

**COMMODIFICATION OF RELIGION IN THE QURANIC PERSPECTIVE  
(A STUDY AT KAMPUNG KERAMAT, BABUSSALAM, NORTH SUMATERA)**

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**Abstract**

Religion, on the one hand, is something sacred, but on the other hand, there is a phenomenon wherein it is used to earn profits for business. It appears that religion has turned into a marketing point that alters the sacred nature of the essence of religion itself, with religious symbols serving as a way to attract consumers' interest in purchasing goods. This study describes the phenomenon of religious commodification in light of the Quran. The qualitative research method was used in the present study. Primary data were collected from business owners near Tuan Guru Babussalam Langkat's graveyard area. The field research data were analyzed from the viewpoint of the Qur'an. The findings indicated that Babussalam, Langkat has certain aspects of religious commodification. The components of commercialization include honouring intellectuals and requesting favours, or *tabarruk*. According to the Qur'an, the practice of commercializing religion is acceptable because no verses condemn the actions of the residents of Babussalam village.

**Keywords:** commodification, Babussalam, the Quran

**Abstrak**

Pada satu sisi, agama adalah sesuatu yang bersifat sakral, namun di sisi lain terdapat fenomena agama menjadi komoditas untuk mendapatkan

keuntungan dalam bisnisnya. Simbol agama menjadi sarana untuk meningkatkan ketertarikan konsumen dalam membeli dagangan, sehingga terkesan agama menjadi daya jual sehingga merubah kesakralan dari esensi agama itu sendiri. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk melihat fenomena komodifikasi agama menurut Al-Quran. Tulisan ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif. Data primer diperoleh dari pelaku usaha di kawasan perkuburan Tuan Guru Babussalam Langkat. Hasil penelitian lapangan dianalisa menurut perspektif Al-Quran dengan mengutip berbagai tafsir Al-Quran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat unsur-unsur komodifikasi agama di Babussalam, Langkat. Unsur-unsur komodifikasi tersebut adalah unsur meminta keberkahan (*tabarruk*), memuliakan ulama. Praktek komodifikasi agama ditinjau menurut Al-Quran dapat dibenarkan sebab tidak di temukan ayat- ayat Al-Quran yang menentang prilaku masyarakat di Kampung Babussalam.

**Kata Kunci:** Komodifikasi, Babussalam, Al-Quran

## Introduction

Naturally, business activities involve the pursuit of profit, and they occur not only in business environments but also in religious settings. A few observable phenomena include the Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran (MTQ) events that take place at the sub-district, district, city, province, and national levels, as well as the celebration of Islamic festivals such Isra' Mi'raj and Maulid Prophet Muhammad Saw. Sacred spaces are not only utilized for seasonal ceremonies related to religion, but also for corporate endeavor. This is evident in the tombs of Allah's guardians, including the tomb of Sunan Gunung Djati and Maulana Malik Ibrahim, both located on the Wali Songo-famous Island of Java. Nowadays, religion is perceived not only as an abstract theoretical concept but also as something that manifests itself materially in people's lives<sup>1</sup>.

This phenomena is also observed in a location that is considered sacred and revered specifically in the village of Babussalam. Babusalam Village, also known as Besilam, is one of religious districts in North Sumatra. This community was founded by Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan Al-Khalidi An-Naqsabadi, or better known as Tuan Guru Babussalam, an eminent scholar. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, he was a scholar, jurist, Sufi, and the head of the Naqsabandiyah Community. He is regarded as one of the many-karomah-wielding scholars of Nusantara. In light of this, the people revere and appreciate him by *tabarruk* anything that becomes his legacy. Due to its reputation for holding several holy artifacts, Tuan Guru Babussalam's tomb draws pilgrimages of hundreds or perhaps thousands of people. In addition to paying respect at Tuan Guru's tomb, they also come to carry out a ritual of worship known as *Suluk*.

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<sup>1</sup> Moch. Fakhruzzai, "Komodifikasi Agama Sebagai Masalah Dakwah," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 5 (2010): 2.

Following his demise in 1926, the most extraordinary assembly took place on Tuan Guru Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan's death day, 21th Jumadil Awal, also known as Haul Tuan Guru Besilam. Thousands of followers and pilgrims were making their journey to Babussalam from all across Indonesia and several other Asian nations. The Pilgrims were not only participate in *dhikr* together but also maintain communication with Tuan Guru Besilam's successors. It was the time that Besilam village started to be visited by many people<sup>2</sup>. The economy was undoubtedly impacted by the visitors and those who came to perform *suluk*. Local residents produce and supply a variety of goods that are considered to be requires and visually appealing items for tourists.

The community and migrants hold an exceptional conviction that everything is associated with Tuan Guru Babussalam. This concept stems from Syaikh Abdul Wahab rokan's apparent karamah. Traders profit from the chance to market the name or symbol associated with products or services branded as "blessings of the master" as something that is offered for sale to the consumers. Religious symbol and Tuan Guru are in reality utilized by traders to sell their products.

At this point, both commodities and religious symbols are being offered together with other merchandise. This phenomenon is referred to as the "commodification of religion" in this context. Commodities defines significant goods, commercial items, crops, or regional crafts that can be utilized as an export<sup>3</sup>. Meanwhile, religion is a system or principle of believing in God along with devotional instructions and duties associated with that belief<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, the process of turning goods or services into commodities where religion and the symbols associated with it become a commercial commodity is known as the "commodification of religion."

The market and spirituality collaborate to sell religion for financial and political advantages is known as the commercialization of religion. The people who benefit the most from the commodity of religion are market players and passionate religious elites. The commodification of religion takes place in any field which generate profits. Meanwhile, the implication of that is a culture of consumerism and religious symbolism that dominates society and is open to manipulation by the politics of fundamentalism and sectarianism. Therefore, the market for the commodification of religion is extremely profitable; conversely, commercial religious organizations that look religion for financial resources are also highly profitable<sup>5</sup>. It can be concluded that religion is a product of society. However, in this case, religion is not being consumed as an objective reality, but rather as a symbol. In economic activity, what is

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<sup>2</sup> Ahmad Fuad Said, *Sejarah Syaikh Abdul Wahab Rokan Al-Khalidi Naqsabandi Tuan Guru Babussalam* (Medan: Pustaka Babussalam, 1976), 15–19.

<sup>3</sup> Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1995), 216.

<sup>4</sup> Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 11.

<sup>5</sup> Lucia Ratih Kusuma Dewi, *Agama Dan Masyarakat Dalam Perspektif Sosiologi(Sosiologi Agama)* (indonesia, 2022), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ywj\\_WHL11m4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ywj_WHL11m4).

needed is not the essence of religion itself, but rather the perception of religion as a religious symbol that society uses to assign label <sup>6</sup>.

There have been some examples of the commodification of religion, particularly Islam, in a number of places, such as the cemeteries of Wali Songo, Gusdur, and Sunan Ampel. For the community, religious leaders are more notable for their charisma. There are certain aspects of the commodification of religion to be found in this location.

There are currently a number of intriguing topics about how people connect with religion and practice it. Religion, which used to be sacred, now it serves as a marketing tool for financial gain. Regardless of whether the activity is positive or negative, the Qur'an is always a reference to determine whether an individual's deed is proper or improper.

Several scholars, such as Noer Lutfi Fais and Rizal Mahendra Asyiri, have brought up the subject of religious commodification. The book "Commodification of the Quran: Social Analysis of the Grand Maqamat Al-Qur'an Mushaf" addresses how to deconstruct societal misconceptions by interpreting the Qur'anic commodification as a social phenomena that uncovers its hidden dimensions. Accordingly, this study's findings indicate that the Qur'anic commodification is a component of the Qur'anic industrialization activity, which uses religious figures as a cover and a promotional tool <sup>7,8</sup>.

Another study conducted by Dadan Rusmana, Suryana al-Fathah, and Muhammad Yoga Firdaus research entitled "Commodification of the Qur'an in Digital Media" addresses this topic. The research concludes that the commodification of religion cannot be separated from the commodification of the Qur'an. The Qur'an becomes significantly more commodified when it starts to be printed and published, and this commodification also happens in the digital sphere as a result of the growing consumerism phenomenon <sup>9</sup>. In "Commodification of Religion: A Study of Phenomenological Interpretation," Andi Rahman proposes treating religion as an economic good, meaning that its benefits are limited to those who can afford to pay, and he discusses the need for society to become more aware of the risks associated with religious commodification <sup>10</sup>.

Based on this, the researchers are interested in examining the Qur'anic verses that discuss the phenomena of religious commodification. This study discusses factors

<sup>6</sup> Hasan Baharun and Harisatun Niswa, "Syariah Branding; Komodifikasi Agama Dalam Bisnis Waralaba Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0," *INFERENSI: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 13, no. 1 (2019): 75–98, <https://doi.org/10.18326/infsl3.v13i1.75-98>.

<sup>7</sup> Nor Lutfi Fais, "Komodifikasi Al-Quran," *MAGHZA: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 6, no. 2 (2021): 172–88, <https://doi.org/10.24090/maghza.v6i2.4848>.

<sup>8</sup> Fais.

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Yoga Firdaus, "Komodifikasi AL-Qur'an Dalam Media Digital," *Mutawatir* 12 NO 2 (n.d.).

<sup>10</sup> Andi Rahman, "KOMODIFIKASI AGAMA; SEBUAH KAJIAN TAFSIR FENOMENOLOGIS," in *Seminar Fokus*, 2016.

causes the commodification of religion. This study also examines the elements involve in the commodification of religion.

This study employed field study type of research and literature utilizing the Qur'anic approach, particularly when examining the daily activities of the Babussalam community in Langkat, North Sumatra. This study investigates the phenomenon occur within the community as well as the profound significance of the symbols that exist there and will be connected to the relevant verses from the Qur'an. Furthermore, the collected data presented in the form of a systematic analysis in order to be interpreted and concluded. This research also used a qualitative approach with ethnographic investigation to describe social phenomena and the local culture which involving actual fieldwork by researchers.

## Discussion

Babussalam is a village located between the cities of Binjai and Berandan in the province of North Sumatra. It was in this village that the first Tuan Guru of Babussalam, the late Syaikh Abdul Wahab Rokan Al-Khalidi Naqsyabandi, also known as Tuan Guru Babussalam (Besilam), delivered his sermons after migrating a few cities. One of the leading scholars and national heroes, Syaikh Al-Khalidi Naqsyabandi is also a wali Allah, a faqih, and the leader of the Naqsyabandiah *tariqat*. He was a pioneer of the state and national freedom. The struggle to disseminate Islamic principles both domestically and internationally. Nowadays, his followers are spread out throughout Malaysia, Thailand, Johor Bahru, Penang, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, and Batu Pahat. The Caliph, his students, and their grandchildren continue to pass on the teachings of *Tariqat* and the Naqsyabandi theology. As a scholar, he has instilled Islamic religious education in the community<sup>11</sup>.

Many people traveled to Babussalam village to seek the first master's blessing to fulfill their wishes. They came from Kualah, Panai Bilah, Kota Pinang, Labuhan Batu Regency (North Sumatra), Dumai, Bengkalis, Pekan Baru, and neighboring Malaysia (Sungai Ujung)<sup>12</sup>. Therefore, it is not surprising that Babussalam village was crowded with thousands of guests on the day of the first Tuan Guru Babussalam's birthday. Up to four hundred people attend even on a typical day<sup>13</sup>.

There are several activities and items that are commercial in the form of goods, services, and venues since the volume of visitors generates plenty of transactions around the tomb. Basic needs include food and drink, prayer clothes includes long veil, hat, *turban*, robe, koko shirt, prayer beads, veil, and others, pictures of Tuan Gurus, including those of previous and present Tuan Guru, and pictures of his offspring. In nearby areas of the grave, books about Tuan Guru's life and teachings are also offered. Furthermore, the region produces food items like the original Babussalam dodol, sulfur

<sup>11</sup> Ahmad Fuad Said, *Sejarah Syaikh Abdul Wahab Rokan Al-Khalidi Naqsyabandi Tuan Guru Babussalam*, 15–19.

<sup>12</sup> *Syaikh Abdul Wahab Tuan Guru Babussalam* (Langkat, 1998), 34.

<sup>13</sup> (“Interview with the offspring of Tuan Guru Babussalam Zakwan” 2020)

soap, and medicines made by Syaikh Zakaria Kamal, the Tuan Guru's descendants. These medicines are popular not only in the region but also overseas, as they are sold to Malaysia, a neighboring country. The other line of business is providing services, like bottled *yasin* water for the *wasilah* of prayers requested to Tuan Guru at present. Other services include counseling, requesting prayers, welcoming guests in front of Tuan Guru Babussalam's grave, and providing *yasin* 41 readings services for those with willingness and problems.

The businesses and services surrounding Tuan Guru Syaikh Abdul Wahab Rokan's grave eventually caused migrants to have different viewpoints, some of which were positive and others of which were negative. Those with unfavorable view believe that service providers profit from providing specific services. Leading them to believe that there are signs of religious commercialization in the vicinity of the holy place.

However, under these circumstances, the village leader, also known as the Tuan Guru, welcomes pilgrims and accepts the different issues they encounter. As a token of appreciation for the solutions offered, they will offer gratitude to the Tuan Guru, as revealed in the author's discussion with the Tuan Guru. This action is perceived by some as a type of service commoditization that is used. In this instance, Tuan Guru also addresses the oblique concerns raised by the numerous beggars who work as *maqam* administrators against the murshid profession, which is perceived by the community as they were only sitting, greeting guests, praying for them, and accepting alms. However, there are many other responsibilities of the murshid or Tuan Guru's custody, such as: resolving community issues, teaching, managing the *suluk* congregation, working with outsiders, mentoring students, and sitting to assist people with all of their problems<sup>14</sup>.

Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan possesses remarkable *karomah* in addition to playing a key role in the establishment of Besilam or Babussalam Village in Langkat Regency, which is located approximately 75 kilometers from Medan. This is why pilgrims never leave his tomb in Besilam Village, Langkat, North Sumatra. The people hold Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan in respect as a Sufi scholar. The Langkat people hold many sacred stories about Him.

Among his most popular *karomah* are:

- His ability to pushing boats beyond the ability of ordinary people.
- His ability to feed those working during *gotong royong*, which was beyond the capacity of many people.
- During the colonial period, the Dutch accused him of printing counterfeit money during the colonial era. As a result of this slander, he eventually left the country. During his absence, fish, oil, and other natural products vanished. When he was forced to return, the earth's resources seemed to return normally.

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<sup>14</sup> (Interview with the successor of Tuan Guru Syaikh Zikmal Fuad, 2020)

- Sheikh Abdul Wahab was able to lift large stones beyond the common human ability
- He was immune to rifle bullets and could soar through the skies. An episode during the conflict was captured in a Dutch image.
- Shaykh Abdul Wahab once told the Sultan of Langkat that Eid al-Fitr was coming up on the following day by sending his sons, H. Abd Jabbar and H. Yahya, to see him. Upon hearing this, the Langkat Sultan got angry and threat to detain every person celebrating Eid the following day. The condition proved to be accurate, the beginning of Shawwal's month emerged that evening, something that had never happened before.
- A man was sailing to Tanjung Balai when his boat began to leak close to the coast, nearly capsizing. He sought assistance from Tuan Guru Babussalam. The boat reached the coast without incident. The press reported that the Master was observed in his room at the same time, continuously elevating his loins, as if he were taking a boat's water. Later on, it was found that the Master's skullcap had obstructed the leaky boat's hole <sup>15</sup>.

**The components of religious commodification (*tabarruk*, *tawassul*, and faith in the karomah of Allah's guards) in the review of the Quran in the Sacred Area of Tuan Guru Babussalam**

The Qur'an is guide and a set of instructions for every servant to carry out all their daily activities without violating in God's and human rules. The Quran serves as a source of fundamental knowledge as well as a remedy for any societal issue that warrants religious observance (Islah Gusmian et al 2020). Additionally, the Qur'an provides Islamic teachings that, both contextually—that is, in line with the times they were written for and textually—always lead to the path of virtue. The universality of the Qur'an is increasingly evident when it can always be used as a reference for any location and any culture (Tibyan, Alquran, and Volume 2023).

When it comes to the commodification of religion, it is found that there are a few factors that are related to it in the Babussalam social community. These factors include the belief in the karomah of a God-lover, the element of honoring the knowledgeable person, and the elements of Tabarruk and tawassul. On contrary, the issue of religious commodification in the sacred village of Tuan Guru Babussalam North Sumatra is perceived as a component of trading religion. Therefore, the following verse will dive into each topic in detail: -Verse 11 of Surah Al-Mujadalah in the Qur'an explain:

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<sup>15</sup> Fuad Said, *Sejarah Syaikh A. Wahab Tuan Guru Babussalam* (Medan: Pustaka Babussalam, 1988), 29–32.

يرفع الله الذين عاملوا منكم و الذين اوتوا العلم درجة، و الله بما عملون خبير

Translation: "Allah will raise in ranks those who believed from among you and those who are given knowledge. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do."

The term "ilmu" in the Qur'an is equivalent to the word "ma'rifah," which means knowledge. Three terms—'arafa, 'arif ma'rifah, and Allah—have nearly the same root. However, Allah is 'alim. In order to rule the khalifah on earth, people must possess the privilege of knowledge, which elevates them above other creatures. However, Allah is 'alim. In order to rule the khalifah on earth, people must possess the privilege of knowledge, which elevates them above other creatures. The Al-Quran states that this capacity is available to humanity with His approval. Textually, knowledge can be acquired through a variety of methods, including the use of reason and five senses, but it also requires guidance from Allah and practice on the part of the professor. As a result, those who possess a variety of characteristics, including a genuine fear of Allah. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of having a pure heart since receiving guidance from Allah depends on having a clean heart, which makes knowledge easier to obtain and comprehend <sup>16</sup>.

Upon examining the life story of Tuan Guru Babussalam, it becomes evident that he possesses an abundance of religious knowledge, or fakih, which has brought about him the respect of many people. This qualifies him according to Surah Al-Mujadalah verse 11 of the Qur'an, which states that *العلم أو توا الذين*, or those who believe and adorn themselves with knowledge. Thus, believers are divided into two groups: those who merely believe and do good deeds, and those who believe and do good deeds and possess knowledge. The latter are elevated by virtue of their knowledge, not only of the value of knowledge they possess, but also of their generosity and teachings to others, whether verbally, in written form, or by giving example <sup>17</sup>. Tuan Guru Babussalam possessed the three qualities mentioned above—faith, good acts, and knowledge—thus it is obvious why the community raised him as Allah glorifies those who possess knowledge to several degrees.

There are several meanings for the word "blessing." The extensive Indonesian dictionary (KBBI) defines a blessing as a gift from God that enhances human life with goodness. The Arabic word "ba-ra-ka" (which means to grow or expand) or "Al-Barakah" (which signifies that Allah is good) are the sources of the term "blessing." Blessing, even a tiny hit will have a significant effect if it happens. It will become useful if it makes a significant impact on something. In essence, blessings are emanations of Allah that anyone desiring them might attain by elevating their virtue. Thus, requesting something from Allah alone using the things that Allah has

<sup>16</sup> Sholeh Sholeh, "Pendidikan Dalam Al-Qur'an (Konsep Ta'lim QS. Al-Mujadalah Ayat 11)," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Al-Thariqah* 1, no. 2 (2017): 14–17, [https://doi.org/10.25299/althariqah.2016.vol1\(2\).633](https://doi.org/10.25299/althariqah.2016.vol1(2).633).

<sup>17</sup> *Tafsir Al-Misbah Pesan Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur-An* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2003), 79–80.

mentioned in the Qur'an constitutes yearning for benefits. Meanwhile, requesting the prayers of the righteous through their representatives in order to pursue virtue and advantages in life is known as wishing for their blessings. Allah is the only one to whom the plea is made<sup>18</sup>.

According to the book *futuhatu al-ilahiyyah*:

أصل البركة ثبوت الحير الإلهي في الشيء

Translation: "The perpetuation of God's favor on something is the fundamental definition of a blessing."

A blessed life, then, is one in which we experience a rise in kindness and advantages. For example, our knowledge will be a blessing if it improves both our own and other people's quality of life. If our position may benefit others by providing security, comfort, or ease in their interactions, then it will be a blessing. Possessing wealth will be viewed as a blessing if it promotes happiness and virtue to oneself and others in particular. However, the linguistic root of the word *tabarruk* is *Masdar tabarraka-yatabarraku*, which signifies wishing for goodness through an act as an intermediary or goodness inherent in something<sup>19</sup>. According to the definition given above, *tabarruk* is used to anticipate or request goodness through an intermediary.

والترك بالشيء : طلب البركة بواسطة

Therefore, it is thought that the blessing obtained through the intermediary is not an object that has the ability to generate the blessing; rather, only Allah SWT is able to bring about *maslahat* (good) and prevent *mafsadat* (bad).

a) The concept of *Tabarruk* in the perspective of *Tafsir*

*Tabarruk* is using something as a means of achieving goodness. In order to reach virtue in this situation, we need to comprehend what the intermediary represents. First, *tabarruk* can be approached through "places" that are regarded as blessed, such as the hill where Adam and Eve met, *Jabal Rahmah*, which is known as a *mustajab* location for prayers for people performing the Hajj and Umrah. Similar to other holy sites, the Kaaba can be utilized as an intermediary for obtaining goodness through acts of worship like *tawaf* and prayer. Second, *tabarruk* can also be performed through intermediary objects, such as the door of Ka'bah (*Multazam*), which is frequently visited by large crowds of Muslims who come to worship in front of it. For Muslims, drinking *zam-zam* water during prayer is thought to bring good fortune and blessings.

وعن ابن عباس رضى الله عنهما قال، قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : خير ماء على وجه الأرض ماء زمزم، فيه طعام الطعم، وشفاء السقم.

<sup>18</sup> Rahmat Setiawan, "Ngalap Barokah Dalam Perspektif Etika Sufistik" 14 (2023): 18–37.

<sup>19</sup> Muhamad Rijal Zaelani, "Konsep Berkah Dalam Pandangan Ahlussunnah: Analisis Syarah Hadis Tentang Tabarruk," *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Ushuluddin* 2, no. 2 (2022): 235–49.

Ibn 'Abbas reported the prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declared that Zam-Zam is the greatest thing on earth. It provides both sustenance and a medical remedy." *Hajar Aswad* is a stone that is thought to have gained more nobility after the prophet touched and kissed it. According to a Hadith, Hajar Aswad will rise on the day of judgment and speak for those who have kissed it. *Tabarruk* can also be performed through objects.

Teachers, parents, and religious individuals such as *kiai* with whom we might have *tabaruk*, which is a prayer through a personal intermediary. The student's *tabarruk*, through their teacher or *kiai*, involves shaking and kissing hands, listening to them at the *ta'lim* assembly, and conveying hope for the goodness and blessings they will get in life. Or the child's *tabarruk* through the mediation of both parents, by honoring, obeying, and requesting prayers from them at each turn in his life, all the while wishing for Allah SWT's pleasure. Prophet Muhammad SAW, stated:

رضا الله في رضا الوالدين، و سخط الله في سخط الوالدين

Translation: "Allah takes joy in the happiness of both parents and takes wrath in the fury of parents." (HR. Tirmidzi)

Similarly, *tabarruk* can also be elevated with the assistance of pious people, as Allah glorifies them by bestowing upon them a great deal of goodness that we are able to experience and witness during their lives.

Based on the information provided above, we can conclude that *tawasul* and *tabarruk* are acceptable practices in Islam. However, we must recognize that only Allah SWT has the authority to bring *maslahat* and reject *mafsadat*, and that the intermediary, while a means of achieving goodness, is not in control of everything. From this point, we can further understand the elevation of things, locations, and holy individuals, as Allah elevates the individual concern. The story of Prophet Yusuf's clothing being sent to Prophet Ya'qub, his father, as a remedy or treatment for the illness he was suffering from—blindness—is also related in Surah Yusuf verse 93 of the Qur'an <sup>20</sup>. Allah said

اذهبا بقميصي هذا على وجه أبي يأت بصيراً

Translation: "Go with this shirt of mine and lay it on my father's face, he will become (again) a seer; and come to me with all your folk."

Following that, Allah informs us by stating

فلما أَن جَاء الْبَشِير أَلْقَاهُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ فَارْتَدَّ بَصِيرًا

Translation: "Then, when the bearer of glad tidings came, he laid it on his face and he became a seer once again." <sup>21</sup>

Accordingly, it is evident from the story from the Qur'an above that the Prophet Yusuf was utilized to treat the blindness that the Prophet Jacob, his father, by

<sup>20</sup> (Ministry of Religion, 2018, 246)

<sup>21</sup> Kementerian Agama, 247.

rubbing his clothes <sup>22</sup>. Many questions will therefore arise from the above situation such as: Did the Prophet Joseph *shirk* in some manner? And if this is a practice of shirk, then why are the Prophets of Allah swt engaging in it? God then affirms in the Qur'an

God the affirm in the Qur'an

ذلک هدی اللہ یهدی بہ من یشاء من عبادہ ولو اشکروا لبیط عملہم

Translation: "This is Allah's guidance with which He guides whoever He wills of His servants. Had they associated others with Him 'in worship', their 'good' deeds would have been wasted." <sup>23</sup>

Thus, it is obvious that the Prophet Yusuf's practice of blessing his clothing served as a means of acting as a tabarruk intermediary through items to heal the Prophet Jacob's blindness, as mentioned in the Qur'an, or the prophet's eyes. The questions that follow include: Why did the Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him) not ask Allah personally to heal the Prophet Jacob's (peace be upon him) illness? And because Prophet Jacob (peace be upon him) was also one of Allah's prophets, why did he not pray to Allah swt directly? The explanation that follows is highly apparent: first, Allah wants to clarify the prophet Joseph's standing among his brothers so that they would follow his lead and not disobey it; second, Allah wants to clarify that whoever follows the commands of Allah SWT will be magnified because Allah made the prophet Joseph's clothes to be worn and attached to his body as a blessing and medicine for the prophet Jacob's illness; thus, it appears through the prophet Joseph's clothing as the karomah and miracles of the prophet Joseph AS.

A number of other verses also discuss *tabarruk*. These verses include:

1. The blessing whereby Allah SWT says, "O Noah, descend with peace and full of blessings from Us upon you and upon the ummah (believers) of those who are with you" (QS Hud [11]: 48) in reference to Prophet Noah a.s. and his followers.
2. Regarding Allah Almighty and the Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him). Says: "So, he exclaimed, "Blessed are those who are in the fire, and those who are around it," as he arrived at the scene of the fire. An-Naml, Q. S. [27]: 8.
3. Allah said concerning the prophet Isaac AS: "We bestowed blessing upon him and upon Ishaq." As-Saffat, Q. S. [37]:113.
4. Allah states of the Prophet Isa AS "And He has made me a blessed one wherever I am." Maryam QS [19]:31.
5. Allah SWT has blessed the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Palestine: Glory to (Allah) Who did take His servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the farthest Mosque, whose precincts We did bless, - in order that We might show him some of Our Signs: for He is the One Who heareth and seeth (all things) Al-Isra [17]:1 (QS).

<sup>22</sup> Buya Hamka Prof. Dr, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, cet 1 jili (Jakarta, 2015), 30–32.

<sup>23</sup> Kementrian Agama, *Qur'an ASY SYIFAA'*.

6. The Aiman valley is blessed by Allah SWT: "But when he came to it, he was called from the bush in the sacred ground to the right side of the valley: "O Moses! It is truly I. I am Allah—the Lord of all worlds". Al-Qashash, Q. S. [28]:30.
7. Objects, trees, and time are occasionally the objects of divine mercy. A blessed olive tree, for instance, is described as follows by Allah SWT: "the lamp is in crystal, the crystal is like a shining star, lit from 'the oil of a blessed olive tree, 'located' neither to the east nor the west (of it). "QS. An-Nur [24]:35.
8. Allah SWT has blessed rainfall: "And We send down from the sky rain charted with blessing, and We produce therewith gardens and Grain for harvests" (QS. Qaf [50]:9).
9. Allah SWT has blessed the night in which the Qur'an revealed (Lailatul Qadar): "Indeed, we sent it down during a blessed night. Indeed, We were to warn [mankind] QS. Ad -Dukhan [44]:3.
10. The Al-Quran has also been blessed by Allah SWT: This is a blessed Book We have revealed. So follow it and be mindful 'of Allah', so you may be shown mercy (QS al-An'am: 155).

It is said that the modification of religion occurred in Babussalam Village constituted to a type of spiritual revenue, thereby Surah Al-Baqarah verse 41 addresses the following:

وَامْنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أَوْلَى كَافِرَ بِهِ، وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِأَيِّ ثَنَةٍ قُلْيَلًا وَأَيِّ فَاتِقُونَ

The offspring of Israel were ordered fear only Allah and believe in the book that Allah revealed. Additionally, Allah prohibited the offspring of Israel from exacting a price on Allah's verse, specifically receiving rewards or bribes by altering Muhammad's attributes, as the priests had done in the past. This meant that the people of Israel could not be the first group to disobey. The scholars discuss receiving money for teaching the Qur'an in verse 41. It is prohibited by the Hanafi school of thought's ashabur-ra'yi and az-Zuhri. They claim that teaching the Qur'an is an obligation that requires sincerity and devotion, thus, they are prohibited from receiving compensation for it, the same as fasting and praying. The majority of scholars, with the exception of the Hanafi school of thought, permit them to be paid for teaching the Qur'an. This is supported by the prophet's words found in Ibn Abbas's hadith, specifically the hadith regarding *rukyah* as narrated by Imam Bukhari.

إِنَّ أَحَقَّ مَا أَخْذَتُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا كِتَابُ اللَّهِ

*Indeed, teaching the book of Allah is the work that most merits your reward.*

It is unacceptable to relate this issue to prayer and fasting since Nash contradicts with this *qiyas* and because the teachings of the Qur'an affect others other than the teacher, making them distinct from devotion that is directed solely toward the culprit. This disagreement also arises when it comes to paying people for praying and

engaging in other religious activities <sup>24</sup>. Imam Syafi'i and Imam Ahmad Ibn Hambal maintain strong opinions. The ulama issued a fatwa about something that can be paid for from an activity that is called an action or good deed, such as being a religion teacher at a school who is allowed to be paid for the labor he provides. This is because educators have personal and household demands as well. Money is provided to teachers as a token of gratitude for their genuine teaching as not all of them have time for other pursuits <sup>25</sup>.

The Quran, Surah As-Saba' verse 47 explains the rule of ethics for preaching. According to Tafsir Ibn Katsir, rewards are only expected from Allah, and asking for rewards from Allah is permissible as Allah is infinitely wise. Legal experts clarify that it is makruh to request and accept paid for giving da'wah services; if one does so, one is protected from sin, although doing so may diminish one's dignity. In the meantime, receiving payment without asking implies that the preacher is passive; the preacher has the freedom to accept or refuse the money <sup>26</sup>. The preacher's partner makes the option to not ask. The community views Tuan Guru Babussalam's advising services as a gift for his time and wisdom, and he does not take money for them. Instead, they consider it a means to express their gratitude for the blessings of having their wishes read aloud by the successor of Tuan Guru Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan.

In line with Surah Al-Ashr verses 1-3, which encourage believers to carry out good deeds and treat one another with respect, the interpretation of this verse has a connection to Babussalam's teacher's interactions and solutions to societal issues, including religious teachings. Encourage one another to be truthful and patient with one another. Religion is guidance addressed to Muslims according to the hadith that Imam Muslim narrates <sup>27</sup>.

### **The Quranic Argument of *Karomah***

Many Ulama have encountered sacred things throughout their lives. The Arabic word "*karamah*" signifies grace, glory, generosity, protection, and assistance from Allah SWT for one of His slaves. The word "*karamah*" in Sufism refers to an exceptional state that is outside the realm of ordinary human experience and is bestowed upon Allah SWT's saint. The term "*sacred*" is also frequently used interchangeably with "*karamah*," denoting exceptional abilities for those selected by Allah SWT, that is, distinctive abilities because of Allah, who aids, accompanies, and shields devout people <sup>28</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Wahbah az- Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir Terj*, jilid 1 (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2013), 114–15.

<sup>25</sup> arifin marpaung Bayu alfiki, "Mengambil Ijarah Berupa Upah Dari Pelaksanaan Mengajarkan Al-Qur'an Menurut Imam Syafi'i Dan Imam Ahmad Ibn Hambal(Studi Kasus Masjid Agung Rantauprapat)," *Jurnal Tarbiyah Islamiyah* 7 Nomor 2 (2022): 9–10.

<sup>26</sup> Tinjauan Kode and Etik Dakwah, "Pendapat Da'i Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam" 5, no. 117 (n.d.): 6,10.

<sup>27</sup> Mustafa al-Buqha, *Al-Wafi Fi Syarah Hadis Arbain An-Nawawi Terj* (Jakarta: Pustaka al-Kausar, 2002), 38.

<sup>28</sup> *Ensiklopedi Islam*, Jilid 3 (Jakarta: PT Ichtiar Baru Van Hoeve, 1994), 10.

Extraordinary things will occur, with the power of God and they will not be given by God except to the chosen one. It is necessary for someone who has not arrived at this point to have a desire to proceed there <sup>29</sup>. This karomah is commonly referred to as sacred in Indonesia. The emergence of karamah on a religious figure or protector of Allah signifies honor or glorification and a sign from Allah that a guardian is present by His side. Not everyone has this karomah; only those who are blessed by Allah do. Many ulama in Indonesia possess karomah. Those who gain this karomah consistently exhibit virtuous behavior, follow the Prophet Muhammad's teachings, and uphold His sunnah. Many passages address the debates around the *karomah*. Here, we will discuss how Allah grants something extraordinary beyond human understanding that Allah gives to certain people, specifically:

A. The story of Ashabul Kahfi, who slept for 39 years during their entire life. Allah protected them from the sun's heat. Allah says:

وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَرُورٌ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتِ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَرَضِّحُهُمْ ذَاتِ الشَّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ

مِنْهُ، ذَلِكَ مِنْ ءَايَتِ اللَّهِ مِنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهَ فَهُوَ الْمَهْدِ وَمَنْ يَضْلِلْ فَلَنْ يَجِدْ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مَرْشِدًا

Translation: "And you might have seen the sun, when it rose, declining to the right from their cave, and when it set, turning away from them to the left, while they lay in the midst of the cave. That is from the Ayat of Allah. He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly-guided; but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no guardian to lead him" (QS.Al-Kahfi: 17).

وَتَحْسِبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ، وَنَقْبِلُهُمْ ذَاتِ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتِ الشَّمَالِ وَكُلُّهُمْ بَسْطَ ذَرَاعِيهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ.

Translation: "And you would think them awake, while they were asleep. And We turned them to the right and to the left, while their dog stretched his forelegs at the entrance. If you had looked at them, you would have turned from them in flight and been filled by them with terror" (QS.Al-Kahfi: 18)

وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةَ سَنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا

Translation: "And they remained in their cave for three hundred years and exceeded by nine" (QS.Al-Kahfi: 25).

Considering this verse as evidence that karomah is true in relation to the story of Ashabul Kahfi.

B. The story of Maryam rattling a parched date palm. The dates fell, ripe beyond their season, and the tree immediately became shaded.

وَهَرِّيَ إِلَيْكَ بِجُزِّ النَّخْلَةِ تَسْقَطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا جَنِيَا

<sup>29</sup> Ibnu 'Ataillah Al-Iskandari, *Al-Hikam Terj* (Jakarta: Turos, 2012), 178.

Translation: "And shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you ripe, fresh dates" (QS.Maryam: 25).

C. The story of Sayyidah Maryam: "Even though no one else had entered Maryam's mihrab, Zakaria consistently discovered sustenance inside," He then said "O Maryam, where did you get this?" Maryam said, "All of this is from Allah".

فتقبلها رجها بقول حسن و أنتها نبتا حسنا و كفلها زكريا، كلما دخل عليها زكريا المحراب وجد عندها رزقا،  
قال يمريم أين لك هذا، قالت هو من عند الله. إن الله يرزق من يشاء بغير حساب

Translation: "So, her Lord accepted her graciously and blessed her with a pleasant upbringing—entrusting her to the care of Zachariah. Whenever Zachariah visited her in the sanctuary, he found her supplied with provisions. He exclaimed, "O Mary! Where did this come from?" She replied, "It is from Allah. Surely Allah provides for whoever He wills without limit.,"" (QS.Ali-Imran: 37).

The history of Tuan Guru Babussalam Syaikh Abdul Wahab Rokan has been popular among the public, the community, who genuinely respect the Ulama, subsequently provided the people a place to share all of their grievances and problems in life. Prior to the discovery of multiple goods with the blessing of Tuan Guru Babussalam, people had also turned to the ulama in the hopes of receiving blessings from Allah's devotees. Goods were interpreted as blessings.

The story of Queen Balqis's throne transfer is one of many stories that demonstrate that *bertawassul*, *tabarruk*, and *karomat* were in fact practiced by earlier people, despite the suspicions of many that they are against religious law. Tafsir al-Misbah verses 38–44 provide an explanation of this story. According to verse 38, Prophet Solomon questioned the dignitaries!"Who among you can bring the throne of Queen Balqis who is in Yemen before they come here?" Verses 40-42 describe how a person acquainted about the sacred texts said, "This gift from my lord to test me, whether I am grateful or disrespectful." Although the interpretation of this verse makes us recall magical stories from the past, this episode proves to be so accurate that the Qur'an makes it very apparent. It appears from the Qur'an and Hadith that belief influences have a significant impact on an individual's life, as Hadith Qudsi says:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله ص م : إن الله يقول : انا عند ظن عبدي بي و انا معه اذا ذكرني. رواه الترمذى

Translation: "From Abu Hurairah he said, the Messenger of Allah declared: Truly, Allah declares: I am what my servant thinks of Me, Me, and I am with him when he thinks of Me" (HR. Tirmidhi)

The interpretation of this Hadith, according to Al-Qadhi 'Iyadh Rahimahullah, is that Allah will grant prayer if the servant requests it, Allah will accept repentance if the servant requests it, and Allah will provide sufficiency if the servant requests it. Huznuzan is the practice of praying with confidence that our requests will be granted. To achieve this, we must maintain our efforts and avoid any prohibition that could lead to the rejection of our prayers. When these two insights are applied to business, they have a significant impact on matters of profit. A person who consistently submits to God, is optimistic, creative, and imaginative, works beyond of their comfort zone, and consistently prays for righteousness will undoubtedly achieve success, particularly in this world. Babussalam village is widely recognized, respected, and missed by outsiders due to the locals' belief in the sacred location of Babussalam, which is said to contain blessings and *karomats*.

The cemetery includes a tourism component in addition to its spiritual, traditional dimension. According to Indonesian customs, which lean towards tolerance for indigenous customs like pilgrimage, the guardian's grave has an abundance of potential as a tourist site. Sufistic Islam, which views Sufis as holy individuals and accords them a prominent status in the community's belief system, is the kind of Islam that first spread to Indonesia. a place that is thought to offer karomah, blessings, and intercession. New holy sites based on major religions are created as a result of saint belief <sup>30</sup>. As a result, the community now visits a sacred location, significantly improving the likelihood that they will be able to rely on it for their livelihoods.

Multipurposes oil is part of the most well-known religious commodification in the Babussalam region. The blessed oil, a superior product in Babussalam Village, has a historical background. Originally, Tuan Guru Babussalam Syaikh Abdul Wahab Rokan taught his children and grandchildren how to formulate medicine, passing along this knowledge to Tuan Guru's own children and grandchildren. Hence, the multipurposes oil was originally known as Tuan Guru oil. Following that, Shaykh Zakariya Kamal Rokan received this information from his children and grandchildren. At first, he used it exclusively for himself and did not sell it. Apparently, when Shaikh Zakariya Kamal Rokan's wife was residing in Kuala Simpang at the time, her brother taught her how to utilize medicines. Her brother Faqih Junaid claimed that the oil was Tuan Guru's and that it would one day provide a living for Shaikh Zakariya Kamal. Shaykh Zakariya Kamal moved to Babussalam Village after he retired and lived as simply as possible primarily of a veteran's pension while his wife worked as a banana chip vendor. After a while, he suddenly recalled the medication recipe that his older brother, the formerly Faqih Junaid, had taught him. When it was first created, it was only as big as a jar. People were then given small amounts to make them feel good about the medication. As a result, when it was brought up again, people bought it rather than asking for it. This oil was sent to Malaysia, where it appears to be in high

<sup>30</sup> Ahmad Falah, "Spiritualitas Muria: Akomodasi Tradisi Dan Wisata," *Walisono: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 20, no. 2 (2012): 14–18, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.2012.20.2.207>.

demand. A significant amount of money was collected from there and used for the Hajj. Previously, the packaging was still plastic ice; only a few years later, it was placed into the packaging. At that time, everything was still manual, with handwritten labels. Along with his spouse, Shaykh Zakariya Kamal visited Mecca. He prayed to Allah while at Mecca, hoping that this oil might be explored further. Upon his return from Mecca, he introduced further product varieties, including hair oil made from candlenut and clove balm. The name of this oil has been changed to "oil of a thousand uses," thus while some refer to it as blessing oil, others label them so. Thus, following his return from the Hajj, his business has grown until now <sup>31</sup>.

Concerning Shaykh Zakaria Kamal's products, which are all labelled "Babussalam's blessings," namely: these items are also a part of the legacy of the late Shaykh Zakaria Kamal, who frequently drew inspiration from *tawajjuh* in his quiet moments and during his prayers, both before and after his Hajj. It is produced by simply combining everything and is consumed with plain water for seven nights. A prayer is spoken aloud and a tattoo is placed on the water. This healing mixture, which is being set up today, was derived from the remains of Shaykh Zakariya Kamal in the past. A relic of pig wart water, which is positioned in the middle of the fields, is another item. It is a medication that keeps rice and other fields safe from disturbance. A great number of individuals are perfectly suited for these products because no religious leader expressed disapproval about them during the production process. The only changes being made to this product are relatively minor, and it has been on the market for a while <sup>32</sup>. The researcher interviewed Shaykh Zakaria Kamal's wife, who was nearing the end of her life, she said "The problem with selling these products was that when we husband and wife were still living in Kuala Simpang, at that time we were selling petrol for vehicles, one day a big car stopped." To fill up the oil, I asked the driver, why do you fill up a small gallon of oil like the driver replied, "Every time I fill up the oil here ma'am, I think this oil can last quite a while," which is why I want to top up the oil here. It appears from the deceased's wife's statement that Shaikh Zakaria Kamal also possessed karomah, which was bestowed by Allah as a reward for his labors.

## Conclusion

According to a review of the Qur'an, the key elements of the commodification of religion in Tuan Guru Babussalam Syaikh Abdul Wahab Rokan al-Khalidi Naqsyabandi's sacred village are believing in the karomah bestowed upon Mukhlis, or master teachers, and honouring ulama as tangible caliphs. The tabarruk of visitors through intermediaries is another aspect. By visiting Babussalam Besilam, the community expects to visit the grave of a notable figure and pious person, pray for

<sup>31</sup> Atok Mua'llim, "Wawancara Dengan Orang Yang Di Tuakan Di Kampung Babussalam" (Langkat, Desa Babussalam, 2020).

<sup>32</sup> (Mr. Mustafa Al-Bakri, n.d)

those who have passed away, and express gratitude to those who passed away. They perform this in the expectation of receiving blessings and goodness. Furthermore, they hold that Allah SWT only possesses the ability to bestow affection and blessings; He is the one who brings maslahah (goodness) and rejects mafsat (badness)

Regarding Shaykh Zakaria Kamal (the teacher's great-grandson), who developed medicine labelled as a blessing and used it as a commodity to be bought and sold, the researchers discover no evidence that it deviates from Islamic law, provided that it neither causes harm to others nor transforms into an illegal object. It is believed that this clarification is accurate and does not place blame on Allah SWT because it is able to cure and solve all problems of life on its own. Perhaps this is where we can see the similarities between the above-mentioned story of the Prophet Yusuf and the *tabarruk* of the community with the village of Babussalam Besilam, namely the curing of his father's illness through the medium of Prophet Yusuf's clothes and with the intermediary of an object, namely a medicinal mixture labelled blessing. Allah uses that to guide whoever He pleases among His followers, particularly those who are faithful. Allah also wants to show that the one who follows His instructions will be glorified.

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