

BOOK REVIEW

Tasawuf Amaliyah. Jombang: Februari, 2018.

By Moch. Djamaluddin Ahmad

Reviewed By

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PRACTICING *IHSAN* WITH *TASAWUF AMALIYAH*

As Islam is spread out by the Prophet of Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him: PbUH) for the seeks of becoming the blessing for the universe (*rahmatan lil 'ālamīn*), Islam offers three main pillars namely *iman*, *islam*, and *ihsan*. The first pillar of *iman* consisting of its principles (*rukun*) is the manifestation of the belief of a believer which is known as theology (*akidah*). The second pillar of *Islam* together with its five principles is the manifestation of the practice of Islamic teaching (*syariat*). And the third pillar of *ikhshan* is the essence of the practicing of the values of Allah the almighty God and the values of the worshipers as later known as *hakikat*.

In order to be able to better practice the three pillars of Islam in daily life, every Muslim is obligated to have the required knowledge prior to understanding them including the knowledge of *tauhid* (*iman/akidah*), Islamic law or *fikih* (*Islam/syariat*), and *tasawuf* (*ihsan/hakikat*). The three required kinds of knowledge are supposed to be mastered together so that they may prevent Muslims from miss practices of Islamic teaching as meant by Allah the Almighty and Muhammad His messenger. Imam Malik mentions in his important work that:

“Those who learn the *fikih* without learning *tasawuf* may become a *fasik*. Those who study *tasawuf* without studying *fikih* may become a *kafir* or *zindiq*. And those who learn *fikih* together with *tasawuf* are those who walk toward *hakikat*.”

What is meant by Imam Malik is also supported by another great and well-known imam as well, Imam Syafi'i. He mentions that every

Muslim should practice Islam in a comprehensive way or *kaffah*, not only having understanding of Islam using *fikih (syariat)* but also studying *tasawuf (hakikat)* to support their efforts of understanding the teaching.

The book written by Moch. Djamaluddin Ahmad is aimed at becoming a guidance for Muslims in their practice of Islam. The book provides a good guidance to practice *ikhshan* through *tasawuf* which is not only offering theories and concepts but also showing the details of how to practice or known as *amaliyah*. Therefore, the title of the book of *Tasawuf Amaliyah* is very appropriate as supported by the aims of the book and the intention of the author.

The book consists of 9 chapters. The author provides comprehensive explanations on how to understand the basic *tasawuf* (Chapter I), steps of practicing *tasawuf* toward closing to Allah the almighty (Chapter II), building appropriate friendship and the right hospitality of students to their teachers (Chapter III), the genealogy of the prayer or *berzikir* (Chapter IV), the variety of appropriate hospitality (Chapter V), requirements of becoming the teacher of the leader in Sufism of *mursyid* (Chapter VI), *wali* (Chapter VII), *nafsu* (Chapter VIII), and *sufi* leaders from time to time (Chapter IX).

Bu quoting Sayyid Abu Bakar Muhammad Syatha ad-Dimyati, the author of the book explain that the knowledge of *tasawuf* is the knowledge to understand the variety of *nafsu* and its symptoms, both the positive and negative parts of the *nafsu* (Page 1). Practicing *tasawuf* means making efforts to keep human hearts from being contaminated by negative values and habits so that they can transform the good norms into daily practices both physically non physically.

Ihsan, as also being mentioned in the hadist by Abu Hurairah, is being defined as "worshiping to Allah as he can see Him, and if he cannot see Himso he should understand and be aware that Allah sees him." Practicing *ikhshan* is impossible without having the knowledge of *tasawuf*. It is because the knowledge of *tasawuf* is needed since when someone does the *amaliyah* he should pray toward Allah the Almighty. This is also found in the Qur'an Q.S. Az-Zāriyāt (51): 56).

One of the important elements in the knowledge of *tasawuf* is the politeness and hospitality, especially to Allah, parents, teachers, and to human beings. Sayyid Ali Al-Khawwas mentions that those who misbehave they are like behaving to betray toward the knowledge of

hakikat and the secrets of Allah the Almighty (page 191). Al-Khawwas mentions the important of the politeness and hospitality. What Al-Khawwas means is that all the values are being taught by the Prophet Muhammad to mankind as he said that “I am the messenger of Allah and being sent to you to guide human being to have good behavior.”

Allah the Almighty gives human beings both mind and *nafsu*. The mind is intended to guide human being to able to control and manage their *nafsu*. The *nafsu* is not meant to be removed from human beings since it is impossible to do so. Human beings are expected to control it. The question is how to do so? The book provides the tips in doing so as being done through practicing *riyāḍah* (practice) and *mujāhadah* (fight). In order to be able to do so, human beings are required to understand the level and kinds of *nafsu* within them.

The *nafsu* is not always being connoted to negative judgment since sometimes it is also positive. The book elaborates carefully about the levels of *nafsu* consisting of 7 (seven) kinds including *ammārah*, *lawwāmah*, *mulhimah*, *muṭmainnah*, *rāḍiyah*, *marḍiyah*, and *kāmilah* (page 255). It is important to understand the variety and level of *nafsu* carefully so that every Muslim know exactly who is friend and opponent within themselves. The Prophet Muhammad said that the fight against the infidel or *kafir* is a small war (*aṣḡar*), but the fight against the *nafsu* is the one being called as the big war (*akbar*).

In the end of the book the author explain about the important to know the history of the *sufi* leaders. He provides the profiles and *sufi* leaders from time to time starting from the second Hijri to the 14th Hijri. The explanation about the *sufi* leaders is meant to provide knowledge and information for those seeking the knowledge and information about *tasawuf* so that they can take a lesson (*‘ibrah*) and good (*uswah ḥasanah*) from selected people who had been able to improve their quality of life through having great practices of *iman*, *islam*, and *ihsan*. They are the examples that can guide them in doing *tasawuf* and becoming their *role model* for *sālik* (the wlak toward Allah the Almighty) in doing the practice required by the teaching of Islam as Allah the Almighty has guided human beings.

As for the scientific responsibilities by the author, the book is also equipped by *footnote*) and bibliography for references (*marāji’*) from appropriate books of *tasawuf* of *mu’tabarah* (standardized). The book is also written in a very careful intention with appropriate diction, words, sentences and paragraph. The author intends to help readers

to understand easily about the *tasawuf*, especially to those who are new in the world of tasawuf. (*)

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