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Qalbun Faqih: An Initial Review with Experts

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ABSTRACT

The Qur'an mentions that the place to carry out intellectual processes such as understanding, thinking, reasoning and reflecting (faculty of intellection) is in the qalb (heart). Although there are other tools for attaining knowledge such as hearing and sight, the qalb is placed as the main tool for thinking in order to obtain truth. Further, the Qur'an states that the ululalbab (intellectuals) are those who use the qalb as a tool to understand. There are six verses identified using the word qalb which are associated with the thinking process. Meanwhile, the words that mean thinking that accompanied the word qalb are faqaha, yafqahu, faqih. Based on this description, the qalb is seen as a place to carry out the process of faqaha. From that, how do scholars view the word faqaha as a process of understanding? If the two terms, qalbun and faqih, are combined, how do experts view the concept of qalbun faqih. This paper analyses the views of scholars on the word faqaha as a process of understanding by using the content analysis method of some literature. Next, a roundtable discussion was held with four experts in the field of Shariah about the concept of qalbun faqih. This paper found six main elements are present in the faqaha process using qalb. Finally, the paper obtained confirmation on the concept of qalbun faqih from the four experts from the field of Shariah.

1. Introduction

The word *qalb* is a derivative of *qaf*, *lam*, *ba* which means the change that happened to it. Qalb means a change that exists in a situation [12]. The word qalb is found in 130 places in 45 surahs and 112 verses with various meanings and explanation according to its context. According to al-Hakim, *qalb* is the second dignity after *sadr* (chest) [16]. One of the contexts of a verse that has the word qalb is the process of understanding. In this context, the accompanying word is *yafqahu*. This word is derived from the word *fahaqa* which means to understand with deep understanding. Six verses were found using this word and associated with *qalb*.

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The following are the verses that use the word *yafqahu* and accompanied by the word *qalb*. Allah SWT's words in surah Al-An'am verse 25:

Meaning:

"And among them are those who listen to you (Muhammad), but We have placed over their hearts coverings, lest they understand it, and in their ears deafness. And if they should see every sign, they will not believe in it. Even when they come to you arguing with you, those who disbelieve say, 'This (Al-Qur'an) is not but legends of the former peoples.'"

The words of Allah SWT in surah Al-'Araf verse 179.

Meaning:

"And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless".

The words of Allah SWT in surah al-Taubah verse 87

Meaning:

"They were satisfied to be with those who stay behind (from the war), and their hearts were sealed over, so they do not understand (the benefits of having faith and jihad)".

The words of Allah SWT in surah Al-Kahfi verse 57

Meaning:

"And who is more unjust than one who is reminded of the verses of his Lord but turns away from them and forgets what his hands have put forth? Indeed, We have placed over their hearts coverings, lest they understand it, and in their ears deafness. And if you invite them to guidance - they will never be guided, then - ever".

The words of Allah SWT in surah al-Munafiqun verse 3.

Meaning:

"That is because they believed, and then they disbelieved; so their hearts were sealed over, and they do not understand".

The words of Allah SWT in surah al-Isra' verse 46

Meaning:

"And We have placed over their hearts coverings, lest they understand it, and in their ears deafness. And when you mention your Lord alone in the Qur'an, they turn back in aversion".

These verses clearly show the use of the words *qalb* and *yafqahu*, which means to understand. The word *qalb* is a place to go through the process of understanding. Until Allah SWT mentions that if one does not use the *qalb* as a place to understand, then the effect is falsehood. Hence, the *qalb* certainly has elements associated with the process of understanding. This paper examines the views

of scholars concerning the word *qalb* and the process of *yafqahu*, and further examines the views of the experts on the use and incorporation of the word *qalbun faqih*.

2. Methodology

This paper uses the library method where data can be accessed, obtained and analyzed through computers or from library materials without going through empirical experiments. Among the materials referenced include scriptures, books, journals and working papers. The scriptures referred to are *Mu'jam Mufradat Alfaz al-Quran*, *Ihya 'Ulum al-Din*, *I-Radd' ala Man Adkhala ila al-Ard wa Jahila an al-Ijtihad fi kul 'Asr Fard*, *Al-Madkhal ila al- Siyasah al-Syar'iyyah*, *Bayan al-Farq Baina Al-Sard wa Al-Qalb wa al-Fuad wa la-Lubb*. *Mu'jam Mufradat Alfaz al-Quran*, *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim*, *Al-Qamus Al-Muhit* and *Al-Mu'jam Al-Mufahras Li Alfaz al-Quran al-Karim*.

Next, data were obtained through open table discussions with four experts in the field of Shariah. Experts from the field of Shariah were chosen because the term *faqih* comes from the word *faqaha* and is related to the word *fiqh*. They were selected based on their involvement and writing in the field of Shariah over a period of more than five years. They are Prof. Madya Dr. Muhammad Nasri Bin Md. Hussain (UUM), Prof. Madya Dr. Muhamad Noor Habibi b. Hj. Long (UUM), Prof. Madya Dr. Alias bin Azhar (UUM) dan Dr. Syed Sultan Bee binti Packeer Mohamed (UUM).

3. Results

The root word for the word *yafqahu* is *faqaha* or *faqiha* or *faquha*. According to Imam al-Nawawi the word *faqiha* means to understand (*fahima*). When a person precedes others in understanding something, it is called *faqaha*. Next, when the ability to understand has become ingrained in a person, it is referred to as *faquha yafquhu* [4].

Deep understanding refers to the ability to know the wisdom of knowledge [5]. Abd al-Karim Zaydan [2] explained that the use of the word *faqaha* in the Qur'an does not merely mean knowing, but means deep understanding and subtle perception. This intended understanding is related to the law of Islam which includes the knowledge of *furu '*, faith (*aqidah*) and mysticism (*tasawuf*) [10]. A person who has a deep understanding is called a *faqih*.

Imam Hassan al-Basri, on the other hand, describes a *faqih* based on the following expression [8]:

"Indeed, a person who is said to be a faqih is an individual who is ascetic while living in this world, who loves the hereafter, who has a keen eye on religious matters, who is istiqamah (consistent) in worshipping Allah, who is pious, who preserves himself from the dignity and property of Muslims and provides them many reminders".

Based on the above expression, al-Ghazali explains that at the beginning of Islam, *fiqh* was referred to as the knowledge of the hereafter. In fact, the discussion of *fiqh* is related to very subtle problems of the heart that must be avoided. *Fiqh* also discusses things that can ruin good deeds. Next, in *fiqh* there are practices that must be done in pursuit of the hereafter. Al-Ghazali also elaborated on a verse in Surah al-Tawbah verse 122 which means *"to deepen their understanding of religious knowledge so that they can teach their people (who went out to fight) when they (the mujahids) return to them (fuqaha)"*.

The term *mujahid* is given to the fighters, who go out to fight in the way of Allah and to uphold the religion of Islam. Meanwhile, the term *fuqaha* refers to scholars who are knowledgeable in the matter of religion. Al-Ghazali explains that the purpose of giving reminders to family members cannot

be achieved unless matters related to the hereafter are explained. In fact, Al-Ghazali explains that the understanding of religious rules, such as the laws of *talaq*, sale and purchase, mortgage, *hudud*, *qisas*, rent and so on, sometimes are unable to make humans more afraid of Allah, and sometimes do not even know Allah SWT.

This is because these things are unable to make the heart be afraid of Allah SWT. In fact, excessive discussion about religious laws will cause the heart to become hard and forget Allah SWT. Al-Ghazali asserts that what is meant by understanding (*fiqh*) is those understanding that involves the question of faith and not the question of *fatwa*. Although Al-Ghazali's explanation focuses more on the understanding of faith, but he does not deny that *fiqh* is also an understanding of the laws of *fatwas* that involve human actions.

Furthermore, in the second century of the Hijrah, the understanding of *fiqh* was more focused on knowledge related to religious laws and separate from faith (*aqidah*) and mysticism (*tasawuf*). Ibn Qayyim, on the other hand, explains that knowledge will arise when enlightenment is obtained from certain propositions [13]. Al-Suyuti explains that an individual who possesses knowledge by *taqlid* is considered to be a person having knowledge of religion but cannot be considered a *faqih* (Abd al-Rahman al-Suyuti, t.t).

Dr. 'Abd' Al Ahmad 'Atwah [1] stated:

"Fiqh does not mean knowing the position of a word in general and specifically, nor does it mean knowing the meaning of words that are already clear. This is because knowing those words is not something that is difficult for someone who knows Arabic. In fact, what is meant by fiqh is to understand all the meanings, wisdom and secrets of tasyri '(Islamic law) and to know the reasons,' illah-'illah and their relationship with each other to issue a law that is true and as if by the will of Allah SWT from its provisions. This is the understanding that Allah SWT praises the scholars of ijtihaddaam, His word which means: And if they return (a matter of life) to the Messenger and Uli al-Amr among them, it will be known by those who are qualified to take the decision (law) about it among them".

Even so, Mahmud Zuhdi Abdul Majid [15] explained that a person who is said to be a *faqih* is not necessarily a *mujtahid*, but may only be *taqlid* with the *ijtihad* of others. The *mujtahids* are the ones who are able to master the principles of *fiqh* while the *faqih*s are the ones who only master the laws of Islam. Thus, it can be concluded that *fiqh* refers to a deep understanding as well as a common understanding.

Al-Qalb is a place for knowledge where human ponders, reflects and contemplates about the meaning of words (*tadabbur*), and reflects (*tafakur*). Like a well, *al-Qalb* is a source of spring and *sadr* is a place to hold the spring. From the spring, water emerged and accumulated in the well. *Al-Qalb* is like a spring and the place of emergence of knowledge and knowledge will be poured on *sadr* [9]. Imam al-Ghazali defines the *qalb* as something that is subtle, divine, spiritual and has a close relationship with the heart. It is this subtlety that is able to perceive, know and recognize something [8].

Based on the explanation from the scholars above, the process of understanding that is associated with the *qalb*, which is related to *aqidah* and *tasawuf*, can now be discussed. The *qalb* is an organ that goes back and forth either according to the light from the Divine or the whispers from the devil. Therefore, the need to constantly purify the soul should always be done. This also illustrates the very close relationship between the *qalb* as the place where faith and spirituality are stored with the process of understanding. The following is a diagram that illustrates the relationship.

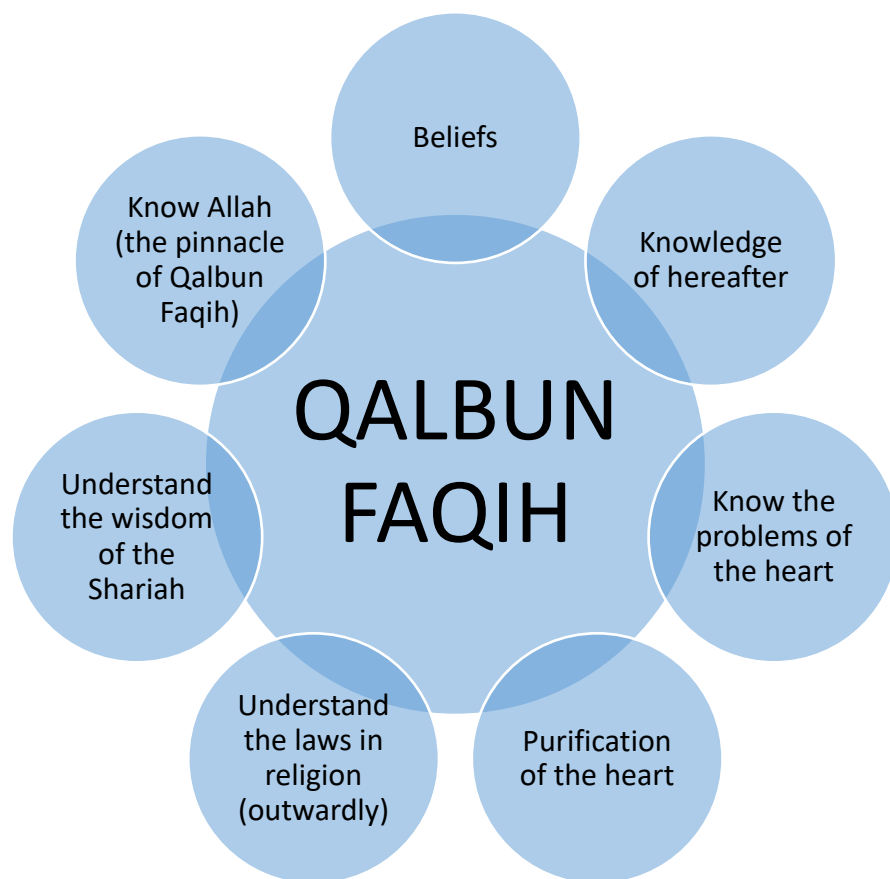


Fig. 1. The relationship of elements to achieve *Qalbun Faqih*

From the above discussion, we established the elements that are related to the *qalbun faqih*. Next, a roundtable discussion with four experts was conducted to obtain views and confirmation by combining the two terms, namely *qalbun* and *faqih* by exhibiting seven elements related to the concept of *qalbun faqih*. Below are the experts' opinions from the discussion:

Prof. Madya Dr. Muhamad Noor Habibi Bin Hj. Long	<i>"The discussion is divided into two, faqih with the meaning we understand and faqih about Allah. First, ma'rifatullah, second, makrifatu ahkamillah. The understanding of the two must be balanced".</i> <i>"If a person only studies fiqh, he only knows the law but he does not know who ordered it. He knows Allah ordered it but does not have knowledge about Allah, His greatness and power. If a person is concerned and truly knows Allah, when he hears the call to prayer, he will immediately get up and prepare to pray and is afraid"</i> <i>"We have a problem now, we don't know Allah, we just do what Allah commands us to do"</i> <i>"In general, qalbun faqih is the highest, but there are levels, such as the companions of Rasulullah S.A.W. Ibn Umar and Ibn Abbas also</i>
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	<i>have different ways of understanding the actions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW "</i> <i>"This model can be used for Muslims"</i> <i>"Knowledge before the first century, all led to knowing Allah"</i>
Prof. Madya Dr. Muhammad Nasri Bin Md. Hussain	<i>"If we want to apply to non -Muslims, we can discuss through the concept of Insaniyyah and divinity (rububiyyah)"</i> <i>"Qalbun faqih can be an added value to the conventional, it's just in Islam we have the concept of the hereafter and uluhiyyah"</i> <i>"Qalbun is an internal formation, when in good, then it will cause good behavior"</i> <i>"The term faqih is important, because qalbun salim will arise when it is related to intellect. When it comes to reason, then it is related to faqih "</i> <i>"In the end, qalbun faqih will give birth to qalbun salim. Because if you only understand, but do not feel it the heart, then this will not work".</i> <i>"Qalbun faqih has two elements, namely the formation of the heart and clear thinking"</i>
Prof. Madya Dr. Alias bin Azhar	<i>Qalbun faqih is a re-branding, so great, there is no issue.</i> <i>We must be clear about Fiqh with tasawuf, because in the past, Islamic Studies did combine fiqh and tasawuf as one, but when there is malakah, then there is a separation of knowledge</i> <i>If this module needs to recombine fiqh and tasawuf, there's a lot to consider. In meeting the needs of society (ask 'illah), which one comes first, qalbun faqih or salim? = faqih must come first</i> <i>We are happy if we understand. Practice good deeds because we understand, not because of taqlid.</i> <i>We already have a platform: qalbun salim. We add qalbun faqih. The people are used to understanding salim with tasawuf, faqih is not visible, so many heretical teachings are born. Qalbun faqih strengthen our faith. Before reaching qalbun salim, one must first reach qalbun faqih.</i>
Dr. Syed Sultan Bee binti Packeer Mohamed	<i>Qalbun faqih is high but Qalbun Salim is the most perfect.</i> <i>We must not only know the problems of the heart but we must also be able to avoid them</i>

	<i>The word 'wisdom of shariah' is changed to 'maqasid syariah'.</i> <i>The word knowledge of the hereafter is changed to knowledge of religion (aqidah-fiqah-akhlak)</i> <i>Faqih must be practiced and conveyed (condition: understand - practice - convey)</i> <i>That's why Qalbun is not just intellectual, it's also spiritual.</i>
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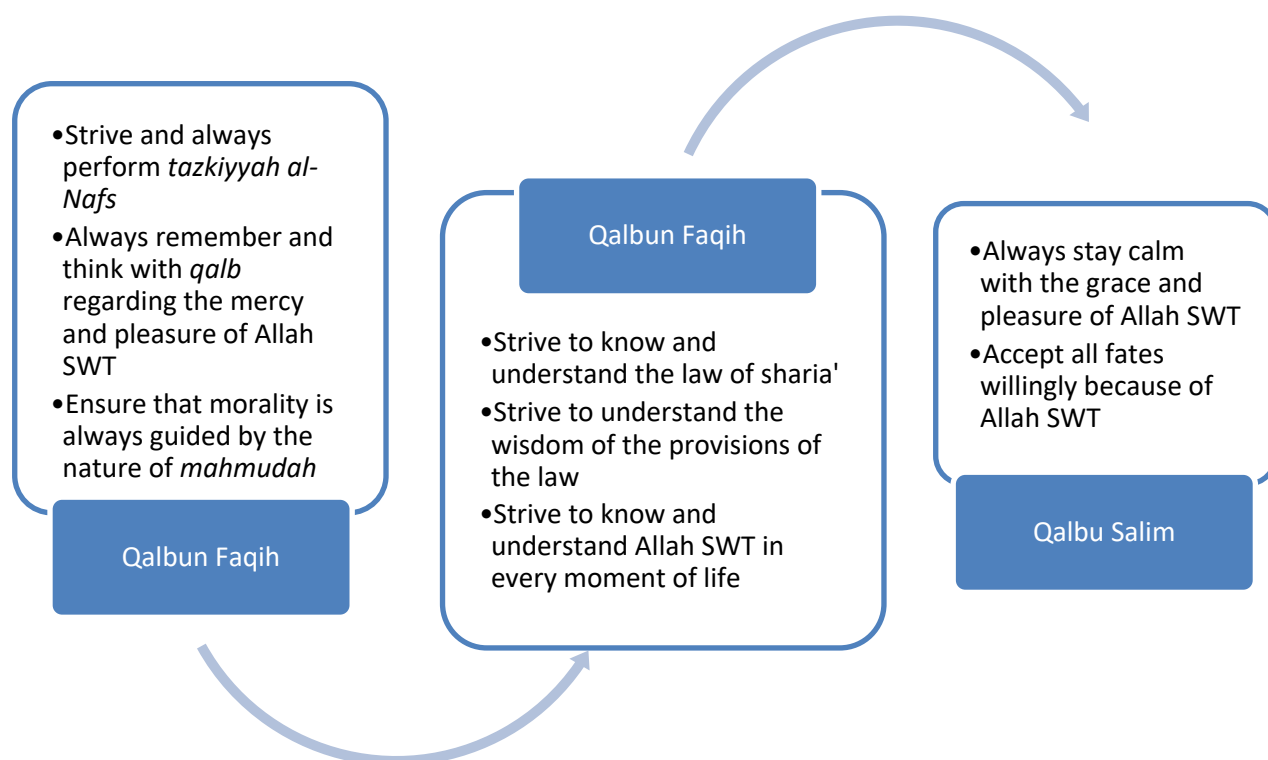


Fig. 2. Relationship between Qalbun Faqih and Qalbun Salim

All experts agree on the use of the term *qalbun faqih*. Although, the combination of these two terms is not found in the literature, the combination of these two terms is appropriate and does not contradict the original term or the commonly used term, which is *qalbun salim*. The concept of *qalbun salim* is the end result, and is the culmination of a servant's devotion to his Creator, Allah SWT. In fact, Allah SWT says in surah al-Syua'ra 'verses 88 to 89, which means "(Remember) the day when wealth and children are no longer useful, except those who face Allah with (bring) a pious heart." Meanwhile, *qalbun faqih* is a deep understanding of problems of the heart and always strive to get rid of them. Once the problems of the heart are gone, then the understanding related to sharia will be deeper by knowing the wisdom of sharia. Finally, through and at the end of this process, we will truly understand Allah. The combination of the two terms brings a clearer concept of understanding according to Islam. That understanding is also for the pleasure of Allah SWT alone. In addition,

understanding has to do with the Giver of the understanding, which is Allah SWT. As a result of this understanding, *qalbun salim* that pleases Allah SWT is born.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, *qalb* as the core to understand something in depth is a principle present in Islam. It aims to make human beings reflect the purpose of the creation of human beings on this earth as a servant to Allah SWT and as a caliph. Certainly, making the *qalb* as the core of understanding will enable the gift of wisdom and truth to human beings. Even so, only a prosperous *qalb* is able to find such wisdom and truth. Humans need to strive to get a peaceful *qalb* so that the resulting thoughts are true thoughts and able to bring people closer to the owner of the *qalb*.

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