

ANALYSIS OF BLESSINGS (SELAWAT) IN THE DALAIL AL-KHAIRAT IMAM AL-JAZULI

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ABSTRACT: This article discusses the significance of blessings (selawat) in Surah Al-Ahzab, verse 56, which forms the basis for the writing of the book *Dalail al-Khairat* by Imam al-Jazuli. The article employs a qualitative research method with a content analysis approach. It finds that the recitation of blessings is considered important for Muslims not only because it has a theological basis in the Quran (Surah Al-Ahzab:56) and is accompanied by various hadiths but also because when scholars who are believed to possess blessings (karamah) compose a book of blessings along with various supplications, which are then transmitted by their disciples, the book becomes not just a recitation but a spiritual practice (wird) believed to carry blessings from the Prophet. The research also reveals that the popularity of *Dalail al-Khairat* is not solely due to the element of the miraculous recitation of blessings that accompanies it but is historically linked to the doctrinal connection between Jazūliyyah and the Sufi orders of Qadiriyyah and Shadhiliyyah. Furthermore, there are different versions of *Dalail al-Khairat*, stemming from variations in the transmission among al-Jazuli's followers.

Keywords: Imam al-Jazuli, selawat, *Dalail al-Khairat*, Surah al-Ahzab:56

1. INTRODUCTION

Every prophet that Allah sends is equipped with miracles as evidence of the truth of the teachings they bring. Broadly speaking, there are two types of miracles: Firstly, those that are material and sensory, [1] like the example of Prophet Noah building the ark, Prophet Abraham remaining unharmed in the fire, Prophet Moses possessing the miraculous staff, and others. These miracles are only applicable during the lifetimes of the respective Prophets. Once these Prophets have passed away, their miracles come to an end.

Secondly, some miracles are non-material, which pertain to teachings. [2] The uniqueness of these miracles lies in the fact that they continue to hold even after the Messenger who brought them has passed away. One example of this kind of miracle is the Noble Qur'an. Although the Prophet Muhammad has passed away, the miraculous nature of the Qur'an remains throughout time. Among the proofs of the Qur'an's miraculous nature are that no one can produce anything like the Qur'an; not just its 114 chapters (surahs), even a single short chapter is beyond the capacity of all creation. Whoever doubts that the Qur'an is a miracle from Allah is challenged to create a chapter similar to the Qur'an (Al-Baqarah/2:23). This challenge has existed since ancient times and will persist indefinitely. Those challenges are not limited to humans; even entities like the jinn are included. It is confirmed in Surah Al-Isra'/17:88 that they will never be able to fulfil this challenge.

Another proof of the Qur'an's miraculous nature is the preservation of its authenticity from the time of its revelation until the Day of Judgment. This contrasts with previous scriptures, the safeguarding of which was left to their respective scholars (Al-Maidah/5:44). In contrast, the Qur'an's authenticity is affirmed and guaranteed by Allah as mentioned in Surah Al-Hijr/15:9.

The conviction in the Qur'an as a miracle, combined with reading it as an act of worship, has led to the Qur'an being the most widely read, memorized, and studied sacred text, as a form of obedience to Allah. In the tradition of Indonesian Muslim society, especially within the realm of Islamic boarding schools (pesante), making the Qur'an the primary reading material is a common practice.

On the other hand, other readings usually complement and enhance the devotional practices among the Muslim community. One of these is sending blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). There is no other

devotional practice in the Muslim community that is as widespread as sending blessings upon the Prophet after the recitation of the Qur'an. Sending blessings is not only an obligatory recitation in various ritual practices like prayers and Friday sermons, but it is also a recommended practice highly favored by Muslims. Sending blessings is not just recited as a part of routine remembrance (dhikr), it is also melodiously recited in various languages and styles, often in the form of praise and blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad.

The praise and blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad are rooted in the awareness that, as Muslims, they owe an immense debt of gratitude to him. Anyone who gains enlightenment in any area of religion is believed to have received blessings from the sending of blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad. Every Muslim who gains insight into acts of worship, the field of religious knowledge, and others, does so through the blessings and inspiration granted by the Prophet Muhammad—through whom Allah sent revelations. He is the source of inspiration for scholars, reciters, jurists, just leaders, activists, philanthropists, and the primary inspiration for the Muslim community in various ritual practices, such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and more. A word spoken by the Prophet Muhammad to one of his companions, for instance, can motivate hope, readiness, and gifts—by Allah's permission. An incident experienced by a companion alongside the Prophet often transforms their life until their passing. This is because Prophet Muhammad is not only a Prophet but also a teacher and the source of consciousness and inspiration for all.

One of the books that contains a compilation of blessings spread among Muslims worldwide is the book "*Dalail al-Khairat*" by the Sufi scholar from Morocco, Imam al-Jazuli. This book is not just read and studied but is also used as a form of devotional remembrance (wird) by Muslims, along with the belief that it accelerates the acceptance of prayers and attaining the pleasure of Allah.

Research on this book has already been conducted by several researchers with different focuses. Among them is Moh Ali Ghafir, who examined the analysis of the miracles of the book *Dalail al-Khairat*. The results of the research found that the miracle of *Dalail al-Khairat* is in obtaining approval and a diploma from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), a practice followed by many groups. Meanwhile, the findings regarding the miracles experienced by the readers of the book are to guide the

reader to success. Many of the readers of *Dalail al-Khairat* have achieved closeness to Allah Almighty and have had encounters with the Prophet in their dreams and real life.[3] Furthermore, there is an article on the Meaning of the *Dalail al-Khairat* Ritual for Batik Entrepreneurs at the Ar-Rahman Kradenan Mosque in Pekalongan City, written by Irfan MiftahulFitri. In his writing, Fitri explains that the congregation that follows the *Dalail al-Khairat* tradition at the Ar-Rahmah Kradenan Mosque consists of various groups but is predominantly composed of batik entrepreneurs from Pekalongan and its vicinity. They come to the Ar-Rahmah Mosque with diverse personal reasons, such as family encouragement, a love for reciting prayers, environmental factors, a desire for a better life, smooth business operations, and seeking intercession from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)[4].

Previous research has focused on the miracles of the book *Dalail al-Khairat* and its function in the lives of the communities that practice its recitations. This is understandable because the book *Dalail al-Khairat* is widely used by Muslim communities, not only in Indonesia but also abroad. However, in contrast to previous research, the author recognizes the importance of the book *Dalail al-Khairat* for a significant portion of the Muslim population, which is filled with recitations of blessings for the Prophet. As a result, the author felt the need to discuss the significance of these blessings from the perspective of Surah Al-Ahzab/33:56 by exploring the various versions of recitations of blessings written in the book *Dalail al-Khairat*.

In this qualitative study, the author aims to present various explanations found in the book "*Dalail al-Khairat*" by Imam al-Jazuli. Therefore, the use of content analysis methodology becomes essential to capture a comprehensive overview of the significance of sending blessings (*selawat*) within al-Jazuli's work. Additionally, an analysis of verse 56 of Surah Al-Ahzab will serve as a primary foundation for the research, aiming to determine whether there are elaborations and explanations by al-Jazuli concerning this verse. It should be noted that verse 56 of Surah Al-Ahzab forms the primary basis for many scholars who advocate the importance of sending blessings upon Prophet Muhammad.

The sequence of discussions to be examined by the author is as follows: Firstly, an explanation of the importance of sending blessings, both from a linguistic perspective and through the interpretations of scholars. Secondly, the background of Imam al-Jazuli. Thirdly, the reasons behind the writing of "*Dalail al-Khairat*." Fourthly, an analysis of the book "*Dalail al-Khairat*," including its socio-political context in Morocco, the miracles associated with it, variations in its narratives, an analysis of Surah Al-Ahzab 33:56, and the significance of sending blessings within "*Dalail al-Khairat*." Lastly, the conclusion.

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The Meaning of Sending Blessings (*selawat*)

The term "*selawat*" originates from the Arabic word الصلوات, which is the plural form of الصلاة, meaning the basic form of "prayer."^[1] Sending blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) means supplicating to Allah for His blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

In terms of terminology, scholars explain *selawat* as follows[2].

واختلف العلماء في معنى الصلاة على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم على قولين بين جمهور أهل العلم وبين المحققين، أما الجمهور فيرون أن الصلاة على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم معناها الرحمة من الله جل في علاه، فهم يقولون: الصلاة من العبد طلب المغفرة، وكذلك الملائكة، والصلاة من الله الرحمة على العبد الذي صلى عليه. والمحققون يرون أن معنى الصلاة على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم الثناء الحسن في الملائكة الأعلى

Scholars have different opinions regarding the meaning of sending blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), especially among the majority of scholars and researchers (*Muhaqqiqin*). According to the majority of scholars, sending blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) means the outpouring of Allah's mercy and affection. They state that the supplication of a servant is to seek forgiveness, and similarly, the angels also supplicate. The sending of blessings by Allah is His mercy upon the servant upon whom blessings are sent. On the other hand, the *Muhaqqiqin* view the meaning of sending blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as expressing excellent praise in the highest assembly. The above opinions are based on a hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in his Sahih. This hadith, further narrated by Ibn Abbas and cited by Abu al-'Aliyah, serves as the basis for these differing interpretations[3].

Upon closer examination, these differences in opinion are not substantial but rather stem from differing interpretations of the expressions found in the Quran, particularly in Surah Al-Ahzab/33:56, as well as in the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The majority of scholars, especially among the commentators (*mufassirin*), tend to see the general meaning of this verse in connection with other verses. On the other hand, the *Muhaqqiqin*, the researchers of the Prophet's sayings, hold on to the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as previously mentioned.

Regardless of the above differences, the Quran employs words rooted in the letter shad, lam, and alif with different meanings. Some of these meanings include: Firstly, it means supplication. This is mentioned in Surah At-Tawbah/9:103: "*Take, [O, Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them to increase, and invoke [Allah's blessings] upon them. Indeed, your invocations are reassurance for them. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing.*"

The phrase "invoke [Allah's blessings] upon them" is understood as "supplicate for them." It means supplicating for the believers in general and specifically when they offer their zakat to you. "Indeed, your invocations are reassurance for them" signifies peace of mind and joy for them. "And Allah is Hearing," He hears and accepts your supplications. "And Knowing," He is aware of the conditions and intentions of His servants, and He will reward each person according to their deeds and intentions. The Prophet (peace be upon him) followed Allah's command, instructed them to give in charity, and appointed collectors to receive it. When someone came to offer their zakat, the Prophet would pray for their goodness and blessings upon them[4].

Secondly, the root letters shad, lam, and alif carry the meaning of ritual prayer, referring to the worship with established procedures and designated times, beginning

with the opening takbir and ending with the concluding Salam. An example of this meaning is found in Surah Al-Ma'idah/5:6: *"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles."*

The phrase "when you rise to [perform] prayer" directly conveys the meaning of performing salah. Scholars deduced that when a Quranic verse mentions the word shala, preceded by qama or its derivatives like aqimu, quntum, and others, it signifies the act of ritual prayer, which is the second pillar of Islam. When the term shala is not followed by qama or similar words, its meaning is either general supplication, a form of worship, or a less significant or incomplete form of salah.[5] This understanding of salah in different contexts can be observed in various Quranic verses, such as Surah Al-Ma'un/107:5: *"So woe to those who pray."* (107:5).

Thirdly, the term shalat implies blessings and forgiveness. This is evident in Surah Al-Baqarah/2:157: *"They are [the ones] upon whom [descend] blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is they who are [the] guided."*

The phrase "blessings from their Lord" directly explains the concept of blessings and forgiveness. This interpretation is confirmed by Umar bin Abdullah al-Muqbil in his book *"LiyaddabbaruAyatihi."* He stated that this phrase is in plural form, indicating that blessings from Allah are abundant and that blessings serve as motivation to perform good deeds in this world and as rewards for their doers in the hereafter.[6]

This third meaning is also mentioned in Surah Al-Ahzab/33:56, which is the focus of this writing and will be further elaborated below; Exegesis of Surah Al-Ahzab/33:56: *"Indeed, Allah and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace."*

Interpretation of Surah Al-Ahzab: 56 and the Importance of Sending Blessings (selawat)

Surah Al-Ahzab is the 33rd chapter of the Quran, consisting of 73 verses. It is categorized as a Madani surah, revealed after Surah Ali Imran. It is named Al-Ahzab, which translates to "The Confederates," referring to various groups forming alliances. The surah addresses the events related to the Battle of the Confederates (*Ghazwat al-Ahzab*), particularly in verses 9 to 27, involving the Jewish tribes, the hypocrites, and the polytheists who conspired against the Muslim community in Medina. Below is the text of Surah Al-Ahzab/33:56:

"Indeed, Allah and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessings upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace."

The relevance of this verse with other verses is explained by Quraish Shihab in his Tafsir al-Misbah. He elaborates that the verses in Surah Al-Ahzab contain regulations established by Allah for the Muslim community regarding Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his family (ahlul bait), reflecting the greatness of Prophet Muhammad's personality. This verse indicates that one is not only expected to avoid demeaning the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but is also required to honor and acknowledge his contributions[7].

Among the expressions of honouring Prophet Muhammad is by sending blessings (selawat) upon him. In the above

verse, there are two imperative forms (fi'ilamr), which are perceived differently in the fields of rhetoric (ilmubalaghah) and jurisprudence (ushulfiqh). In rhetoric, the imperative form signifies a higher authority requesting an action from a lower entity, such as a father commanding a child or a teacher instructing a student. In jurisprudence, the imperative form signifies a divine command or a request from a higher authority to a subordinate, as seen in commands to establish prayers and pay zakat. In the context of this research, it refers to the command to send blessings upon Prophet Muhammad.

Before delving into the interpretations of scholars regarding this verse, it's interesting to note that there are 89 verses in the Quran beginning with the address "O you who have believed" (Ya ayyuhallazdinaamanu). In all those verses, this address is placed at the beginning of the verse, except in Surah Al-Ahzab/33:56. In this verse, the call to believers to send blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad starts with a statement of affirmation (taukid) that Allah and His angels send blessings upon him, followed by the command for the believers to do the same. According to Sheikh 'Ali Jum'ah, this emphasizes the significant role of sending blessings upon the Prophet, to the extent that even Allah and His angels do so[8].

Another explanation is provided by Sheikh Wahbah az-Zuhaili regarding the meaning of the verse, accompanied by a critical question: Why do Allah and His angels send blessings while the command to believers includes greetings? For example, *"Indeed, Allah and His angels send blessings upon Prophet Muhammad as an elevation of his status. O believers, send blessings and convey greetings to the Prophet."* In his interpretation, this signifies that the blessing (*selawat*) from Allah is in the form of mercy and approval. The blessing from the angels is supplication and seeking forgiveness for the Prophet. The blessing from the believers is supplication and reverence. Thus, the praise for the Prophet from the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth is collected and showered. The emphasis on sending blessings from Allah and the angels without mentioning greetings suggests that the blessings from Allah and the angels are sufficient[9].

Meanwhile, Muhammad bin Salih asy-Syawwi, in his book *Nafahat al-Makkiyah*, interprets the verse as follows: Allah honors His Prophet Muhammad and proclaims his rank before Him. Allah praises and extols the Prophet, and the angels also praise him. Then, Allah commands the believers, who affirm Allah and His Messenger and act according to His law, to send blessings and greetings to the Prophet. Through this, praises and prayers for the Prophet accumulate. Allah further commands the believers who affirm Allah and His Messenger and act according to His law to send blessings and greetings to the Prophet. Thus, praises and prayers from the inhabitants of heaven and earth come together [10].

A different perspective on interpreting the verse is offered by the renowned Sufi practitioner Jalaluddin ar-Rumi, as quoted by Annemary Schimmel in her magnum opus, *"Muhammad and His Messenger."* Rumi states that there is no better act of worship than sending blessings (*selawat*), an act that Allah and His angels also perform. The practice of sending blessings shows the exalted status of Prophet Muhammad in the eyes of Allah[11].

The importance of sending blessings can be seen in the fact that reciting blessings is a part of the mandatory prayers

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(salat), which is a primary act of worship for Muslims and the second pillar of Islam. Moreover, numerous hadiths emphasize the significance of reciting blessings, particularly as discussed in the content of the book "*Dalail al-Khairat*."

Originally, sending blessings was seen as a form of supplication intended to enhance the glory of Prophet Muhammad. However, over time, it also came to be viewed as a form of praise for Prophet Muhammad, who holds a special position close to Allah. The question then arose: where is Prophet Muhammad in order to receive and respond to these blessings? This question has been debated by classical scholars in the past.

According to some reports, not only the Prophets but also the righteous individuals who die in the way of Allah are all still alive in the presence of Allah. This is confirmed in Allah's words in Surah Ali Imran/3:169-170:

"Do not think of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they are living, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord; they rejoice in the bounty provided by Allah: And with regard to those left behind, who have not yet joined them (in their bliss), the (Martyrs) glory in the fact that on them is no fear, nor have they (cause to) grieved."

The belief that all the Prophets lived inside their graves has strong evidence. Therefore, especially Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), can also respond to the greetings conveyed by his visitors from his grave in Raudhah. According to scholars, if Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) can respond to greetings from his grave, he can do so from anywhere. However, regardless of how people imagine the life of the Prophets after their death, it seems there is no doubt that the Prophets, in a way unknown to the living in this world, live in their graves, blessed and mercy-bestowed by Allah [12].

The strong conviction among Muslims that Prophet Muhammad is still alive has grown even stronger among the faithful. This has intensified the enthusiasm for sending blessings to Prophet Muhammad. This sentiment can also be found in early literary works where, after beginning with praises to Allah and preceded by "*bismillah*," various versions of blessings for Prophet Muhammad would be recited.

On the other hand, scholars have also discussed the question of whether sending blessings to the Prophet is excessive. Considering that Prophet Muhammad is already perfect and has been perfected in a comprehensible manner, blessings from believers do not add to his honor. It can be answered that precisely because Prophet Muhammad is perfect, the benefits of sending blessings lie with the believers and not with him.

Furthermore, scholars have discussed the most appropriate phrasing for sending blessings. Generally, there is a standard form of sending blessings taught directly by Prophet Muhammad, known as the Ibrahimic blessing (selawat Ibrahim), which is also recited in the obligatory prayers. The complete text is as follows:

"O Allah, send blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, as You sent blessings upon Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim. Surely, you are praiseworthy and glorious. O Allah, send blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, as You sent blessings upon Ibrahim

and the family of Ibrahim. Surely, You are praiseworthy and glorious." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Scholars unanimously agree that the blessings recited in prayer are as taught by Prophet Muhammad. However, the wording of blessings recited outside of prayer or as a form of worship, like reciting it as a form of dhikr (remembrance of Allah), has many variations. This study will focus on the book "*Dalail al-Khairat*," which contains blessings for Prophet Muhammad, written by Imam al-Jazuli.

Getting to Know Imam al-Jazuli

Life of Imam al-Jazuli

The full name of Imam al-Jazuli is Abu Abdullah Muhammad Abdurrahman bin Abu Bakr bin Sulaiman Al-Jazuli, al-Hasani, asy-Syadzili, al-Maliki. He is famously known as Imam al-Jazuli. He was born in Jazulah, a tribal name in the Sus region of Morocco, North Africa, in the year 807 H / 1404-1405 CE. He dedicated his time to seeking knowledge in the city of Fez, then embarked on a journey to Hijaz, continued to Egypt, and eventually returned to Morocco to serve the religion. [12] Imam al-Jazuli also spent approximately fourteen years in seclusion (khalwat)[13].

Imam al-Jazuli passed away while performing the Fajr prayer during his first prostration (or according to one narration, the second prostration) on the 16th of Rabi'ul Awwal, 870 H / 1465 CE, at the age of 63. He was buried after the Dhuhr prayer on the same day in the mosque he had built. It is reported that a sweet fragrance emanated from his grave, believed to be due to his frequent recitation of blessings upon Prophet Muhammad. After 77 years from his death, Imam al-Jazuli's tomb was moved to the city of Marrakesh, Morocco[14]. His tomb remains a destination for pilgrims from various parts of the world.

Among the influential teachers of Imam al-Jazuli were Sheikh Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Abdullah Amghar Al-Shaghir, Sheikh Syadzili, Sayyid Abu Abdillah, Muhammad bin Abdul Mudhor Al-Munithi, and Sayid Abu Utsman Sa'id Al-Hartanai. His many students who continued his legacy were well-known. Some of them include Abu Abdillah Muhammad Al-Shoghir Al-Sahli, Abu Muhammad Abdul Karim Al-Mandari, and Abdul 'Aziz Ab-Tiba[15].

Miracles (Karomah) of Imam Al-Jazuli

One of the miracles associated with Imam al-Jazuli is that after 77 years after his passing, his tomb in Marrakesh was moved, and when his remains were taken out of the grave, his body was still intact as if he had just been buried. His hair and beard were still clean and clear as they were on the day of his burial. It's not surprising that many people visit Imam al-Jazuli's tomb in Marrakesh. Sheikh Yusuf bin Isma'il al-Nabhani, a prominent historian, Sufi, and expert in Shafi'i jurisprudence, regarded all this as part of Imam al-Jazuli's sanctity[16].

Most pilgrims also recite *Dalail al-Khairat* (a collection of blessings on Prophet Muhammad) there, which is why there's a strong fragrance of musk oil around the tomb due to the numerous recitations of blessings and prayers for Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his companions. The story of this sweet fragrance is part of another historical account about Imam al-Jazuli, where righteous individuals from various generations have consistently read and practiced his book, *Dalail al-Khairat*.

Ultimately, Imam al-Jazuli attained the status of being alongside Prophet Muhammad in the future because of his followers who recited blessings (salawat). Just as Prophet Muhammad said, "*The closest of people to me on the Day of Judgment are those who send the most blessings upon me.*" (Narrated by Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban, Baihaqi)

Reasons for Writing *Dalail al-Khairat*

The most famous work of Sheikh Muhammad bin Sulaiman Al-Jazuli is "*Dalail al-Khairat waSyawariq al-Anwar fi Dzikr al-Shalat 'Ala al-Nabiyyi al-Mukhtar*" (The Indices of Goodness and the Shining Lights in Mentioning Blessings Upon the Chosen Prophet), often known as *Dalail al-Khairat*[17]. He also left behind a treatise on Sufism, the Hizb al-Falah and Hizb called *Hizb Subhana al-Daim La Yazal*[18].

In a study conducted by Vincent J. Cornell in the 1980s, it was discovered that Imam al-Jazuli's works were not limited to those mentioned above; other books could not be preserved. However, Cornell found five other books attributed to Imam al-Jazuli, all in manuscript form. These books include: "*Aqīdat al-wālī al-ṣāliḥ Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Jazūlī*," "*Khiṣāl al-murīdīn*," "*Risālaft-l-maḥabba*," "*Risālaft-l-tawḥīd*," and "*Risāla'ilā 'ulamā' al-zāhir*." According to one source, Imam al-Jazuli also compiled various writings and statements of his students in a work called "*al-Nuṣḥ al-tāmm li-man qālaRabbīAllāhthummaistaqām*," but unfortunately, this book has been lost[19].

According to a believed account, the writing of *Dalail al-Khairat* began with an incident experienced by Imam al-Jazuli. One day, when it was time for prayer, he rose from his place and went to a well to perform ablution. However, upon reaching the edge of the well, he could not find a means to draw water from it. As Imam al-Jazuli was perplexed, a young girl observed him from a higher place and asked, "Who are you?" Imam al-Jazuli responded by explaining his name. Then the boy said, "You are a man who is always praised by people, yet you are confused about finding a tool to draw water from the well." The boy then spat into the well, and suddenly the water gushed up, allowing al-Jazuli to perform ablution with the overflowing water. Witnessing this, al-Jazuli was amazed by the boy's spirituality. After completing his ablution, he asked the boy, "I swear to you, by what means did you attain this spirituality?" The boy replied, "By frequently reciting blessings upon someone who, when walking on barren land without water or vegetation, wild animals depend on for help." Upon hearing the boy's answer, Imam al-Jazuli spontaneously swore to compile a book that contains blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him)[20].

As for the details of the compilation of *Dalail al-Khairat*, most historians agree that al-Jazuli composed *Dalail al-Khairat* while he was in Fes, Morocco. Some also argue that Imam al-Jazuli drew his references from the library of the University of Qarawiyyin[21]. However, they do not agree on the exact timing of its writing. Some claim that the book *Dalail al-Khairat* was written after al-Jazuli participated in the fight against the Portuguese, who were then colonizing Tangier, Morocco in 1437 CE. However, a more critical analysis of available sources indicates that the book *Dalail* was completed much later, around the year 1453 CE, after Imam al-Jazuli returned from his extended education in the Muslim East[22].

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK DALAIL AL-KHAIRAT

Dalail al-Khairat in the Socio-Political Context of Morocco

Many scholars and researchers believe that the expression of honor and praise for Prophet Muhammad is of great significance among Sufi circles, and this has been the case for centuries. For Sufis, the belief in the perfection of Prophet Muhammad sometimes goes beyond the standard belief that he was free from error. Imam Qadi 'Iyad (d. 1149/50) once stated, "Prophet Muhammad has taken all the qualities of the Beautiful Names of Allah (Asma' al-Husna)"[23]. The belief in Prophet Muhammad as the cosmic light (Nur Muhammad) originating from God has been recorded since the 8th to 9th centuries and reached its peak in the works of Ibn Arabi (1165-1240) and his disciples[24].

The forms of honoring the Prophet through poetry and celebrating his birthday (Mawlid) have been present since at least the 13th century. The tradition of venerating Prophet Muhammad further spread and became popular when Imam al-Jazuli authored the book *Dalail al-Khairat*, specifically in the 15th and 16th centuries CE [25]. The dissemination of *Dalail al-Khairat* began from the East and over two centuries gained a semi-sacred status and was almost distributed internationally. The question that arises is whether the popularity of *Dalail al-Khairat* is solely due to the miracles associated with its author, Imam al-Jazuli, which were then encapsulated in his book, or are there other factors that contribute to it.

In his recent research, "*Muhammad ibn Sulaymān al-Jazūlī and the Place of Dalā'il al-Khayrāt in Jazūlite Sufism*," Vincent J. Cornell concludes that: "*Dalā'il al-Khairāt* became one of the most popular works of Islamic devotional literature. This widespread popularity was partly due to the Jazūliyya's doctrinal connections with the Qādiriyya and Shādhiliyya Sufi orders. In Jazūliyya Sufi practice, the recitation of Dalā'il al-Khairāt and the prayers and litanies of the order were used to instill a "Muḥammadan" consciousness in the mind of the disciple. This higher consciousness was meant to serve as a compass of spiritual guidance for the "true seeker of God" (*al-murīd al-ṣādiq*), who aspired to the highest levels of Sufi knowledge"[26].

From the explanation above, it can be understood that *Dalā'il al-Khairāt* became one of the most popular works of Islamic devotional literature due to the doctrinal connections of Jazūliyya with the Sufi orders of Qādiriyya and Shādhiliyya. In Jazūliyya Sufi practice, the recitation of *Dalā'il al-Khairāt* and the prayers of the order were utilized to instill a heightened "Muḥammadan" awareness in the disciple's mind. This elevated awareness was intended to be a compass and spiritual guidance for the "true seeker of God" (*al-murīd al-ṣādiq*) aspiring for the highest levels of Sufi knowledge.

On the other hand, the composition of *Dalā'il al-Khairāt* by Imam al-Jazūlī and the formation of his Sufi order should be seen as a direct consequence of the political, economic, and social conditions of that time. The European dominance over Moroccan trade and the increasing divisions within the Marinid Sultanate (Morocco) raised concerns among Moroccan scholars, who worried that their land might experience a loss of autonomy similar to the threat that befell the Kingdom of Granada in al-Andalus. The importance of the book *Dalail al-Khairat* in the

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mission to restore Morocco's integrity is documented in one of the earliest hagiographic notices about Imam al-Jazūlī.

According to the story above, immediately after participating in the defense of Tangier, Imam al-Jazuli met a righteous woman who instructed him to return to Fes and fulfil his true mission (that is, to compose *Dalā'il al-Khairāt*) instead of engaging in warfare and jihad. When he protested that the Islamic obligation of sword jihad was more important than pen jihad, the woman exclaimed, "*O Muhammad, where are you going? The people of Maghreb need you!*"[27] In later versions of this story, Imam al-Jazuli stated that the wisdom of that holy woman was a reward from Allah for her continuous supplications to Prophet Muhammad[28].

The Wonders of Dalail al-Khairat

When looking at the influence of the book *Dalail al-Khairat* from the perspective of its "wonders," our viewpoint will differ from the first one. From this second perspective, the popularity of the book *Dalail al-Khairat* can be attributed to several factors, as analyzed by Moh Ali Ghafir[29]. First, it received direct approval from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). To practice *Dalail al-Khairat*, one must seek permission from their teacher. As mentioned in the book "Bulugh al-Masarat ala *Dalail al-Khairat*," Sheikh Hasan al-Misri stated, "It is sufficient as an indication of the greatness of *Dalail al-Khairat* that some of the 'Arifin (those who have recognized Allah) received permission from Sayyid al-Mursalin, the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (peace be upon him)." Sheikh as-Siddiq al-Falali also narrates that Prophet Muhammad taught him the book written by Imam al-Jazuli while he was asleep, and when he woke up, he had memorized the book well[30].

The stories of these great scholars strengthen the authenticity of *Dalail al-Khairat* and establish the Prophet Muhammad's approval of its composition. Second, it has become a practice for many Muslims. There is no doubt about the widespread popularity and practice of *Dalail al-Khairat* among Muslims in Indonesia, especially among students. Furthermore, the practice of Dalail Khairat, as mentioned earlier, has become global, not only in its country of origin, Morocco but also in India and Southeast Asia. Third, it leads the reader to success. Scholars claim that the book, a collection of blessings by al-Jazuli, contains numerous blessings and successes for its readers. Therefore, the following expression is very accurate: "Whoever reads it forty times to fulfil their needs and alleviate their sorrows, Allah will grant their wishes and relieve their distress."

Differences in the Narration of Dalail al-Khairat

There are differences in the narration of the copies of *Dalail al-Khairat*. However, according to the scholars, the most reliable copy of *Dalail al-Khairat* is the one attributed to al-Sheikh Abu 'Abdillah Muhammad al-Shaghir al-Sahli. This is due not only to his seniority, as he is considered the most senior and prominent student of Imam al-Jazuli but also because al-Sahli's copy was corrected by Imam al-Jazuli himself eight years before his death, precisely on Friday morning, the 6th of Rabiul Awal in the year 862 H[31]. In the author's investigation, differences in wording and narration can be seen in various editions or manuscripts of *Dalail al-Khairat* with different printings. Here are some details:

First, in the 1937 edition by Mustafa al-Bab al-Halabi, the opening of the book (Iftitahu *Dalail al-Khairat*) is presented directly to the readers. It includes praise to Allah, blessings to the Prophet, and a hope that those who read *Dalail al-Khairat* will receive blessings. It is followed by the recitation of Asma' al-Husna, the prologue by Imam al-Jazuli, the virtues of sending blessings to the Prophet, the names of Prophet Muhammad (around 201 names), the attributes of Raudhah as-Syarifah, the opening prayer of *Dalail al-Khairat*, the procedure for sending blessings to the Prophet, and eight hizib (from Monday to Monday), ending with the prayer of *Dalail al-Khairat*[32]

Second, the 2017 edition by Dar al-Wabil as-Shayyib is based on the narration of Abi al-Hasan Nuruddin bin Ali bin Jum'ah as-Syafi'i (Imam Tariqah Syadziliyyah al-'Aliyyah). This edition does not include the prologue by Imam al-Jazuli and the virtues of sending blessings to Prophet Muhammad. However, at the end of the book, it explains the chain of narration through Sheikh Ali Jum'ah, Sheikh al-Ghumari, Sayyid Muhammad 'Alawi al-Maliki, and Sheikh Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani, with the chain ultimately reaching Imam al-Jazuli[33]

Third, *Dalail al-Khairat* authenticated by Sheikh Ahmad bin Muhammad Ridwan and certified by Sheikh Muhammad Zakariya al-Bukhari does not provide information about its year of publication. Like the narration by Sheikh Ali Jum'ah, this edition does not include the prologue by Imam al-Jazuli, the virtues of sending blessings to Prophet Muhammad, or details about Sifat ar-Raudhah, as found in the edition by al-Halabi.

The key difference in this last edition of *Dalail Khairat*, compared to the previous two mentioned editions, lies in the explanation of the main purpose of reading *Dalail al-Khairat*, which is found in the introduction before mentioning the other names of Prophet Muhammad. In this introduction, it is explained that the primary purpose of reading *Dalail al-Khairat* is to instil in the students of al-Jazuli a strong and comprehensive love for Prophet Muhammad. This love's transformative effect will lead the seeker (student) directly to God (wushulillah). This purpose is clearly stated in al-Jazuli's introduction to *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt*. [34] Here is the expression:

إلهي بجاه نبيك سيدنا محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم عندك ومكانته لديك، ومحبتك له ومحبتك لك، وبالسر الذي بينك وبينه، أسألك أن تصلي وتسلم عليه وعلى آله وصحبه، وضاعف اللهم ومحبتني فيه، وعزفتني بحقه ورثته، ووفقتني لاتباعه، والقيام بأدبه وسنته، وأجمعني عليه ومتعني برويته وأسعدني بمكلمته... (إلى أن قال)... يا الله يا نور يا حاق يا مبین. [35]

"O my God, for the sake of Your Prophet, our Master Muhammad (may Allah bless and protect him) in Your presence, with his status before You, with Your love for him and his love for You, and with the secret between You and him, I ask You to bless and protect [the Prophet], his family, and his companions. O my God, increase my love for him and also inform me of his truth and spiritual rank. Allow me to follow him, maintain his behavior and Sunnah, unite me with him, grant me the vision of his essence, and bless me through conversing with him (waas'idnībimukālamahīhi)... O Allah, the Luminous One, the True One, and the Most Manifest."

It should be noted that in the two *Dalail al-Khairat* books mentioned earlier, there is an explanation of the prayer before starting the main reading. Each book may use a different wording. Some use the wording "Iftitahu *Dalail al-*

Khairat," "Du'aBad'i*Dalail al-Khairat*," or "Du'aan-Niyyah." All of them have the same meaning, which is the opening prayer before beginning the main reading. However, the explanation of the main purpose of *Dalail al-Khairat*, as found in the third book, is not mentioned in the previous two editions. This might raise the question of which narration aligns with the copy attributed to al-Sheikh Abu 'Abdillah Muhammad al-Shaghir al-Sahli. So far, the author has not been able to find the answer. In Moh Ali Ghafir's research,[36] detailed information is not provided. Similarly, the two commentaries on *Dalail al-Khairat* that the author has examined, authored by Sheikh Yusuf al-Fasi (Mathali' al-Masarrat bi Jala'i*Dalail al-Khairat*)[37] and Sheikh Abdul Majid as-Syarwani (Syarhu*Dalail al-Khairat*waSyawariq al-Anwar),^[38] do not mention the source of their narrations. However, these two commentaries bear similarities to the printings by Mustafa al-Bab al-Halabi and Dar al-Wabil as-Shayyib.

Analysis of Surah al-Ahzab 33:56 and the Importance of Salawat (Sending Blessings) in Dalail al-Khairat

Despite the differences in the narrations found in *Dalail al-Khairat*, in the author's analysis, these variations are not significantly important and do not detract from the core purpose of Imam al-Jazuli's writing of *Dalail al-Khairat*. Al-Jazuli teaches and invites all of us as Muslims to love the Prophet Muhammad through *Dalail al-Khairat*[39]. History has shown that al-Jazuli's efforts were blessed by the Prophet. In this regard, the statement by Sayyid az-Zabidi in *Ithaf as-Sadat al-Muttaqin bi SyarhiIhya' al-Ulum ad-Din* is indeed true:

"Those who love the Prophet Muhammad can express their love for him in various ways, including composing poetry and books, both long and short. The book *Dalail al-Khairat* by Imam al-Jazuli is one such short book that contains invocations of blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad. In al-Jazuli's time, there were many other books containing blessings and praises for the Prophet. However, Allah accepted al-Jazuli's work and made it famous. From *Dalail al-Khairat*, various explanations (commentaries) and marginal notes (hawashi) have emerged to clarify al-Jazuli's intentions. I (Sayyid az-Zabidi) often heard from many of my teachers saying, 'If you want to know a person's rank in Allah's acceptance, look at his authored books or his students.'"^[40]

Returning to the analysis of *Dalail al-Khairat*, as previously explained, the author will only present important expressions stated by al-Jazuli in his supplications and praises for the Prophet Muhammad, especially regarding Salawat (sending blessings). This means that the author will not provide an analysis or the purpose of: the names of the Prophet, supplications of forgiveness (istighfar), the beautiful names of Allah (Asmaul Husna), etc., which are also included in *Dalail al-Khairat*.

First, Imam al-Jazuli's introduction. It should be noted that Imam al-Jazuli's introduction is not always included in the various printings. If you want to know Imam al-Jazuli's introduction to his book *Dalail al-Khairat*, you can find it, for example, in Abdul Majid as-Syarwani's commentary on *Dalail al-Khairat*. In his introduction, after writing the Basmalah (In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful), Hamdalah (Praise be to Allah), and Salawat upon the Prophet, Imam al-Jazuli says:

"The purpose of this book is to mention sending blessings upon the Prophet and the virtues thereof. I deliberately

omitted the chain of narration (sanad) to make it easier for readers to memorize. Sending blessings is one of the most important acts for those seeking closeness to Allah." In his commentary, as-Syarwani explains the importance of sending blessings to the Prophet. According to him, Salawat is min anfa' al-wasa'il (the most beneficial means). Salawat is a way to reach Allah without the need for a teacher (syekh)[41]. He also explains the statement of scholars that there is no other way to attain closeness to Allah except by avoiding wrongdoing and sending blessings to the Prophet Muhammad [42]

Second, the opening supplication of *Dalail al-Khairat*. In this section, al-Jazuli shows how he surrenders to Allah with all his efforts and intentions, meaning he has no other intention except to draw closer to Allah. Then he expresses his desire to draw near to Allah by sending blessings to the Prophet Muhammad because the command to send blessings and love for the Prophet Muhammad is Allah's command. Furthermore, al-Jazuli also writes about his hope that his supplication will be accepted and that he will be counted among the righteous servants of Allah who continuously recite *Dalail al-Khairat*. He says: "So accept it from me through Your grace and make me among Your righteous servants and grant me the ability to recite it continuously." In another narration, there is an additional supplication: "O Allah, increase his honor upon the honor You have bestowed upon him and elevate his status among the messengers and raise his rank among the prophets. I ask for Your satisfaction and his satisfaction, O Lord of the worlds..."

In this opening supplication, readers who are aware of its significance will understand that the primary purpose of reading *Dalail al-Khairat* is to seek Allah's pleasure. Additionally, praises and supplications for the Prophet Muhammad are offered by al-Jazuli. While it is believed by Muslims that the Prophet Muhammad already holds a high status in the eyes of Allah, al-Jazuli still asks Allah to increase his honor. Third, the virtues of sending blessings upon the Prophet. Imam al-Jazuli begins this section by quoting one of the verses emphasizing the importance of Salawat, Surah al-Ahzab 33:56: "Indeed, Allah and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet[43], O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace."

Regarding the interpretation of verse 33:56 of Surah al-Ahzab, the author has previously explained this. Among the impressions that the Quran gives regarding the importance of sending blessings is that there are 89 verses in the Quran that address the believers (Ya ayyuhallazdinaamanu). All these verses usually start with the phrase, except for Surah al-Ahzab 33:56, where it begins with a strong affirmation (taukid) that Allah and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad, followed by the command to believers to send blessings upon him. This indicates how important the act of sending blessings upon the Prophet is, even Allah and His angels send blessings upon him. However, Imam al-Jazuli does not explain the secret behind this verse. Instead, he presents several Hadiths that emphasize the importance of Salawat, motivating readers to send blessings and seek its blessings.[44] Here are some of these Hadiths and their meanings:

It is narrated that one day, the Prophet Muhammad came with a smile on his face, and he said: "Gabriel came to me today, and he asked, 'Are you pleased, O Muhammad, that

no one from your Ummah sends blessings upon you except that I send blessings upon them tenfold, and no one sends peace upon you except that I send peace upon them tenfold?" Commenting on this Hadith, as-Syarnubi explains that when the Prophet smiled, his radiant light was visible. He mentions that there are two different versions of this Hadith. In one version, it is Gabriel who sends the blessings, and in the other, it is Allah. If it is Allah who sends the blessings, the wording of the Hadith is, "Are you pleased that your Lord, the Almighty, says..." There are many Hadiths that emphasize the encouragement to send blessings, and this should be a source of pride for the Muslim community, as they can send blessings upon the Prophet. In this regard, Ibn 'Ataillah said: "If Allah sends a single blessing, it suffices for all worldly and Hereafter concerns. So, what about someone who sends blessings tenfold?" Additionally, there is one Hadith that is of paramount importance, and al-Jazuli places it at the end of the chapter on the virtues of sending blessings. The Hadith says:

"It was said to the Messenger of Allah, may peace and blessings be upon him, 'Who among the believers has the strongest faith in you?' He replied, 'One who believes in me without having seen me; his love for me is intense, and he wishes he could see me in exchange for his entire worldly wealth.'" [45] This Hadith can be a source of motivation for Muslims who may not have had the opportunity to see the Prophet in this world, but their love for him is unquestionable. In the author's opinion, this Hadith remains relevant throughout all times. In summary, these are some of the key points discussed in *Dalail al-Khairat* regarding the importance of sending blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad.

CONCLUSION

Surah al-Ahzab/33:56 gives the impression that scholars agree that the recitation of blessings (selawat) in prayer should be done as taught by the Prophet Muhammad, commonly known as the selawat Ibrahimiyah. However, when it comes to reciting blessings outside of prayer, there are various forms and models. It is not surprising, therefore, that the diverse supplications, poems, and other compositions created by scholars each have their own characteristics.

One of the scholars who composed recitations of blessings for Prophet Muhammad was Sheikh Muhammad bin Sulaiman al-Jazuli through his work, the *Dalail al-Khairat*. Considering the background of Imam al-Jazuli – who was filled with various blessings before and after writing the book – it is not surprising that when this book was completed, it was widely accepted by Muslims worldwide. Muslims who read *Dalail al-Khairat* have different hopes and intentions. Some seek the fulfilment of their wishes or the ease of their affairs, among other things. As long as their intentions align with the original purpose of the book, which is to seek blessings from the Prophet, as Imam al-Jazuli did, these intentions are valid. In this case, what Imam al-Jazuli prayed for when composing this book can be considered a success, as it encourages Muslims to approach Allah through their love for the Prophet. On the other hand, it is found that *Dalail al-Khairat* has different narrations and versions. Therefore, sometimes what is

found in one version of the book may not be present in another. However, they all share the same core substance.

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- [38] Abdul Majid as-Syarnubi al-Azhari, *Syarab Dalail al-Khairat Wa Syawariq al-Anwar* (Kairo: Maktabah al-Adab, 1994), 74
- [39] In addition to Dalail al-Khairat, there is certainly another renowned and equally important book in the form of poetry, namely the Burdah by Imam al-Busyiri.
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- [41] Because the recitation of blessings (selawat) does not require anything to be deemed valid. This demonstrates how "inexpensive" selawatis, yet its value is very high.
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- [43] Blessings (selawat) from Allah, the Most Gracious, signify bestowing mercy; from the angels, it means seeking forgiveness; and from the believers, it signifies praying for mercy, as in the words "Allāhummaṣalli'alā Muhammad."
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