



THE THOUGHTS OF ASH'ARĪYYAH AND JAHMĪYYAH ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF ALLĀH A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Muhammad Sutan Alambudi

Ma'had Aly Hasyim Asy'ari Tebuireng Jombang Indonesia

M. Farid Zaini

Universitas Sunan Giri Surabaya Indonesia

(Corresponding author) e-mail:

muhammadsutanalam@gmail.com

Abstract:

This article prioritizes the methodological debate between Ash'arīyyah and jahmīyyah in interpreting divine attributes, a topic often overshadowed by theological polemics. To address the lack of comparative studies on tafwīd and ta'wīl, this analytical study foregrounds their hermeneutical differences. The objectives are to: (1) compare both methods, (2) analyze their impact on understanding Allāh's knowledge. The central dilemma is whether textual ambiguity in naş requires tafwīd (deferral to God) or ta'wīl (rational interpretation). Using qualitative descriptive-comparative methods, the study examines primary sources (e.g., 'Al-Ibānah' and 'Maqālāt Jahm') through content analysis, contextualizing arguments, and synthesizing classical critiques. Findings show Ash'arīyyah's tafwīd rejects JAHMĪYYAH's ta'wīl, highlighting divergent theological implications. The study recommends integrating these insights into contemporary debates on Islamic hermeneutics.

Submission date:

05 January 2025

Received in revised form:

18 March 2025

Acceptance date:

21 April 2025

Available online:

26 June 2025

Competing Interest:

**The author(s) have
declared that no
competing interest exists.**

Keywords: *Ash'arīyyah, jahmīyyah, Knowledge of Allāh, Attributes of Allāh*

Introduction

Views on God become an important topic examined in religion. In the concept of monotheism (belief in one God), the basic criterion of a worthy figure of God to be worshipped is that God is greater and more exalted than anything else. God is believed to be the highest existence deserving of worship and whose commands should always be obeyed. This concept is accepted by the three major world religions: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, which are the main followers of this monotheistic belief.¹

¹ Fauzan Saleh, *Kajian Filsafat Tentang Keberadaan Tuhan dan Pluralisme Agama* (Kediri: STAIN Kediri Press, 2011).

In the Islamic scholarly tradition, the concept of monotheism has been widely discussed by theological thinkers. In the book "Islamic Theology," Harun Nasution states that theology is the science that discusses the fundamental teachings of a religion, as humans seek to delve deeply into the intricacies of their faith. This knowledge provides them with beliefs based on strong foundations that are not easily swayed by the passage of time. In the Islamic world, there are many terms or names for the sciences that study the divine, including *ilm al-kalām*, *fiqh akbar*, *‘ilm ushuluddin*, *ilm tauhīd*, *‘ilm ‘aqāid*, *‘ilm tauhīd wa sifat*, and *‘ilm naẓar wa istidlāl*. Among these names, the most commonly used is *‘ilm al-kalām*.²

For theological thinkers, religion is a vital issue that cannot be easily replaced. Initially, theology was considered part of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), but over time, theology rapidly evolved into a diverse school of thought known as *ilm al-kalam*. The challenge of *‘ilm al-kalām* is to strengthen the fundamental beliefs of Islam with convincing evidence concerning Allāh, His attributes, His works, the prophets, the Qur’ān, and eschatology.³ Al-Farabi defines *ilm al-kalam* as the discipline that discusses the Essence and attributes of Allāh, along with the existence of all possibilities, ranging from issues of the world to matters of the afterlife based on Islamic doctrine. Ultimately, the emphasis is on producing the knowledge of divinity in a philosophical manner.⁴

In an effort to know Allāh through His names and attributes, Allāh *subhānahu wa ta’alā* has established a principle that can be said to be a rule and limitation in Surah Ash-Shura, verse 11, which means, "*There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.*" Departing from this verse, all *ahlu qiblat*⁵ strive to purify Allāh (*tanzih*) from all forms of resemblance, deficiency, and anything that may diminish His greatness and majesty. Many expressions in the Qur'an indicate these attributes of Allāh. The people of the Qiblah, with their various groups, have different interpretations of these attributes of Allāh. The theologians among the Jahmīyyah, Mu’tazilah, Ash’arīyyah, and Maturidiyyah are the groups that most often appear on the stage of debate regarding the attributes of Allāh and criticize each other.⁶

The previous research conducted by Syawal Kurnia Putraa and colleagues in the journal entitled 'Aspects of Divinity in Islamic Theology: Analysis of Three Schools of Thought: Mu'tazilah, Ash'arīyyah, Al-Maturidiyyah,' suggests that the aspects of divinity in Islamic theology consist of the attributes of God, the justice

² Muh Subhan Ashari, "Teologi Islam Perspektif Harun Nasution," *An-Nur: Jurnal Studi Islam* 10 (2020): 73–96.

³ Syawal Kurnia and Muhammad Amri, "Aspek-Aspek Ketuhanan dalam Teologi Islam: Analisis Tiga Mazhab: Mu'tazilah, Asy'ariyah, Al-Maturidiyah," *Isi humor* 1, no. 3 (2023): 180–86, <https://doi.org/10.58540/isihumor.v1i3.239>.

⁴ Rosihon Anwar and Abdul Rozak, *Ilmu Kalam* (Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia, 2001).

⁵ All Muslims who face the Ka'bah in Mecca..

⁶ Muhammad Istiqamah, "Memahami Sifat-Sifat Allah: Criticism of Salafiyah Theology on the Various Interpretations of Al-Mutakallimun on the Attributes of Allah," *Nukhbah* 6, no. 1 (2020): 77–104, <https://doi.org/10.36701/nukhbah.v6i1.101>.

of God, the power and will of God. This study elaborates on the aspect of divinity according to the Mu'tazilah group in more detail from these three aspects. It is also explained that the attributes of God should be understood not only in terms of the similarity in substance between God and humans, but also in terms of actions. God has absolute power to perform all actions according to His will.⁷

The study conducted by Ummy Fadillah Barokah and colleagues in the research on Ḥadīth Attributes of Allāh: Odd Uniqueness, Meaning, and Comprehensive Interpretation suggests that the understanding of Ḥadīth about Allāh being odd and favoring the odd signifies a complex meaning. Textually, this Ḥadīth provides an understanding that Allāh desires His servants to always be mindful and obedient to all His commands. However, in the context of social life, Allāh is neutral, He not only favors odd numbers but also even numbers. This is evident from His commandments and encouragements to worship Him as well as His creations, which include both odd and even numbers.⁸

In the context of Islamic theology, there is a striking difference between the Ash'arīyyah and Jahmīyyah groups in understanding the concept of Allāh's knowledge. This certainly impacts the overall theological understanding of the Muslim community. The differing theoretical perspectives on the concept of Allāh's knowledge not only engage in philosophical discussions but also influence the interpretation of Islamic legal sources, namely the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, especially those addressing theological themes. From this disparity, the issue arises of how the Ash'arīyyah and Jahmīyyah construct their thoughts in understanding the concept of Allāh's knowledge and how a theological approach to interpreting the texts (*naṣ*) is carried out.

The research mentioned stands out from previous studies as it delves deeper into the concept of the attributes of Allāh according to the perspectives of the Ash'arīyyah and Jahmīyyah schools. Unlike earlier research that may have focused on the general concept of divine attributes or discussed theological Ḥadīth without linking them to specific theological thinkers, this study aims to fill a gap in the existing research. Specifically, this article will explore the viewpoints and concepts of Allāh's knowledge according to the Ash'arīyyah and Jahmīyyah schools, providing a more comprehensive understanding that has not been extensively covered by other researchers.

⁷ Kurnia and Amri, "Aspek-Aspek Ketuhanan Dalam Teologi Islam : Analisis Tiga Mazhab : Mu'tazilah , Asyariyah , Al -Maturidiyah."

⁸ U. F. Barokah, U. Hasanah, et al., "Hadis Sifat Allah: Keunikan Ganjil, Makna dan Tafsir Komprehensif," *Indonesian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 4, no. 2 (2023): 431–46, <https://doi.org/10.33367/ijhass.v4i2.4354>.

Research Methodology

The method used in this study is a qualitative-descriptive-comparative approach with the techniques of content analysis and library research. Content analysis is a research method employed to draw conclusions from a text. In other words, content analysis aims to uncover the author's ideas, whether manifest or latent. The content analyzed includes sources such as books discussing Ash'arīyyah and Jahmīyyah theology, specifically the primary source book *Ibānah 'an uṣūl ad-Diyānah* and *maqālat Jahm ibn ṣafwān wa āsarihi fī al-fīraq al-Islāmiyyah*. Additionally, the library research aspect of this study involves using secondary data sources obtained from research results, articles, and reference books related to the research theme.

Results and Discussion

The Jahmīyyah sect and Their Methodology in Understanding Naṣ

The term Jahmīyyah refers to the name of Jahm ibn Shafwan. He hailed from Khurasan and was known as Abu Mahruz, the freed slave of the Bani Rasib from Azad. He studied Islamic theology from Ja'd bin Dirham⁹. He was a skilled and eloquent preacher. He was politically assassinated, with no connection to religion.¹⁰ He was a mysterious and enigmatic figure. His scholarly and social status remain unknown. He is known for two main reasons: first, as a secretary and rebel alongside Haris bin Suraih against the Umayyad dynasty, as recorded in historical texts. Second, for his controversial innovations and statements found in theological works. Jahm lived in the early days of Islam and was assassinated in the early 2nd century Hijri. He lived before the formalization of knowledge, hence most of the books written during his time have been lost¹¹.

The era of Jahm was filled with external and internal turmoil, such as the rebellion of Abu Muslim al-Khurasani and the downfall of the Umayyad dynasty. The Islamic state at that time was rapidly expanding and flourishing. Khurasan was situated far from urban centers, making the codification of information about the state highly challenging. Therefore, it is not surprising that there is very little information available about the figure of Jahm ibn Shafwan¹².

The theological thoughts of Jahm bin Shafwan were not codified in a book. His evolving ideas were in the form of 'maqalah'. The term '*maqālah*' was also used by Abu Hanifah. When asked about his opinion on the prevalent discussions of a'radh and ajsam in society, Abu Hanifah responded, "Those are the words

⁹ Jalal al-Din al-Qasimi, *Tarikh al-Jahmiyyah wa al-Mu'tazilah* (Beirut: Mu'assasatu al-Risalah, 1979).

¹⁰ Anwar and Rozak, *Ilmu Kalam*. p. 67.

¹¹ Yasar Qadli, *Maqalat Jahm Ibn Shafwan Wa Atsaruha Fi Al-Firqah Al-Islamiyyah* (Dhau al-Salaf, 2005). p. 129

¹² Al-Qasimi, *Tarikh Al-Jahmiyyah Wa Al-Mu'tazilah*. h. 67

(*maqālah*) of philosophers. It is incumbent upon you to adhere to the traditions and teachings of the early scholars. Beware of anything new, for it is innovation (*bid'ah*)."¹³

Jahm ibn Shafwan was reportedly killed by Salim ibn Ahwaz al-Mazani in Maru (in the region of Turkistan) during the final years of the Umayyad rule. Jahm ibn Shafwan was known to have said: "I do not consider Allāh to be a thing, because that would mean likening Allāh to material things." However, he also considered the knowledge of Allāh to be created. He believed that the Qur'ān was a creation, and according to him, Allāh did not always know something before it occurred¹⁴.

Muhammad Imarah mentioned 12 sects of the Murji'ah, one of which was the al-JAHMĪYYAH, followers of Jahm bin Shafwan. According to Harun Nasution, the al-JAHMĪYYAH were an extreme group within the Murji'ah. He explained that the group of Jahm bin Shafwan and his followers believed that a person who believes in God and then declares disbelief verbally is not considered a disbeliever because faith and disbelief reside in the heart, not in other parts of the human body¹⁵.

Al-Syaratsani mentioned that Jahm was considered a prominent figure among the Jabariyah. Jahm's theological views included: firstly, it is not permissible to attribute to Allāh attributes that are similar to creatures. He denied the attributes of life and knowledge to avoid anthropomorphism, but he affirmed the names *qudrat*, *fā'il*, and *khaliq*. Secondly, he considered knowledge as something new (*ḥadiṣ*) for Allāh. Thirdly, he believed that humans do not have power over anything and should not be attributed with ability. Humans are compelled in their actions, without power, will, or choice. Fourthly, he believed that paradise and hell are not eternal. Fifthly, whoever believes and then denies verbally does not commit disbelief because of their denial¹⁶.

Jahm bin Shafwan rejected the attribution of attributes to the Essence. He denied the existence of attributes in the Essence. He affirmed the application of certain names such as *al-khalq* and *qudrah*¹⁷. Jahm stated that the knowledge of God originates from temporality. He associated God's knowledge with something temporary. According to him, God can know the consequences of that knowledge. And that knowledge is something separate from God¹⁸. Jahm denied that Allāh knows something before it occurs. Instead, Allāh knows it after establishing and creating it¹⁹.

¹³ Qadli, *Maqalat Jahm Ibn Shafwan Wa Atsaruha Fi Al-Firaq Al-Islamiyyah*.

¹⁴ Abu Hasan Al-Asy'ari, *Maqalat Islamiyyin Wa Al-Ikhtilafu Al-Mushallin* (Dar Faraniz Syatayiz, 1980). p. 279.

¹⁵ Anwar and Rozak, *Ilmu Kalam*. p. 61

¹⁶ Ahmad Asy-Syahratsani, *Al-Milal Wa Al-Nihal* (Dar al-Ma'rifah, Beirut, 2007). p. 99.

¹⁷ Qadli, *Maqalat Jahm Ibn Shafwan Wa Atsaruha Fi Al-Firaq Al-Islamiyyah*. p. 393. v. 1.

¹⁸ Cornelia Schöck, *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology* (Oxford Handbooks, 2016). P. 58.

¹⁹ Qadli, *Maqalat Jahm Ibn Shafwan Wa Atsaruha Fi Al-Firaq Al-Islamiyyah*. p. 393. v. 2.

The Mutazilites adopted views from the Jahmīyyah, such as the denial of divine vision, attributes, and the created nature of the Qur'ān. If every sect, except for one, is considered to agree on major issues, they are considered as one school of thought. This is why the term Jahmīyyah is used by scholars to refer to the Mutazilites. Therefore, Imam Ahmad in his book *rad 'ala Jahmīyyah*, and Imam Bukhari criticized the Jahmīyyah, referring to them as the Mutazilites. The purpose of the early scholars in criticizing and debating with the Jahmīyyah was that they were the origin of other sects, preceding them in emergence. They were the first sect to adopt the method of interpretation (*ta'wīl*), and they flourished during the Umayyad Caliphate. Hence, their name was prominent among the early generations compared to others²⁰.

Ibn Taymiyyah in his book "*Minhaj al-Sunnah*" mentioned that when the calamity of the Jahmīyyah, who denied divine attributes in the early 3rd century, arose, they called on people to reject the attributes of Allāh. The scholars of the Sunnah refuted them. Every Mutazilite is considered Jahmīyyah, but not every Jahmīyyah is a Mutazilite. However, Jahm was more inclined towards *ta'tīl* (negation of attributes) because he denied the names and attributes. Bishr al-Mursi from the Murjiah sect was a prominent figure among the Jahmīyyah²¹. Most of the interpretative approaches of the Jahmīyyah towards authentic texts originated from him²².

Ahmad bin Hanbal mentioned that the theology of the Jahmīyyah was based on three Qur'ānic verses: "There is nothing like unto Him." (Surah Ash-Shura, 42:11), "He is Allāh in the heavens and the earth." (Surah Al-An'am, 6:6), "Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted." (Surah Al-An'am, 6:103). Jahmīyyah interpreted the Qur'ān in ways other than its apparent meaning, denied the Ḥadīths of the Prophet, and considered anyone who attributes to Allāh the attributes He attributed to Himself in His book and as conveyed by His messenger to be a disbeliever, as they deemed it to be likening Allāh to His creation. Their teachings led many astray due to their statements..²³

Jahmīyyah interprets the verse in the Qur'ān which states, "Indeed, We have made it an Arabic Qur'an." (Surah Az-Zukhruf, 43:3) to mean that "*ja'ala*" (made) signifies "*khalaqa*" (created). Therefore, according to their interpretation, every "*ma'jul*" (something made) is considered "*makhluq*" (created).²⁴. In the same way, the Jahmīyyah interpreted the verse in the Qur'ān which means "beholding his

²⁰ Al-Qasimi, *Tarikh Al-Jahmiyyah Wa Al-Mu'tazilah*. p. 59.

²¹ Al-Qasimi. p. 60.

²² Ibnu Taimiyah Abu Abbas Taqiyyuddin, *Dar'u Ta'arudh Al-Aql Wa Al-Naql* (Mamlakah al-Arabiyah al-Su'udiyah, 1991). p. 50. v.2.

²³ Ahmad Ibn hanbal, *Al-Radd 'ala Al-Jahmiyyah Wa Al-Zanadaqah* (Dar Tsabat li al-Nasyr wa al-Tauzi', 2003). P. 97.

²⁴ Ibn hanbal. p. 103.

God" (Surah Al-Qiyamah, 75:23). They interpreted the word "*nāẓirah*" (beholding) as "*intizār*" for reward from the God ²⁵.

The Ash'ariyyah Sect and Their Methodology in Understanding Naş

Abu Hasan Al-Asy'ari, the founder of the Ash'ariyyah sect, was born in the city of Basra in the year 260 AH/874 CE. He was a descendant of the Prophet's companion from Yemen, Abu Musa Al-Asy'ari. Abu Hasan was known by the title Abu Al-Hasan, and his honorific name was Naşiruddin. His father was a follower of Ahl Al-Sunnah and Ahl Al-Ḥadīth, who, before his passing, instructed that Al-Asy'ari be educated by scholars knowledgeable in Ḥadīth and Islamic jurisprudence according to the Shafi'i school, such as Zakaria bin Yahya al-Saji, Sahl bin Nuh, and Abu Ishaq al-Marwazi. After his father's death, at the age of ten, his mother married a prominent Mu'tazilite figure, Abu 'Ali Al-Jubba'i. Under Al-Jubba'i's guidance, Al-Asy'ari delved into the teachings of the Mu'tazilites and became a prominent figure within that group. He often represented his stepfather in debates and wrote works to defend the Mu'tazilite school of thought. ²⁶.

At the age of 40, Al-Asy'ari openly declared in the mosque of Basra that he was renouncing the Mu'tazilite beliefs. According to Ibn Asakir, this decision was influenced by his three encounters with the Prophet Muhammad in his dreams during the month of Ramadan. In these dreams, the Prophet warned him to abandon the Mu'tazilite teachings and to defend beliefs rooted in the sunnah ²⁷.

The Ash'ariyyah sect is one of the branches of theology within Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah that plays a vital role in balancing reason and revelation, as well as elucidating various theological issues that are often debated among the Muslim community. This sect is based on ideas derived from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Additionally, the Ash'ariyyah also acknowledge the narrations of the companions, the successors, and the scholars of Ḥadīth, which serve as their main reference points. ²⁸.

The Ash'ariyyah believe that Allāh possesses attributes mentioned in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. These attributes are divided into two types: *ma'nawiyah* (meaning-based) and *khawariyah* (descriptive) attributes. Ma'nawiyah attributes include qualities like life (*al-ḥayat*), knowledge (*al-'ilm*), hearing (*as-sama'*), and seeing (*al-başar*). On the other hand, *khawariyah* attributes encompass examples such as hands, face, eyes, fingers, and feet. The *khawariyah* attributes of Allāh refer to meanings related to physical aspects. ²⁹.

²⁵ Ibn hanbal. p. 130.

²⁶ Farra Sintiya Prisca, "Konsep Asy'ariyah dan Relevansinya dalam Kehidupan," *Riayah: Jurnal Sosial dan Keagamaan* 8, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.32332/riayah.v8i2.8274>.

²⁷ Wildana Latif Mahmudi, "PERTUMBUHAN ALIRAN-ALIRAN DALAM ISLAM DAN" 05 (2019): 78–86.

²⁸ Abu Hasan Al-Asy'ari, *Al-Ibanah 'an Ushul Ad-Diyanah* (Dar al-Ansar, n.d.). p. 20.

²⁹ Husna, Azwar, and Sakni, "SIFAT KHABARIYAH ALLAH PERSPEKTIF ABU AL-HASAN AL-ASY'ARI: ANALISIS KITAB AL-IBANAH 'AN USHUL AD-DIYANAH."

According to the Ash'arīyyah perspective, they interpret all of Allāh's khabariyah attributes, whether they are essence-related (dzatīyah) or action-related (fi'liyah). The Ash'arīyyah's interpretation of essence-related attributes includes qualities such as face, hands, and eyes of Allāh. When interpreting action-related attributes, which pertain to the actions of Allāh, they include concepts like istiwa' (Allāh's rising above the Throne) and actions such as Allāh descending to the lower heaven every night, as mentioned in the Qur'ān, which translates to: "The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established." (Qur'ān, Taha 20:5).

The Ash'arīyyah believe that Allāh's rising above the Throne is in accordance with His Majesty, without needing to be understood as a permanent settlement. In this regard, Allāh's *fi'liyyah* attributes indicate that He has the will to perform actions, but humans do not need to contemplate the form or manner in which Allāh rises above or descends. This belief underscores the notion that Allāh's actions cannot be measured or imagined by human intellect³⁰. The essence (*ẓatīyyah*) attributes are attributes that always accompany the essence of Allāh and cannot be separated, even though the form of these attributes cannot be imagined by creatures. An example of this essence attribute is the Face of Allāh, mentioned in Surah Ar-Rahman, verse 27, which means: "And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor." (Qur'ān, Ar-Rahman: 27).

The meaning of the term "*Wajhu Rabbika*" where "*Wajh*" is a metaphorical expression with a comprehensive meaning, where what is referred to as the "face" actually refers to the Essence of Allāh. In these verses, Allāh SWT informs that He has a face and eyes, but the form and limits of it should not be questioned or explained (*bi lā kaif wa bi lā ḥad*).

Muhammad Makki argued that Abu Hasan Al-Asy'ari, in his book *Al-Ibānah*, tended to reject interpretations (*ta'wīl*) of texts related to the attributes of Allāh such as hands and face. He adhered strictly to a literal understanding without resorting to metaphorical interpretations. For example, he contended that "*yad*" should not be interpreted as the hand of a creature, and "*wajh*" should not be interpreted as the face of a creature. In this regard, he followed the methodology of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, whom he considered as the leader in dealing with these attributes of Allāh.³¹

In the later period of his life, Al-Asy'ari adjusted some of his views by starting to accept interpretations of certain texts using well-known metaphors. In these metaphors, for example, the sentence "the king placed his hand on the city" is not interpreted literally, but rather signifies power or control. Similarly, the phrase "the Hand of Allāh is over their hands" (Qur'ān, Al-Fath: 10) is understood as authority or power, not a physical hand like that of a creature.

³⁰ Husna, Azwar, and Sakni.

³¹ Ahmad Tayyib, *Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari Imam Ahl Al-Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah* (Dar Maqdis al-Arabi, 2010). p. 343. v. 2.

Al-Asy'ari's interpretations can be found in his book *Al-Luma'*, which actually does not involve complex interpretations (*ta'wīl*), but rather the use of common metaphors in the Arabic language (*majaz masyhūrah*). This shift from a literal approach he held in *Al-Ibanah* towards accepting metaphorical interpretations of some of Allāh's attributes is a notable development in his thought.³²

In his book *Al-Ibānah*, Abu Hasaan Al-Asy'ari stated his views on the people of truth and the followers of the Sunnah, among which is the belief in what is found in the Qur'ān, Ḥadīths, narrations of the companions, successors, and scholars of Ḥadīth. He also believed that Allāh has a face, hands, eyes, but without resemblance (*bi lā kaif*). Anyone who considers the names of Allāh as other than Him is deemed misguided. He affirmed Allāh's attributes of Seeing and Hearing, unlike the denials of the Mu'tazilites, Jahmites, and Kharijites. The Qur'ān is not a creation. We cannot escape His knowledge. Allāh can be seen by the believers in paradise.³³

In explaining the attribute of Allāh's knowledge, Al-Asy'ari adhered to the Qur'ānic verses such as Surah An-Nisa verse 166, Surah Fatir verse 11, Surah Hud verse 14, and Surah Al-Baqarah verse 155. He rejected the arguments of the Jahmīyyah who claimed that Allāh does not possess knowledge, power, will, life, hearing, and sight. Al-Asy'ari considered this stance taken by the Jahmīyyah as influenced by the ideas of heretics and *ta'wīl*³⁴. This is in line with the views of the Ash'arīyyah scholars, such as Imam Al-Ghazālī. He mentioned the essence of the Salaf school of thought, which is the truth for us, that whoever is informed about any of these Ḥadīths by a layperson must do seven things: sanctification, then affirmation, then acknowledgment of inability, then silence, then self-restraint, then abandonment, then submission to those who possess knowledge..³⁵ The practical and relevant aspect of the concept of *tafwīd* used by Al-Asy'ari.

The analysis of the opinions of the Ash'arīyyah and Jahmīyyah in Understanding Naş

From the data above, it shows that the Jahmīyyah use the method of *ta'wīl* in understanding textual evidence. In this context, the Jahmīyyah deny the attributes of Allāh, including the attribute of knowledge. They consider Allāh's knowledge as a creation, so Allāh can only know through that knowledge when creating creatures. On the other hand, the data on the Ash'arīyyah indicates that in understanding textual evidence, they tend towards the method of *tafwīd*. The Ash'arīyyah affirm that Allāh has attributes, but these attributes are not separate

³² Tayyib. p. 345.

³³ Al-Asy'ari, *Al-Ibanah 'an Ushul Ad-Diyanah*. p. 10.

³⁴ Al-Asy'ari. p. 41.

³⁵ Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *IlJamu Al-Awam 'an 'Ilmi Al-Kalam* (Dar Minhaj li Nasyr wa Tauzi', 2017). p. 49.

from His Essence. They accept and interpret textual evidence as it appears and leave the interpretation to Allāh. After comparing these two theological views, the researcher aims to reconcile their perspectives in understanding the Qur'ānic texts, thereby proposing a middle path that can accommodate both seemingly opposing theories.

From the findings, the researcher identifies that Jahmīyyah theology leans more towards the *ta'wīl* approach in understanding textual evidence. They believe that attributes are created and that God does not depend on these attributes. If the attribute is attributed to Allāh, it will lead to the plurality of pre-eternal entities. On the other hand, Ash'arīyyah theology tends towards *tafwīd* in understanding textual evidence. They balance reason and revelation by affirming the attributes of Allāh with the condition of *bi lā kaif* (without asking how). There seems to be a difference in the tendency of analysis between the two in understanding textual evidence.

In a philosophical approach, this issue can be analyzed through the dialectics of Hegel (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel). The term "dialectic" is based on everyday experiences in dialogue. If stated as an opinion, it will be opposed by another opinion. Unsatisfied with this opposition, both sides are reconciled through more detailed opinions, becoming the most important components. Essentially, this can be formulated in three stages. The first stage is a thesis, which then gives rise to the second stage or antithesis. Finally, they are reconciled within the scope of synthesis. In synthesis, not only is there a negation because the synthesis emerges, making both the thesis and antithesis no longer valid, but also both opposing aspects are elevated to a higher level, as they are still maintained within that synthesis³⁶.

In the philosophical framework of Hegel's dialectics, the initial argument of the Jahmīyyah is considered as the thesis. This argument is then rejected by the Ash'arīyyah, who affirm the attributes of Allāh using the tendency of *tafwīd* in theological understanding, which is considered as the antithesis. After observing the differences between the two perspectives, is there a compromise that could lead to a synthesis between them?

In Islamic theology, there are two tendencies in understanding textual evidence. The first is the textual approach, such as the *tafwīd* method used by the Ash'arīyyah. The second is the contextual approach, like the *ta'wīl* method used by the Jahmīyyah. Even though both methods could be accepted, the Ash'arīyyah

³⁶ Muhammad Zulfikar Nur Falah, Ari Bachtiar Firmansyah, and Luqman Hakim, "Metode Dialektika Hegel dan Analisisnya atas Paradigma Hukum," *Kajian Politik dan Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan* 8, no. 2 (2022): 131–55, <https://doi.org/10.20871/kpjipm.v8i2.226>.

reject the Jahmīyyah's opinion because the *ta'wīl* method used by the Jahmīyyah is seen as violating the principles agreed upon by the scholars of *uṣūl*.

In the context of *ta'wīl* a word (*naṣ*), it is mentioned that a word will remain in its literal meaning as long as there is no other indication that could shift it to another meaning. Indeed, a word sometimes has a literal meaning in itself, but it is connected to something that gives it a different meaning.³⁷ Musthofa Zuhaili mentions what is known as a void interpretation (*ta'wīl bāṭil*). According to him, a void interpretation is (*ta'wīl bāṭil*) an interpretation based on desires, intentions, and supporting a certain opinion, an interpretation (*ta'wīl*) that contradicts the clear text (*naṣ*), and an interpretation (*ta'wīl*) that does not encompass the meaning of the word itself³⁸. The Jahmīyyah do not consider other indications in understanding textual evidence; the evidence they use for denying attributes is Surah ash-Shura, verse 11. However, the Jahmīyyah do not consider other textual indications, such as the Ash'arīyyah's argument in Surah al-Baqarah, verse 255, which expresses Allāh's All-Knowing and His Knowledge. Therefore, from this issue, the Jahmīyyah are considered to prioritize reason in understanding textual evidence and could be said to engage in void interpretation (*ta'wīl bāṭil*).

Indeed, it is important to note that the evidence used in the argument between the Ash'arīyyah and Jahmīyyah is both derived from the Qur'ān. According to the scholars of *uṣūl*, contradiction does not occur or apply to two equally definitive pieces of evidence. It is impossible to give preference (*tarjīh*) to one piece of evidence over the other. A mujtahid strives to unite, combine, and reconcile between two pieces of evidence. Practicing both pieces of evidence is more preferable than disregarding either one³⁹. From this point, the concept of synthesis from Hegel's dialectics can be applied using the method of *al-jam'u wa al-taufiq* (uniting and reconciling). Specifically, between the general (*'am*) and specific (*khās*) evidence, they are combined by *takhsisu al-'am bih* (specifying the general term [*'am*] with the specific [*khās*]). The Jahmīyyah utilize the general (*'am*), while the Ash'arīyyah utilize the *dalīl khās*.

In addition, reconciliation between the two methods, namely the method of *tafwīd* and the method of *ta'wīl*, can also be achieved. However, it is important to note that the method of *ta'wīl* should not be like the one practiced by the Jahmīyyah, known as void interpretation. Therefore, the synthesis (Hegel's dialectics) between *tafwīd* and *ta'wīl* involves the concept of *tanzīh* (safeguarding Allāh from imperfections), which can be attained by using the method of *al-jam'u*

³⁷ Abdurrahman bin Yahya al-Ma'lami, *Risalah Fi Haqiqatu Al-Ta'wil* (Dar Thalsi al-Khadra', 2005). p. 56.

³⁸ Mustafa Zuhaili, *Al-Wajiz Fi Ushul Fiqh Al-Islamiy* (Dar al-Khair Damasqi, 2006). p. 101. v. 2.

³⁹ Wahbah al-Zuhaili, *Al-Wajiz Fi Ushul Fiqh* (Dar Fikr Al-Ma'ashir, 2013). p. 244.

wa al-taufiq. *Tanzīh* represents a higher level, capable of resolving conflicting matters and merging them in understanding *naş*.

Understanding *naş* based on theological perspectives indeed has several shortcomings. These include differences in theological beliefs, considering unacceptable beliefs as established beliefs, lack of historical studies on theological beliefs, mixing verbal and non-verbal indicators, and disregarding other indicators..⁴⁰ Nevertheless, this article presents an alternative interpretation by using the method of *al-jam'u wa al-taufiq* as a synthesis of the *tafwīd* and *ta'wīl* methods.

In conclusion, this research still has some limitations and shortcomings, and it is far from perfect. Building upon previous studies, further research could expand the findings by analyzing the theories of the divine attributes of knowledge according to the Jahmīyyah and Ash'arīyyah schools of thought, and their impact on understanding unexplored texts. From the results of this research, it is hoped that future Muslim scholars can utilize the theories of theologians as an approach to understanding *naş*. Additionally, further research is needed to explore other theological-themed *naş* and their relevance in the modern world.

Conclusion

The researcher concludes that there are several important aspects in the theological constructs of the Ash'arīyyah and Jahmīyyah schools in understanding the divine attribute of knowledge. Firstly, the methods used by both groups in interpreting the texts that serve as legal sources. The Ash'arīyyah lean towards the method of *tafwīd*, while the Jahmīyyah tend towards the method of *ta'wīl*. Secondly, the *ta'wīl* method of the Jahmīyyah is not entirely correct as it contradicts the principles of the scholars of *uşūl*, leading the Ash'arīyyah to oppose their interpretations.

Furthermore, to understand *naş* discussing theology, it is necessary to approach them in accordance with the methods used by theologians. One can employ either the method of *tafwīd* or the method of *ta'wīl*, as long as they do not contradict the established principles of scholars. Although there are limitations in understanding Ḥadīth based on theological beliefs, the researcher concludes that the legal sources of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth can be objectively understood using these two methods. Thus, in the end, the primary goal of safeguarding Allāh (*tanzīh*) can be achieved.

⁴⁰ Ali Hasan Beigi, "An Approach to the Application of Theological Beliefs in Understanding Hadith from a Pathological Perspective," *The Journal of Hadith Studies and Researches* 1, no. 3 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.22034/hsr.2024.51269.1015>.

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