



Religious Moderation from the Perspective of the Hadith Nabawi

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Abstract. Religious moderation is the moderate understanding, worship, and muamalah attitudes in applying the teachings of the religion adopted, so that they are balanced, not extreme and not disparaging. This article aims to explore the hadiths nabawi becoming the basis for being moderate in Islam, either in aqidah, worship, or muamalah. This will result in a complete understanding of true religious moderation. It was a qualitative research with a library research type, and the data analysis techniques employed were inductive and deductive. The results of the study indicated that there are several hadiths that prohibit Muslims from being extreme in religion, either in aqidah, worship, or muamalah with others. The existing sahih hadiths engage us to understand and practice religion passing through the path of balance and staying in the middle way so that religion seems friendly, gentle and affectionate. The principle of moderation in religion (wasathiyah) which is explained in the hadith nabawi is the one of al-khairiyah (being the best), al-tawazun (balancing), raf'u al-haraj (removing troubles), and al-tasamuh (being tolerant).

Keywords: Islam · Religious Moderation · Hadith

1 Introduction

The word moderation in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) is interpreted into two meanings, namely reducing violence and avoiding extremes. For example, if someone is said to be moderate, it means that the person is acting as he should be, namely he should be reasonable, mediocre and not be extreme. It shows that the word moderate means more inclined to its meaning in the aspect of balance in the dimensions of morals, character and beliefs, both when a person is seen as an individual or when he is associated with state institutions [1].

Whereas in Arabic rules, moderation is better known as wasathiyah. There are similarities in meaning between the words tawassuth (middle), ta'ādul (fair), and tawazun (balanced). On the basis of being very close to or even the same meaning, the three expressions can be combined into wasathiyah. Wasathiyah means a middle ground or balance between two different or opposite things [2].

In Indonesia, the discourse on moderation (wasathiyah) is described in three basic principles, namely: moderation of thought, movement, and action. Regarding the first

principle, moderation in religious thought is recognized by the ability to synthesize between text and context, for example, in reading scriptures, it is not only understood through the outward state of the text, then negates the context element behind it. Moderation in religious thought is to dynamically combine the two in order to get a complex understanding, resulting in moderate Muslims who are not only textual, but also contextual. It is because the contextual approach is important to understand Islam in terms of its context, both space and time.

The second principle is moderation in the movement, namely the activity of spreading (da'wah) religion which aims to invite goodness and avoid evil, it must be underlined that in the movement to do, violence and coercion should not be used. Instead, they better use a good, friendly, polite way without any intention of hurting and judging others. It is better to show a friendly face, instead of being angry, and it always prioritizes love, instead of carrying the spirit of hatred. The third principle is moderation in actions (religious practices), it is the strengthening of the relationship between religion and culture (traditions) of the local community. Religion is not present with an old-fashioned character (conservative) towards culture, in fact both are open to each other to dialogue and produce new cultures. As one of the characteristics of a moderate Muslim, one attitude is that one is not anti-local culture, as long as the culture does not conflict with religious law, of course it is legal if applied and even it may be used as a means to strengthen the values of faith [3].

Therefore, Islam actually rejects extreme attitudes and exaggeration, and on the contrary, it also denounces the attitude of some Muslims who are too soft and ignore the teachings of their religion. Thus, what is called moderation is a middle position between two extreme poles, between the very liberal and the very extreme [4].

Muslims are the middle class as described in the QS. Al-Baqarah verse 143: "And thus We have made you (Muslims) a median [i.e., just] community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you. And We did not make the qiblah which you used to face except that We might make evident who would follow the Messenger from who would turn back on his heels And indeed, it is difficult except for those whom Allāh has guided. And never would Allāh have caused you to lose your faith [i.e., your previous prayers]. Indeed Allāh is, to the people, Kind and Merciful.

The Prophet has full authority in explaining the contents of The Qur'an. When he was still alive, every problem faced by the companions was immediately asked to the Messenger of Allah, and each of his answers became a hadith that has always been a guide for his people. Hadith as understood is an explanation of various things that are still not clear from the contents of The Qur'an. Therefore, there is a very close relationship between The Qur'an and hadiths. This study would explore the hadiths nabawi serving as the basis for being moderate in Islam, in aqidah, worship, and muamalah. This will result in a complete understanding of true religious moderation.

2 Methodology

This research is a qualitative research through literature study. The method used in the research is the thematic method, by collecting hadiths and correlating them with the

object of research. This method is common because it connects the existing problems with the contextualization of the hadith message.

3 Results

3.1 Hadiths on Religious Moderation

- 1) Prohibition of excess in religion
- a) From Ibn Abbas said, the Rasulullah said: “Keep yourselves from exaggeration (ghulu) in religion. Indeed exaggeration in religion has destroyed those before you.” (HR an-Nasa’i, [5] Ibnu Majah [6]. And authenticated by al-Albani)

This Hadith explains about: (1) excessive Prohibition in carrying out religion to the extent that it exceeds the limit; (2) The Prophet (may peace be upon him) warned his ummah from the attitude of ghulu (exaggerated) and said clearly that it is the cause of destruction and destruction, because it violates the Shari’a and is the cause of the destruction of the previous Ummah; (3) Among the forms ghulu, that is attitude ghuluw against righteous people by glorifying them, building their graves, making statues that resemble them, even until finally they are worshiped.

- b) Abdullah bin Mas’ud narrated from the Prophet Muhammad saw, he said: “Woe to the extreme ones!” He said it three times.” (HR. Muslim) [7].

This hadith explains about the prohibition of doing extremes in religion so that it exceeds the limits of what is prescribed.

- c) Anas bin Malik narrated, the Prophet Muhammad saw said: “Do not burden yourself, so that Allah Azza wa Jalla will burden you. Verily a people have burdened themselves, then Allah Almighty has burdened them. You can still see their remains in monasteries and houses of worship, they invented rahbaniyyah (monasticism) even though We did not prescribe it for them.” (HR. Abu Dawud [8] and authenticated by al-Albani).

This hadith describes the prohibition of doing tasyaddud (to burden oneself) in worship so that it exceeds the limits as done by the monks so that they live celibate for religious reasons.

- 2) Prohibition of exaggeration in praising the Messenger of Allah

From Umar bin Khattab, the Messenger of Allah said: “Do not be excessive in praising me, as the Christians have exaggerated in praising ‘Isa son of Maryam. I am only His servant, so say: Servant of Allah and His Messenger.” (HR. Bukhari) [9].

This hadith explains the prohibition of transgressed (exaggerated) in praising and flattering the Messenger of Allah, thus elevating him above his rank as a servant and messenger of Allah, attributing to him some of the qualities ilahiyyah (ketuhanan).

3) The command to practice religion according to the example of the Prophet Muhammad saw

From Anas bin Malik, he said: Three people came to the houses belonging to the Prophet's wives to ask about the worship of the Prophet, so when they were informed, it was as if they considered it a little. They said, "How is our condition if it is compared with that of the Prophet? He is a person whose past and future sins have been forgiven." Then one of them said, 'As for me, then I will pray all night long.' Another said, 'And I will fast all year without breaking my fast.' While the third said, 'I will stay away from women, I will not marry forever.' So the Prophet Muhammad came to them and said, "Are you the ones who have said such and such? Remember, for the sake of Allah, I am the most Allah-fearing among you, and the most pious of Him, but I fast and break my fast, I pray and sleep, and I marry women. So whoever hates my sunnah, he is not from my group." (HR. Bukhari dan Muslim)

This Hadith explains the standard of piety in religion is what the Prophet Muhammad SAW exemplified. He carries out Islamic laws in accordance with human nature, because each has rights that should be fulfilled, namely Allah's rights the children's rights, the wife's rights, and the body's rights So he sometimes fasted and sometimes broke his fast, on some nights he prayed and on others he slept to give the right eye, and he got married because it is part of human biological needs. This is a form of religious moderation exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad.

4) Orders are balanced in obedience

a) From Aisha, that the Prophet (saw) entered Aisha's place and at that time there was a woman with him, so then he asked, "Who is this woman?" Aisha replied, 'This is fulanah.' Then Aisha said that she was very extraordinary in performing prayers. So he said: "Don't be like that! You should do what you are capable of. By Allah, Allah will not be bored (giving reward) until you are bored. And the religion (charity) that is most beloved to Allah is what its doers do continuously." (HR) Bukhari and Muslim)

This Hadith explains that: (1) Worshiping excessively is not recommended because it is feared that it will cause saturation; (2) The goodness with the greatest reward is that the one which is done continuously, even if the quantity is small. Rather than great in quantity, but if it is done only once or twice; (3) Goodness that is done continuously proves the attitude of getting closer and sincere; (4) Sufficient for our own needs, even in things that are permissible, will be rewarding when it is intended to increase endurance in worship and do good.

b) From Abu Hurairah, that the Prophet SAW said: "Religion is easy. No one complicates religion, unless he will lose. Therefore apply the middle, try to approach the most perfect, worship happily, and take advantage of the morning, evening, and a little time at the end of the night." (HR. Bukhari).

And in another narration of Bukhari, the Prophet Muhammad saw said: "Be in the middle, try to get close to the most perfect, and take advantage of the morning, evening

and a little bit of the end of the night. Worship the middle, do it in moderation, surely you will reach your goal.”

This Hadith explains about: (1) The recommendation to worship in the middle according to one’s ability so that it can be continuous; (2) Suggestions to perform worship when the body is in good health; (3) Worship that is not excessive can lead us to the pleasure of Allah.

- c) From Anas bin Malik, he told that Prophet Muhammad was seen to enter into the mosque. He saw there was a rope that ran between the two pillars of the mosque, so he asked: “What rope is it?” The companions replied, ‘This is Zainab’s rope. If she feels tired during the night prayer, then he leans on the rope.’ So the Messenger of Allah said: “Let go of this rope. Let one of you pray while one is active. If one is tired, then one should sleep.” (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

This Hadith explains that : (1) Islamic teachings are easy; (2) It is suggested not to be excessive in worship, but to do it wholeheartedly; (3) One does not force oneself to do sunnah worship, so that it exceeds the limit of one’s ability.

- d) From Aisha, that the Messenger of Allah said: “If one of you falls asleep while praying, then let him sleep so that the drowsiness disappears from him, because when he prays while he is sleepy, he does not know, maybe he intended to beg forgiveness, but instead he insults himself.”(HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

This hadith describes: (1) Suggestion not to overdo worship; (2) The instruction to pay attention to the body’s rights when worshiping, so that one can worship solemnly.

- e) From Jabir bin Samurah, he said, ‘I once prayed with the Prophet Muhammad saw. Indeed, his prayer was moderate (not long and not short), and his sermon was moderate.’ (HR. Muslim).

This Hadith explains that (1) The practice of the Prophet’s worship was middle, especially when he was a priest; (2) We are instructed not to overdo anything.

- f) From Wahb bin Abdullah, he said, the Prophet Muhammad saw brought Salman and Abu Darda’ together. One day, Salman visited Abu Darda’. When he saw Umm Darda’ (Abu Darda’s wife) in a shabby state, Salman asked, ‘What is wrong with you?’ Umm Darda’ replied, ‘Your brother, Abu Darda’ has no desire for the world anymore.’ Abu Darda’ then came and made some foods. After that, he said to Salman, ‘Eat. I am fasting.’ Salman replied, ‘I will not eat, unless you join in.’ So Abu Darda’ ate. When the night fell, Abu Darda’ would go to perform the tahajjud prayer. Salman said to him, ‘Go to sleep.’ Abu Darda’ slept. Then when he was about to leave again for the midnight prayer, Salman said, ‘Go to sleep.’ When the end of the night came, Salman said, ‘Now get up.’ Then they pray together. Salman said to him, ‘Your Lord has rights that you should fulfill, your body also has rights you have to meet, and your family also has rights you should fulfill. Therefore, meet their

respective rights.’ Then Abu Darda’ came to the Prophet (s) and complained about all of them. The Prophet SAW said: “What Salman said is true.”(HR. Bukhari).

This Hadith describes that (1) it is an instruction to be fair in fulfilling each other’s rights; (2) It is permissible to forbid a person from leaving a Sunnah practice when that Sunnah practice causes that person to neglect his obligations.

5) The command on being moderate in giving charity

From Saad bin Abu Waqqash, he said, ‘In the year of Hajj Wada’, the Messenger of Allah visited me when I was seriously ill. I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, I am severely sick. I am a person who has a lot of wealth, while my heir is only my daughter. Can I donate two thirds of my wealth?’ The Messenger of Allah replied: “Don’t.” I asked, ‘Half, O Messenger of Allah?’ He replied: “Don’t.” I asked, “A third, O Messenger of Allah?” He replied: “It can be a third, and a third is a lot. Indeed, if you leave your heirs in a state of abundance it is better than you leaving them in a state of poverty, so that they beg from the people.” (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

This Hadith explains about: (1) The middle advice in giving charity; (2) The instruction to pay attention to the future of the child so as not to become a weak generation and become a burden to others.

6) Many paths of goodness

From Abu Dharr, that the Messenger of Allah said: “Never underestimate the slightest kindness, even if only by showing a cheerful (friendly) face when you meet fellow Muslims.” (HR. Muslim)

This Hadith explains that: (1) There are many ways of goodness so that we don’t behave in an extreme way with certain practices; (2) The lightest kindness to do is to have a friendly face when meeting fellow Muslims.

3.2 The Concept of Religious Moderation in Islam

The principle of religious moderation in Islam consists of several things and all of them are the scope of the basic concepts of Islam, namely the concept of aqidah, Sharia, and morality.

1) Moderation of religion in the field of Aqidah

Aqidah is the initial foundation for every Muslim to believe in the oneness of Allah with all His attributes. As a perfect religion, Islam provides the values of its teachings so that they are always in the middle (tawasuth). Moderation of religion in the field of aqidah can be seen in the followings:

a) Divinity between Atheism and Polytheism

Islam exists between atheism which denies the existence of a God and polytheism which believes in many Gods. This means that Islam does not adopt the notion of atheism nor polytheism, but rather the understanding of monotheism, which is an understanding that believes in One Almighty God.

b) Nature between the unseen and the reality

Islam has a moderate character, placing itself between the view that believes in no existence other than the real world and the view that this world is only an illusion that has the true nature of existence. For Islam, this nature is a substance that cannot be doubted, but behind it there is another essence, namely the Essence that creates and governs it.

c) Allah's attribute between Negating Allah's Attribute (ta'thil) and Imitating Allah's Attributes (tasybih)

There are some schools of thought that do not believe in the existence of attributes for Allah. According to the school of thought them, God does not have any nature, there is only essence. On the other hand, there is a school of thought that characterizes Allah with characteristics that are similar to the nature of His creatures. Islam is in the middle between these two notions, namely determining the appropriate qualities for Allah's greatness, as stated in The Qur'an and As-Sunnah.

d) Prophethood between cult and anti

In historical records, there are two groups who have an excessive school of thought and treatment of prophethood. There are groups who cult the prophets to the highest degree, so that they equal the dignity of divinity or position them as children of God; and others who demean prophethood by harassing, slandering, torturing, and accusing them of being liars. For Islam, the prophets are ordinary people who eat, drink, marry, and walk in the market like ordinary people. What distinguishes them from ordinary people is that they get revelation from Allah swt.

e) The source of truth between reason and revelation

Islam is a religion among those who believe in reason as the only source and tool for discovering the nature of existence, and others who view that revelation is the only way to obtain the essence of existence. For Islam reason and revelation are two things that both have important roles that are complementary (support each other). If it is likened to a court, mind functions as a witness while revelation as a judge, or vice versa, namely mind as a judge while revelation as a witness.

2) Moderation of religion in the field of Worship

Moderation of religion in the field of worship is to make it easier to carry out worship and legal obligations, light and practical. This is of course in accordance with strong

sharia texts and certainly does not require further interpretation or interpretation. In Surah al-Baqoroh verse 185 Allah says:

Also mentioned in Surah An-Nisa 28:

Islam is a religion that is easy and does not make it difficult for its people. Example; If a person is not able to perform worship perfectly then there are reliefs that can be done. Like a person who is unable to pray standing up, it is permissible to pray sitting or lying down, if lying down is also not able to do so then it is enough with the eye signal or in the heart.

In surah al-Baqarah 286 Allah says: "Allāh does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned. "Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we have forgotten or erred. Our Lord, and lay not upon us a burden like that which You laid upon those before us. Our Lord, and burden us not with that which we have no ability to bear. And pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy upon us. You are our protector, so give us victory over the disbelieving people."

3) Moderation of religion in the field of morality

In the moral-tasawuf aspect, Islamic moderation can be described with a middle attitude:

a) Between the essence and the Shari'a

In solving a problem, tasawuf does not only use Shari'a or Shari'a glasses, but uses both. Because the essence without the Shari'a is false, and the essence without the Shari'a is nonsense and tends to be permissive to evil and injustice.

b) Between khauf (fear) and roja' (hope)

Moral-Tasawuf teaches the need for a balance between khauf (fear) and roja' (hope), because khauf too much is easy to make people despair, while roja' too much makes people dare to sin.

c) Between physical and spiritual

Tasawuf is intended to purify the heart and improve spiritual quality, but still must pay attention to physical aspects, such as physical strength, cleanliness and health.

d) Between outer and inner

Morals of Tasawuf pay attention to the outer and inner aspects, such as prayer, for example, which has an outer and an inner format. The inner format of prayer is takbir, reading fatihah, bowing, prostration, etc., while the inner format is solemn and tadaru' (humble), where both are established before Allah swt

4 Discussion

Research on religious moderation has been carried out by several previous researchers, such as Quraish Shihab in his book explaining the meaning of moderation and offering ideas in order to apply good and correct religious moderation [10]. Other studies have tried to examine religious moderation and elaborate it with national lines [11]. Other research on the meaning of moderation has also been conducted previously by Edi Jumadi, but his research is limited to a review of the meaning of religious moderation contained in a book published by the Ministry of Religion entitled Religious Moderation [12]. Likewise, the research conducted by Faelasup on Islam and religious moderation in the perspective of hadith which focuses more on discussing hadiths about moderate Islamic character [13]. So the research conducted by this researcher complements the research conducted by previous researchers on the meaning of religious moderation from the perspective of the prophetic hadith, namely exploring the prophetic hadiths which are the basis for being moderate in Islam, both in *aqidah*, worship, and *muamalah*. This will result in a complete understanding of true religious moderation.

5 Conclusion

In the meaning of moderation in various hadith narrations, it can be concluded that the essence of religious moderation is moderate religious understanding and practice, that is, neither excessive nor underestimating, both in matters of *aqidah*, worship, and in morals of *muamalah*.

According to the author, in interpreting and practicing religious moderation, one must rely on *syar'i* arguments and follow the example of the Messenger of Allah in practicing them so as not to be trapped in extreme or liberal understandings, because he is the standard of piety.

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