

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا.

“Muhammad is not the father of any of you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets. And Allah knows all things.”

<sup>42</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 319-320.

<sup>43</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 321.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Shahih al-Bukhari*, Juz VI, h. 145, no. 4782.

<sup>45</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 322.

It seems clear that the Prophet's marriage to Zainab was at the behest of God, not following his whims and desires, as alleged by the people of ignorance. Marriage with Zainab as a form of polygamy of the Prophet has had a noble purpose, namely for the establishment of the law by eradicating the traditions that have mushroomed in the jahiliah period. Therefore, this marriage is called Zainab as a marriage directly married by God to establish a law.<sup>46</sup>

c. Social aspect (*al-ijma'iyah*)

The third wisdom is seen from the social aspect, seen in the Prophet's marriage to 'Aisha, the daughter of Abu Bakar al-Shididiq, the first comrade in arms. Then his marriage to Hafshah, the daughter of Umar bin al-Khattab, the second comrade-in-arms. The Prophet's association with the Quraysh tribe in terms of lineage and his marriage to several other women. All of that shows the purpose of establishing kinship between tribes, as well as making the heart united in strengthening the Prophet's preaching.<sup>47</sup>

For example, the Prophet was married to 'Aisha, the daughter whom his father Abu Bakr loved the most and who had the most honorable position beside him. Abu Bakr himself was the first Companion to convert to Islam and sacrificed his body, soul and property for the sake of Islam and defended the Prophet for the cause of Islam. Furthermore, the Prophet's marriage to Hafshah who calmed Umar, especially his sacrifice for the preaching of Islam: his honesty, sincerity and willingness to sacrifice for the sake of Islam. Similarly, the Prophet married his two daughters to Uthman bin Affan and Ali bin Abi Talib. Strictly speaking, the four of them (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali) were the great companions and *khalafatur rasul* who spread Islam and continued the Prophet's mission.<sup>48</sup>

d. Political aspects (*al-siyasah*)

Another purpose why the Prophet was polygamous was to soften the hearts of people and unite the Arab tribes. As is known, everyone who marries the daughter of an Arab tribe or a family, then between the two there will be an alliance that in time will encourage them to unite by defending and protecting each other. There are three evidence examples of the wisdom of the Prophet's marriage that can be considered from this political aspect. *First*, the Prophet's marriage to Juwariyah bint Harith the son of the chief of Banu Musthalaq. Juwariyah was once detained with her people by the Islamic forces.

In the midst of Juwariyah's captivity, she declared that she wanted to redeem herself to be released. Then the Prophet came with a little help in the form of wealth and intended to marry her. The offer was accepted, and eventually the marriage between them took place. From what the Prophet did, the Muslims freed all the captives of Banu Mushthalaq and they eventually converted to Islam and became brothers in faith.<sup>49</sup> From this it is clear that the Prophet's marriage brought blessings to Juwariyah, to the Banu Mushthalaq and also to her

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<sup>46</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 323.

<sup>47</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 323.

<sup>48</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 324.

<sup>49</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 325.

family. The marriage had also led to the Islamization of Banu Mushthalaq and their freedom from captivity.

*Secondly*, the Prophet's marriage to Shafiyah bint Huyay bin Akhthab who was taken captive after the death of her husband during the battle of Khaibar. At that time, Shafiyah fell into the hands of some Muslims as a prisoner. She was given an offer to marry the Prophet and be freed, or choose to have her vehicle released and return to her family. So Shafiyah chose freedom and became the Prophet's wife, citing the great power and kindness of the Prophet which subsequently led Shafiyah and some of her people to convert to Islam.<sup>50</sup>

*Third*, the Prophet's marriage to Umm Habibah, whose real name was Ramlah bint Abu Sufyan. At that time, Abu Sufyan was the flag bearer (symbol of resistance) of the polytheists and was among the foremost in fighting the Prophet. While her daughter Ummu Habibah embraced Islam in Mecca and migrated with her husband to Habsyah, in order to defend her religion. Then, Ummu Habibah's husband died and she lived alone abandoned, practically no help and who cared about her.

Hearing the news, the Prophet sent a messenger to the king of Habsyah, Najasyi, to marry Umm Habibah to him. What the Prophet wanted was approved and finally the Prophet and Umm Habibah were married with a dowry of 400 dinars. After the news of the Prophet's marriage to Ummu Habibah was heard by Abu Sufyan, Abu Sufyan was proud because the Prophet was very generous and carried the value of equality (as a fellow Qurayshite) which ultimately led Abu Sufyan to get instructions to convert to Islam.<sup>51</sup>

Thus, it is clear that the Prophet's marriage to Abu Sufyan's daughter has reduced hostility and even united into brothers in faith. In fact, Abu Sufyan was previously one of the Bani Umaiyyah who was most aggressively hostile to the Prophet, most often against the Prophet and the Muslims. Marriage with Umm Habibah was the cause of the softening of Abu Sufyan's heart personally, more generally for his people and also his entire family. In addition, the Prophet with his marriage has shown respect to Umm Habibah for her faith, because she ran away from her village to save her religion, Islam.

From the explanation of the Prophet's polygamy above, it appears that the Prophet's marriage to his wives contains very important wisdom, namely for the sake of religion and explaining about the laws of religion, especially subduing the hearts of people who are his opponents, so that the princes of the tribe are interested in embracing Islam and can establish good relations. In addition, it is known that apart from 'Aisha, all the Prophet's wives were widows. In each of his marriages, the Prophet showed concrete evidence indicating his intelligence and courage, the height of his ideals and the beauty of his behavior. The Prophet's marriages were also not based on the satisfaction of sexual lust, because the Prophet when polygamy was not in his teens and those he married were not girls.

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<sup>50</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 323.

<sup>51</sup> Ali al-Shabuni, *Rawai' al-Bayan...*, Jilid II, h. 326.

## Conclusion

From the relatively brief explanation above, this research reaches the end point with two conclusions. *First*, Ali al-Shabuni views marriage as a form of obligation, while men who are polygamous with more than four wives are considered haram. In other words, al-Shabuni allows polygamy as long as it fulfills the terms and conditions set by Islam. *Second*, the polygamous marriage performed by the Prophet Muhammad according to Ali al-Shabuni contains four wisdoms that are worthy of attention, namely the teaching aspect, the aspect of determining the law, the social aspect and the political aspect. Of the four wisdoms mentioned by al-Shabuni, it appears that the Prophet's purpose of polygamy is for the sake of religion and explaining about religious law, especially to subdue the hearts of people who are opponents so that they can be attracted to embrace Islam and can establish good relations. In each of his marriages, the Prophet showed concrete evidence indicating his intelligence and courage, the height of his ideals and the beauty of his behavior. The Prophet's marriages were also not based on the satisfaction of sexual lust, because the Prophet when polygamy was not in his teens and those he married were not girls.

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