

***SESAJEN* IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF IBN KATHIR: INTERPRETATION OF SURAH AN-NISA, VERSE 48**

Achris Achsanudtaqwin
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung
achsanudtaqwinachris@gmail.com

Abstrak. *Sesajen telah menjadi topik kontroversial dari zaman dahulu hingga saat ini. Ritual yang melibatkan persembahan makanan dan benda-benda lainnya ini dilakukan dalam upacara keagamaan atau adat sebagai cara untuk berkomunikasi dengan kekuatan gaib. Tradisi sesajen dalam Islam mencerminkan warisan budaya dengan praktik spiritual dan keagamaan, dan pemahaman tentang tradisi ini sangat penting untuk memahami pandangan Islam tentang sesajen. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali tafsir Ibnu Katsir tentang tradisi sesajen dalam konteks surat An-Nisa ayat 48, untuk memahami pandangan dan argumentasinya mengenai sesajen dalam Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan kajian literatur untuk menggali perspektif Ibnu Katsir tentang sesajen melalui penafsirannya terhadap Al-Qur'an. Ini melibatkan analisis literatur, termasuk karya Ibnu Katsir, untuk merinci argumen dan pandangannya tentang tradisi sesajen. Tafsir Ibnu Katsir menekankan pentingnya menjaga kesucian ibadah dan memperingatkan terhadap penyimpangan prinsip tauhid, memberikan bimbingan berharga bagi*

umat Islam di masa sekarang. Penafsirannya berkontribusi dalam memperkuat identitas agama dan melawan pengaruh budaya negatif sekaligus mengatasi tantangan modern.

Kata Kunci: *Sesajen, Tafsir Ibn Katsir, An-Nisa Ayat 48*

Abstract. Sesajen has been a controversial topic from ancient times to the present. This ritual involves offering food and other objects in religious or customary ceremonies to communicate with supernatural powers. The tradition of sesajen in Islam reflects a cultural heritage with spiritual and religious practices, and an understanding of this tradition is essential to understanding the Islamic view of sesajen. This study explores Ibn Kathir's interpretation of the tradition of sesajen in the context of Surah An-Nisa verse 48, to understand his views and arguments regarding sesajen in Islam. This study uses a literature review to explore Ibn Kathir's perspective on sesajen through his interpretation of the Qur'an. This involves analyzing literature, including Ibn Kathir's works, to detail his arguments and views on the tradition of sesajen. Ibn Kathir's interpretation emphasizes the importance of maintaining the sanctity of worship and warns against deviation from the principle of monotheism, providing valuable guidance for Muslims today. His interpretation contributes to strengthening the religious identity, and countering negative cultural influences while addressing modern challenges.

Keywords : *Offerings, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Surat An-Nisa Verse 48*

INTRODUCTION

Sesajen has often been something controversial from the past to the present. *Sesajen* consists of food offerings surrounded by other objects, such as flowers and incense or frankincense, which are offered in religious ceremonies or traditional ceremonies that are carried out symbolically with supernatural powers. The power in question can be the highest power that has given life and become the centre of hope for various positive desires of the community,¹ or a power that is believed to have kept the community away from the touch of negative things.²

The tradition of *sesajen* is an important aspect of religious life in Islam, playing a significant role in various Muslim communities. While rooted in cultural heritage, presenting offerings to spiritual entities intertwines with religious traditions. Although Islamic teachings are based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, interpretations and practices may vary across communities. Therefore, understanding the tradition of *sesajen* from an Islamic perspective requires examining its historical roots, cultural roles, and religious interpretations, to respond wisely and moderately to cultural practices deeply embedded in society.

Among the Qur'anic *mufasssir* who provided interpretations related to the tradition of offerings is Ibn Kathir. In his monumental exegesis, "Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Adhim," Ibn Kathir offers deep insights into the meanings and applications of Islamic teachings. The relevance of Ibn Kathir's interpretation regarding the tradition of offerings is significant, given that he is one of the most respected figures in the Islamic exegetical tradition.

¹Indrahti, Sri; Prasetyawan, Yanuar Yoga; Maziyah, Siti; Alamsyah (2019). " Implikasi Kuliner Sesaji dan Dhanyang dalam Upacara Tradisi di Jepara". Berkala Arkeologi. 39 (1): 73–91. doi:10.30883/jba.v39i1.327.

²Sholikhin, KH. Muhammad (2010). Ritual dan Tradisi Islam Jawa. Yogyakarta: Narasi. p. 50. ISBN 9789791682053.

In order to investigate Ibn Kathir's understanding of the tradition of offerings, this study adopts a library-based research approach. This method allows for the exploration and analysis of Ibn Kathir's views on offerings through his interpretation of the Qur'an. By collecting and analyzing relevant literature, including the works of Ibn Kathir, this research aims to elaborate on his arguments and perspectives on the tradition of offerings in the context of Surah An-Nisa, verse 48.

What makes this article particularly interesting is its focus on how one of the most revered Islamic scholars interprets a culturally embedded tradition like *sesajen*, offering a nuanced understanding of how Islamic teachings interact with local customs. This study contributes to the discourse on religious interpretations and highlights the importance of bridging traditional practices with religious comprehension in a diverse Muslim society.

METHOD

This study employs a library research approach, where the primary data are gathered by reviewing various materials from the library, such as documents, books, historical accounts, and magazines. Library research is chosen to support the comprehensive theoretical foundation of the issue being studied. It involves examining relevant literature, reference books, and previous research to analyze cultural, social values, and norms in the context of the research. ³Data collection is done through reviewing books, literature, and reports related to the problem being investigated.⁴

³Sarwono Jonathan. (2006). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu

⁴Sugiyono. (2012). *Memahami Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: ALFABETA

DISCUSION

Ibn Kathir's View On The Tradition Of Offerings In The Letter An Nisa' Verse 48

The meaning of *sesajen* can be analyzed through various perspectives involving different disciplines. Offerings are a cultural heritage carried out to worship gods, certain spirits or guardians of places (trees, stones, intersections). ⁵The practice of giving offerings to these spiritual entities has complex values and impacts, depending on the cultural, religious and historical context of the society concerned. In the context of religious studies, offerings are seen as sacred religious manifestations, creating a point of connection between the worldly and religious worlds.

In today's era, many people still consider the importance of traditional Javanese offerings and rituals, such as "*suguh sesajen*". The practice of *sesajen* is deeply rooted in local culture and belief systems and is often associated with supernatural or mystical elements.⁶ Different understanding of current trends and tendencies, that the act of transmission can be understood in the context of social tradition because it is related to traditions passed down from ancestors in the lives of indigenous peoples, namely religious customs and occultism. Customs can be interpreted as beliefs that are passed down from generation to generation and continuously.

The tradition of offerings has apparently been met with much controversy among Muslims, because the act is an activity that can trigger acts of shirk or associating partners with Allah. This view has been explained in the word of Allah in the letter an-Nisa' Verse 48:

⁵Ayatullah Humaeni, et al., *Menelusuri Makna dan Akar Tradisi Sesajen (Masyarakat Mulim Banten dan Masyarakat Hindu Bali)*, (Banten: LP2M UIN SMH Banten), 32

⁶Abdul Karim and Moch. Khafidz Fuad Raya , *The Acculturation Dynamics of the Sekaten Tradition in Modern Indonesia* , *jurnaldialog.kemenag.go.id*, Vol. 45, No.1, June 2022,29

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ
إِنَّمَا عَظِيمًا

Meaning: Indeed, Allah will not forgive the sin of shirk, and He forgives all sins other than that, for whomever He wills. Whoever associates others with Allah has indeed committed a great sin.

Ibn Kathir commented in the book Tafsir Al-Qu'an al-'Adzim that there are many hadiths which explain the sin of shirk, which is a very big sin. Imam Ahmad narrated from Abu Idris, I heard Muawiyah say, I heard the Messenger of Allah say:⁷

"Every sin must be forgiven by Allah except for those who die while infidels or kill a believer intentionally" (also narrated by an-Nasa'i).

Imam Bukhari and Muslim narrated from Abu Dzar, he said: "One night I was out, suddenly the Messenger of Allah was walking alone. I assumed he didn't like walking with someone, so I tried walking under the moonlight, finally he turned and saw me." He said: "Who is that?" I answered: "Abu Dzar, may Allah make me your ransom." He said: "O Abu Dzar, come here!", then I walked with him for a moment. He said:

"Indeed, the richest people will be the ones who will have the least reward on the Day of Resurrection, except for those to whom Allah has given good deeds, then distributed them from the right and left, and from the front and back and he has done good deeds with his wealth."

Then I walked again for a while with him, and then he said to me: "Sit here". He also invited me to sit in a valley full of rocks. He said to me: "Sit here until I come back." Then he went into the desert until I could no longer see him. While I was waiting for a long time, then I heard him come and say: "Even if

⁷Ismail ibn Katsir, al-Qur'an al-'Adzim, (translator; al-khairat, translation of tafsir ibn Katsir 2018) juz 2,27-329.

you commit adultery or steal." Abu Dzar said: "When he came, I felt impatient so I asked: "O Prophet of Allah, May Allah makes me your ransom. Who is speaking from the direction of the desert? I heard someone coming towards you." He answered: "That was Gabriel, who came to me on the side of the desert, saying: "Tell the good news to your people, that whoever dies and does not associate anything with Allah in the slightest, he will enter heaven." I asked; "Even if you steal and commit adultery?" he answered: "yes" I asked: "Even if you steal and commit adultery?" he answered: "Yes". I asked again: "Even if you steal and commit adultery?" He replied: "Yes. Even if he drinks alcohol."

In ash-shahihain, narrated by Ibn Mas'ud, he said:

I asked: "O Messenger of Allah, what is the greatest sin?" He answered: "You are an equal to Allah, even though He is the one who created you."⁸

Shirk is the severance of the relationship between Allah and His servant. Therefore, there is no hope for them of forgiveness when they leave this world. ⁹The polytheist associates God with something and remains polytheistic until his death, even though with the evidence before him such as the evidence of monotheism in nature universe and the guidance of the apostle. This is not done to someone who still has elements of goodness and piety.

From the meaning of the offerings, Ibn Kathir is of the view that offerings are included in the act of shirk so that in the letter of An-Nisai verse 48 that avoiding the act of providing offerings reflects his deep understanding of the concept of tauhid (the oneness of Allah) in Islamic teachings. Ibn Kathir also emphasized the urgency to avoid the act of shirk, namely giving offerings to other than Allah, which is considered a violation of the basic principle of tauhid.

⁸Ibid, p. 329

⁹Hasiah , *Syirik Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an*, Yurisprudencia Volume 3 Number 1 June 2017,85

Ibn Kathir also emphasized that offerings, as a form of offering or worship, should be directed exclusively to Allah alone. His commentary illustrates the concept that Allah is the only true object of worship, and giving offerings to other entities can lead to deviation and violation of tawhid.

Implications Of Ibn Kathir's Interpretation Of The Tradition Of Offerings In The Letter An Nisa' Versi 48
The Importance Of Purity Of Worship

Worship in Islam is not only the implementation of obligatory rituals but also a complete surrender to God to fulfil His will through the methods and means that He has determined. Worship includes all means of worship and wholeheartedly. Of course, people not only perform the rituals, but when they understand them, they also perform inner rituals. Religion is not limited to prayer, fasting, and reading the Qur'an, but everything pleasing to Allah, both words and deeds that are done. The concept of reason and thought is good and true. However, until desires and thoughts are controlled properly, truth and desire are not perfect and true before God. Therefore, humans are given a burden or taqlif, namely commands and prohibitions according to the religion of Allah SWT, namely Islam.¹⁰ Therefore, Muslims do not need to boast about their form of worship in front of others. However, Muslims must maintain their worship to keep their heart and mind clean.

Ibn Kathir's commentary highlights the importance of maintaining the sanctity of worship, especially in the context of offerings. The implication is to teach Muslims that worship is the prerogative of Allah alone, and all forms of offerings or reverence should only be directed to Him. This concept of the sanctity of worship reinforces the principle of tawhid and teaches Muslims to understand the depth of a direct relationship with Allah without any intervention or other entity.

¹⁰H. E Hassan Saleh, (ed.), *Kajian Fiqh Nabawi & Fiqh Kontemporer*, (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2008), 3-5

The implementation of maintaining the sanctity of worship in daily life is a change in the daily behaviour of Muslims. They are reminded to worship sincerely and solemnly, avoiding all forms of deviation that can damage the sanctity of worship. The sanctity according to Ibn Kathir's interpretation, also has an impact on strengthening the religious identity of Muslims. By maintaining the sanctity, Muslims can protect the integrity of Islamic teachings in the context of cultural and religious plurality.

In this context, several aspects related to maintaining purity in Islamic teachings include maintaining cleanliness and health, both physically and spiritually. For example, maintaining body cleanliness, taking a mandatory bath, and maintaining environmental cleanliness are important parts of Islamic teachings to protect the purity of worship. In addition, maintaining health is also considered important in Islamic teachings, because health is one of the main supporting elements in carrying out various activities, including worship.¹¹ This involves various aspects, from maintaining physical cleanliness and health to maintaining spiritual purity. This is in line with Islamic teachings that emphasize the importance of maintaining purity in all aspects of life, including in carrying out worship.

Warning against Deviations

Ibn Kathir's commentary provides specific warnings against deviation, reminding Muslims of the risks and spiritual consequences of such actions. This interpretation describes the threat of torment in the afterlife for those who involve themselves in acts of shirk.¹² Furthermore, shirk is a major sin and the root of all crimes and deviations as well as actions that are prohibited by Allah SWT. Shirk is a bad act. The only major sin that will not be forgiven by Allah SWT if the person

¹¹ <https://www.amanahgitha.com/pentingnya-menjaga-kebersihan-dan-kesehatan-bagi-sebuah-muslim/>, December 23, 2023, 16:05

¹² <https://muslim.or.id/85175-penyimpangan-terhadap-iman-dan-takdir.html>, December 23, 2023, 16:07

concerned does not repent in his life is a hypocrite who does not accept the Oneness of Allah SWT and therefore places his trust in someone other than Allah SWT.

Shirk also means equating Allah SWT with something else.¹³This creates a sense of fear and caution in the world of Religious education which has an important role in shaping character and strengthening religious identity. Delivering warnings and consequences of deviation, as understood from Ibn Kathir's interpretation, can form a better awareness and understanding of the importance of upholding the principles of monotheism. Therefore, religious education in Indonesia is included in the national curriculum which must be followed by all levels and types of education. In addition, religious education also has an important role in the family in shaping the child's personality and strengthening the family's religious identity. Religious education in the family can help children understand religious values and practice them in everyday life.¹⁴

In this context, parents as educators in the family must always be based on religious values and realize that the family is the starting point of departure as well as the initial capital in shaping the child's personality. Overall, religious education has an important role in shaping the character of students and strengthening their religious identity, as well as in shaping the child's personality and strengthening the family's religious identity. Conveying warnings and consequences of deviations in worship, as understood from Ibn Kathir's interpretation, can help Muslims understand the importance of upholding the principles of monotheism and maintaining the sanctity of worship. And ultimately, encourage them to stay away from practices that can endanger the belief in monotheism.

Ibn Kathir's interpretation provides profound implications related to the sanctity of worship and warnings against

¹³Diva Salsa Billa , *Kajian tentang Syirik dalam Perspektif Hadis*, Gunung Djati Conference Series, Volume 23 (2023),10

¹⁴Ahmad Masduki , *Implikasi Pendidikan Islam Dalam Keluarga Dan Kepribadian Anak*, Vol. 3, No. 2, August 2020,61

deviations, especially in the context of offerings. These implications are not only theoretical but also have practical impacts in shaping the behaviour and religious identity of Muslims. The sanctity of worship and warnings against deviations, according to Ibn Kathir's interpretation, are a strong foundation for strengthening the principles of monotheism in the daily lives of Muslims.

Ibn Kathir's Interpretation Of The Tradition Of Offerings In The Letter An Nisa' Verse 48 In A Modern Context

Ibn Kathir's commentary, emphasizing the importance of tawhid, provides valuable guidance for Muslims in facing the complex realities of today. In an era of globalization and cultural diversity, this understanding can help Muslims align the principles of tawhid with modern challenges and influences. Tawhid can help Muslims face the complex realities of today by providing clear and consistent guidance for life. Tawhid teaches that only Allah has power over everything so that Muslims can avoid the negative influences of cultures and values that are contrary to Islamic teachings. In addition, understanding tawhid can also help Muslims understand and face various complex social and political problems, such as poverty, injustice, and inter-religious conflict. By understanding that Allah is the only and created everything, Muslims can develop an attitude of tawakal and sincerity in facing the various challenges of life.¹⁵

Ibn Kathir's commentary has great relevance in providing moral guidance to Muslims in facing the impact of contemporary technology and culture. Loyalty to the values of monotheism is considered the foundation for maintaining ethics and morality in the digital and global era. A strong understanding of monotheism can help Muslims understand and face various modern challenges, including the influence of contemporary technology and culture.

¹⁵Prof. Sangkot Sirait, *Tauhid Dan Pembelajarannya*, (Postgraduate Program, FTIK UIN SUKA: Yogyakarta, 2020),3

Ibnu Katsir emphasized the importance of monotheistic education, including the values of monotheism rububiyah, in the Koran, which can help Muslims understand and face various modern challenges. By understanding the concept of monotheism, Muslims can maintain their wealth and faith while facing the challenges of modernization, develop skills in using technology, understand divine concepts in science and technology, support critical thinking, and apply religious teachings in everyday life.

Ibn Kathir's commentary forms a solid and relevant foundation of Islamic teaching. Its implications are to provide a consistent understanding of the principles of tawhid that can be integrated into various aspects of daily life. This helps Muslims to live a life with continuity between religious beliefs and daily actions.¹⁶

The relevance of rejecting practices that contradict monotheism, including giving offerings, is seen in strengthening the religious identity of Muslims. This is because monotheism emphasizes the oneness of Allah and rejects practices that can be considered as a form of shirk. By understanding the principles of monotheism, Muslims can maintain their religious identity amidst diverse cultural currents and remain faithful to the teachings of Islam without being influenced by practices that are not in accordance. Practices that contradict monotheism can affect the religious identity of Muslims by changing their views on Islamic teachings and reducing their belief in the principles of monotheism. Therefore, practices that are different from monotheism can help Muslims strengthen their religious identity and remain faithful to the teachings of Islam. ¹⁷As for the rejection of practices that contradict monotheism, Muslims can prevent the occurrence of religious pluralism that can weaken the belief in monotheism. This

¹⁶Moh. Shofan, *Pemikiran Ibnu Katsir Tentang Pendidikan Akhlak*, Didaktika Aulia, Volume 1 Number 2 (2021),5

¹⁷Prof. Sangkot Sirait, *Tauhid ...*,60

understanding is important in maintaining religious identity in a multicultural society.

Ibn Kathir's commentary is not only relevant in a historical context, but also has significant leverage in facing modern challenges and influences. As an ethical guide, a foundation for Islamic teachings and a rejection of practices that contradict monotheism, this commentary provides continued relevance for Muslims in living their lives in the contemporary era.

CONCLUSION

Ibn Kathir, one of the most respected Qur'anic *mufasssir*, offers significant insights into the tradition of offerings or *sesajen* in his famous work "Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Adhim." This study explores his interpretation of *sesajen* through a library-based research approach, focusing on his views in Surah An-Nisa, verse 48. By analyzing relevant literature, the study provides a detailed understanding of Ibn Kathir's perspectives on this culturally embedded practice and its relation to Islamic teachings. The article highlights how Islamic scholarship interacts with local customs, bridging the gap between religious teachings and cultural traditions. Future research should explore how contemporary Islamic scholars approach similar traditions in different cultural contexts, contributing to a broader understanding of how Islam adapts and responds to cultural diversity.

REFERENCE

- Aneka Ahmadi, Aceng Ali Nurdin, Ishmahani Sobarningsih, Asep Herry Hernawan. 2023. "Implementasi Integrasi Kurikulum 2013 Dan Merdeka Belajar Di Sdit Al Fitrah Kota." *Jurnal Visi Ilmu Pendidikan* 62-63.
- Anis, Herman. 2021. *Cara Merumuskan Tujuan Pembelajaran*. <https://hermananis.com/cara-merumuskan-tujuan-pembelajaran/>.

- Asrori, Mohammad. 2013. "Pengertian, Tujuan Dan Ruang Lingkup Strategi." *Vol.5*, Januari – Juni: No. 2.
- Harisnur, Fadhlina. 2022. "Pendekatan, Strategi, Metode, Dan Teknik." *Genderang Asa: Journal Of Primary Education* 30-31.
- Hasiah. 2017. "Syirik Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an." *Volume 3 Nomor 1* , Juni : 85.
- Juniardi, Wilman. 2023. *Tujuan Pembelajaran: Pengertian, Fungsi, dan Cara Menyusunnya*.
<https://www.quipper.com/id/blog/info-guru/tujuan-pembelajaran/>.
- . 2023. *Tujuan Pembelajaran: Pengertian, Fungsi, dan Cara Menyusunnya*.
- M. Riyan Afandi, Muhammad Afi Ramdhani, Muhammad Rizky, Mukhammad EkoSetiawan, Abdul Majid. 2023. "Tantangan dan Strategi dalam Menggunakan Assessment untuk Meningkatkan Pembelajaran di Era Digital." *Prosiding Santika 3 : Seminar Nasional Tadris Matematika UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan*. Pekalongan: Tadris Matematika, Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan, Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan. 554-555.
- Maisyarah, Mei Sri Lena. 2022. "Penerapan Model Project Based Learning (PJBL) Pada Pembelajaran Tematik Terpadu Di Sekolah Dasar." *e-Jurnal Inovasi Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar* 4.
- Nasikhah, Umi. 2020. "Strategi Pembelajaran Aktif Sebagai Upaya Dalam." *Tarbiya Islamica* 52-53.
- Nasution, Nur Wahyudin. 2017. *Strategi Pembelajaran*. Medan: Perdana Publishing.

- Ni G.A.A. Md. Lismanteri Dewi, Lulup Endah Tripalupi, Made Artana. 2013. "Pengaruh Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Dan Kebiasaan." *Vol. 3 No. 1*, Agustus: 3.
- Nurhakim, Ahmad. 2022. *Macam-Macam Strategi Pembelajaran serta Contoh Penerapan & Cara Menentukannya* . Quipper Blog.
- Pat Kurniati, Andjela Lenora Kelmaskouw, Ahmad Deing, Bonin, Bambang Agus Haryanto. 2022. "Model Proses Inovasi Kurikulum Merdeka Implikasinya Bagi SiswaDan Guru Abad 21." *Jurnal Citizenship Virtues* 14.
- Siti Nurhasanah, Agus Jayadi, Rika Sa'diyah,Syafimen. 2019. *Strategi Pembelajaran*. Cipayung, Jakarta Timur: Edu Pustaka.