

## THE CONSTRUCTION OF FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF ISLAMIC ECONOMICS: LEARNING FROM ULUL ALBĀB VERSES <sup>(\*)</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

*Ulul Albāb* is a symbol of trusted, educated people, who can achieve a comprehensive synergy between spirituality, humanity, charity, and mental attitude when responding to the verses of Allah, whether the written verses (the Qur'an) or the verses of the cosmos (nature and its phenomenon). This study is noteworthy because Islamic economists and popular commentators of tafsir books have not widely studied Islamic economic values based on the *Ulul Albāb* verses. Hence, this paper aimed to construct the fundamental values of Islamic economics based on the *Ulul Albāb* verses. This work employed thematic exegesis and content analysis. Sixteen (16) verses in the Qur'an mentioned the term *Ulul Albāb*, with seven (7) verses are connected to the economic issues. This research is focused on Surah al-Baqarah (2): 197 and 269. Based on these verses, the fundamental values of Islamic economics in four (4) aspects

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are constructed, namely, spirituality, humanity, technical, and ethical aspects. It is expected that the study will be the model of thematic exegesis in constructing the fundamental values from various terms in the Qur'an, especially regarding actual values related to Islamic economics.

**Keywords:** *Ulul Albāb verses; Construction; Islamic Economic Values; Spirituality, Humanity, Ethics, Technic.*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Generally, the messages of the Qur'an are divided into three (3) dimensions of relationship; (i) The relationship between a human and his God; (ii) The relationship between human beings; (iii) The relationship between humans and nature (environment). Among the verses that explain a clear description of those relationships are the *Ulul Albāb* verses. We can find them in Surah al-Baqarah (2): 179, 197; Surah Ali Imrān (3): 190; Surah al-Māidah (5): 100; Surah al-Zumar (39): 21.

Thus far, researchs on the term *Ulul Albāb* have been related to educational issues, e.g., involving themes about character building and leadership<sup>6</sup>; the teacher's role in *Ulul Albāb* generation building<sup>7</sup>. The term is also related to the internalization of *Ulul Albāb* values by students of Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang (UIN Maliki Malang), Indonesia. The internalization of *Ulul Albāb* values aims to generate UIN Maliki Malang graduates as revealed in its Vision and Mission; i.e., with the character of *dhikr*, *fikr* and *'amal saleh*<sup>8</sup>; empowerment of *Ulul Albāb* characteristics through the integration of learning modules. This study focused on the program module for

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<sup>6</sup> Jaffar, Y., Razak, A. Z. A., Embong, R., & Hasrul, M. (2019). The Concept of Ulul Albab Principal Leadership. *International Journal Of Academic Research In Business And Social Sciences*, 9(11).

<sup>7</sup> Subirin, N. A., Alwi, N. H., Fakhruddin, F. M., Manaf, U. K. A., & Salim, S. S. (2018). *Ulul Albāb* Generation: Roles of Ulul Albāb Teachers in Malaysian Selected School. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(14), Pages 1022-1032.

<sup>8</sup> Khaerani, I. F. S. R., Muhammad, A., & Syihabuddin, M. (2017, November). Internalization Of Ulul Albab Value (A Study Of Living Qur'an Among The Students of UIN Malang). In *International Conference on Qur'an and Hadith Studies (ICQHS 2017)* (pp. 161-168). Atlantis Press.

integrative science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education based on *Tawheed*.<sup>9</sup>

The *Ulul Albāb* term was also studied in *tafsir*, but the studies were still in the education area. For example, the *Ulul Albāb* vision implementation in the Surah Ali Imran (3): 190-191 in the educational institution<sup>10</sup>. A similar study entitled "The Ulil Albab Concept in the Qur'an and its Relevance to Modern Education" aimed to analyze the *Ulil Albāb* concept from the Quranic perspective. However, the research on *Ulil Albāb* term mentioned above and the many others not mentioned here were mainly related to education and character-building issues.

In the context of Islamic economics, virtually many Muslim economists have formulated the fundamental values of Islamic economics based on the Qur'an and the tradition of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w). Among these actual values are as follows: (i) *Tawheed*. It is the most important basis in Islamic doctrine. All human activities, including those in the economy, cannot be separated.<sup>11</sup>; (ii) *Ihsān*. *Ihsān* ethics in Islamic economics is instrumental in realizing the benefits and tranquility of the economic community. This value is related to *Tawheed*.<sup>12</sup>; (iii) Social justice. Social justice is an absolute requirement in Islamic economic ethics. There are no prosperity and peace without justice.<sup>13</sup>; (iv) *Amanah* (trust). Trust is an essential value in Islamic economics. Without it, all transactions are considered illegal. Without trusting each other, it will lead to deception and betrayal. Thus, there is only one choice, either trust or betrayal. Its importance can be seen through the emphasis of *amanah* that should be present in every

<sup>9</sup> Rahim, F. (2017). *Pemeriksaan Ulul Albāb Melalui Modul STEM bersepadu STEMind. O-JIE: Online Journal of Islamic Education*, 3, 1–12.

<sup>10</sup> Ulfah, N. (2020). *Implimentasi Konsep Pendidikan Ulul Albab Dalam QS. Ali Imran Ayat 190-191 Di MAN Insan Cendekia Serpong* <http://repository.iiq.ac.id//handle/123456789/101>

<sup>11</sup> Choudhury, M. A. (2020). Ontological Foundation of the Theory of Econometrics in Unity of Knowledge by Inter-Causality. In *Islamic Economics as Mesoscience* (pp. 19-38). Springer, Singapore; Hilmiyah, N., Possumah, B. T., & Shafiai, M. H. M. (2019). Tawhid and Shariah Economics: Positioning Tauhid as Philosophical Foundation of Shariah Economics. *Al-Falah: Journal of Islamic Economics*, 4(2), 145-162.

<sup>12</sup> Ayudin, N. (2020), "Paradigmatic Foundation and Moral Axioms of Ihsan Ethics in Islamic Economics and Business", *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 288-308. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIABR-12-2016-0146>.

<sup>13</sup> Azid, T., & Sunar, L. (Eds.). (2019). *Social Justice and Islamic Economics: Theory, Issues and Practice*. Routledge, 3-6.

financial transaction. Trust can also mean accountability.<sup>14</sup>; and (v) No usury (*riba*). It is still related to the concept of *halal*. Although usury is specific, it often occurs in debt and investment contracts. From the point of view of Islamic economics, usury destroys the economic system, and it is strictly prohibited.<sup>15</sup>

It is worth noting that the formulations of the fundamental values of Islamic economics above have not been constructed based on the *Ulul Albāb* verses. It possibly has been developed as it is because the researchers, who put forward these ideas, were not professional commentators of the Qur'an. Hence, they might not be interested in conducting an in-depth and detailed study of the *Ulul Albāb* term and its economic values in the Qur'an, as well as in the books of tafsir (e.g., *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wil Ay al-Qur'an*; *Tafsīr al-Jāmi' Li Ahkām al-Qur'an*; *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*; *Tafsīr Al-Tabrīr Wa Al-Tanwīr*; and *Tafsīr Mishbah*<sup>16</sup>). The explanation of the *Ulul Albāb* verses in association with the problem of Islamic economics values has also not been found in these books of *tafsir*.

An example is the interpretations of Surah al-Baqarah (2): 197 as translated according to Ali and Brown, which talks about Hajj, provision, and *Ulul Albāb* cases:

الْحُجَّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَةٌ. فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحُجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ  
فِي الْحُجِّ ۗ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَّعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ ۗ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ  
يَأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ (197)

Al-Baqarah: 197

<sup>14</sup> Ali, S. N. (2017). Building Trust In Islamic Finance Products And Services. *Society and Business Review*.

<sup>15</sup> Lawal, I. M. (2016). Riba (Usury); a Tool that should be Carved out of Financial Transactions. *Turkish Journal of Islamic Economics*, 3(2), 13-24.

<sup>16</sup> Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad (2001), *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wil āy al-Qur'an*, in Muḥammad Shākīr, Mahmud & Muḥammad Shākīr, Aḥmad (Eds), juz 4, Cairo: Maktabah Ibn Taimiyah; Abu Bakr al-Qurṭūbī, A. A. M. I. A. (2006). *Al-Jāmi' Li Ahkāmī Al-Qur'an wa al-Mubayyīnu Limā Taḍammanahu min al-Sunnati wa Ayi al-Furqān: Juz 3* in (A. Ibn Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turky & M. R. 'Arqaswasy, Eds.). Muassasah al-Risālāh; al-Marāghī, A. M. (1946). *Tafsīr al-Marāghī: Juz 2* (1st ed.). Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Baby al-Halaby and sons; Ibnu Āshūr, M. T. (1984). *Tafsīr al-Tabrīr wa al-Tanwīr: Vol. 2*. Tunisia: Al-Dār al-Tunisiat; Shihab, M. Q. (2005). *Tafsīr Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keresasian al-Qur'an*. Lentera Hati Press.

*For Hajj are the months well known. If anyone undertakes that duty therein, let there be no obscenity, wickedness, or wrangling in the Hajj. Furthermore, whatever good ye do, (be sure) Allah knoweth it. Moreover, take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best of provisions is right conduct. So be afraid of Allah, O ye that is wise.<sup>17</sup>*

The scholar Al-Ṭabari in determining the provisions (تَزْوُدًا) of the previous verse relied a lot on the narrations that explained the *asbāb al-nuzūl*. He interpreted it textually, i.e., identifying the daily food as the provision needed when carrying out Hajj. However, he also understood that *taqwa* (obeying Allah's commands and avoiding His prohibitions) is the best provision in the conduct of Hajj<sup>18</sup>. According to the scholar Qurṭūbī, the provision is also food as described by *asbāb al-nuzūl*. He also cited Ibn 'Arabi's view, who explicitly connected these provisions with the material necessities that need to be prepared by pilgrims who have wealth<sup>19</sup>.

The contemporary commentator Ibnu 'Āshūr opined that the provision in the verse could mean a recommendation to do more good deeds as a provision for the afterlife. Furthermore, piety (*taqwa*) is understood as being the better provision than the traveler's food on the pilgrimage. Besides, He acknowledged that the verse could mean material provision, such as foods, which are also needed by a tourist<sup>20</sup>. As for the scholar Marāghī, He took a simple approach in his explanation<sup>21</sup>. He did not even associate it with material provisions like the other commentators. Instead, He emphasized the provisions as for the afterlife. As for Shihab, He has interpreted it as material and spiritual provisions. However, his explanation was less detailed and relatively general. But He believed it was

<sup>17</sup> Ali, Abdullah Yusuf, & Brown, W. B. (1987). *The Holy Quran (Koran)*. King Fahd Printing Complex.

<sup>18</sup> Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad (2001), *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*, in Muhammad Shākir, Mahmud & Muhammad Shākir, Ahmad (Eds), Vol. 4, Cairo: Maktabah Ibn Taimiyyah

<sup>19</sup> Abu Bakr al-Qurṭūbī, A. A. M. I. A. (2006). *Al-Jāmi' Li Ahkām al-Qur'ān wa al-Mubayyinu Limā Taḍammanahu min al-Sunnati wa Ayi al-Furqān: Vol. 3* in (A. Ibn Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turky & M. R. 'Arqaswasī, Eds.). Muassasah al-Risālah

<sup>20</sup> Ibnu 'Āshūr, M. T. (1984). *Tafsīr al-Tahrīr wa al-Tanwīr: Juz 2*. Tunisia: Al-Dār al-Tunisiat

<sup>21</sup> Marāghī, A. M. (1946). *Tafsīr al-Marāghī: Juz 2* (1st ed.). Cairo: Mustafā al-Baby al-Halaby and sons

essential to material provisions prepared for the pilgrimage so as not to starve but not wasteful, either<sup>22</sup>.

It is felt that the commentators of the Qur'an (*mufasssir*) were less exploratory in this matter. They did not discuss the relationship between the provision of Hajj, *Ulul Albāb*, and the fundamental values of Islamic economics in a comprehensive manner. Therefore, they might not be interested in linking the *Ulul Albāb* verses with Islamic economic issues or might forget to reveal the fundamental values of Islamic economics. Indeed, there is no commercial term (التجارية) in the context of the *Ulul Albāb* verses, as in Surah al-Baqarah (2): 282 and Surah al-Nisā (4): 29. The absence of a commercial term can also discourage scholars from linking it with the problem of Islamic economics in its interpretation. However, sixteen (16) verses mentioned the term of *Ulul Albāb* in the Qur'an, demonstrating that it is vital to pay attention to it. Therefore, these verses may contain universal fundamental doctrines or values for human activities, especially in the economic context.

As mentioned above, the explanation of the term *Ulul Albāb*, indicates that this that this term is only studied in education and character building and is not associated with economic problems. Hence, it is quite "unique" and challenging to construct Islamic economic values from the *Ulul Albāb* verses as done in this paper.

Thus, this paper aims to construct the fundamental values of Islamic economics based on the verses of *Ulul Albāb* in the Qur'an. However, this paper focused only on analyzing Surah al-Baqarah (2): 197 and 269, including the eight (8) previous verses (261-268) to the latter and the thirteen (13) verses after it (270-283). To find out the meaning of verse 269, it is necessary to analyze the surrounding verses because they are interconnected. Thus, the construction of these values can be holistic. The approach taken in this study is to provide a sample and results of preliminary research in constructing the fundamental values of *Ulul Albāb* Islamic economy.

## 2.0 THE MEANING OF *ULUL ALBĀB*

The term of *Ulul albāb* consists of two (2) words. The first word is *ulu* (أولو) or *uli* (أولى), and its meaning is the possessor/owner. As for the second word *albāb*

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<sup>22</sup> Shihab, M. Q. (2005). *Tafsir Misbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian al-Qur'an* (Cet. 6). Lentera Hati Press.

(أَبَاب), it is the plural for the word *lub*(لُب), and the meaning is ‘*aqal* (عقل) or mind, heart, intellect, reason, understanding. So, for instance, if we say: عَقُولٌ سَلِيمَةٌ مُسْتَنِيرَةٌ بِنُورِ اللَّهِ the meaning is *the light of Allah enlightens his mind*.<sup>23</sup> The scholar Marāghi mentioned it as أهل العقول (intellectual) or one who has the virtue of intellectuality<sup>24</sup>.

The terms of *Ulul Albāb* (أُولُو الْأَبَابِ) or *Uli Albāb* (أُولَى الْأَبَابِ) in the Qur’an are related to many aspects, such as the issue of enforcing the law of retribution (*qisas*)<sup>25</sup>; the law of etiquette, and provisions of Hajj<sup>26</sup>; intelligence in picking up unclear messages and also problems related to economic principles<sup>27</sup>; wisdom when looking at the abstract verses of the Qur’an<sup>28</sup>; positive attitude responding to the creation of the heavens and the earth and the phenomenon of the rotation of night and day<sup>29</sup>; intelligent in weighing the good and evil of things<sup>30</sup>; able to relate to the story of the Prophets before the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) (historical wisdom)<sup>31</sup>; wise in addressing the truth in the Qur’an<sup>32</sup>; affirmation of the oneness of Allah (*Tawheed*)<sup>33</sup>; relating to the command to think and ponder about the verses of the Qur’an<sup>34</sup>; describing family harmony<sup>35</sup>; explaining the human typology that is close to God, comparison between those who are knowledgeable and those who are not<sup>36</sup>; relating to the phenomena and process of the evolution of living things<sup>37</sup>; relating to contemporary issues in the Torah,

<sup>23</sup> Cowan, J. M., & Wehr, H. (1979). *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic: Arabic-English*. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 854; Manzur, I. (2014). *Lisān al-‘Arab* (Vol. 2). Wizārah al-Awqāf al-Su‘ūdiyyah

<sup>24</sup> Al-Marāghi, A. M. (1946). *Tafsīr al-Marāghi: Vol. 2* (1st ed.). Cairo: Mustafā al-Baby al-Halaby and sons, 101.

<sup>25</sup> Surah Al-Baqarah (2): 179

<sup>26</sup> Surah Al-Baqarah (2): 197

<sup>27</sup> Surah Al-Baqarah (2): 269

<sup>28</sup> Surah Ali Imrān (3): 7

<sup>29</sup> Surah Ali Imrān (3): 190

<sup>30</sup> Surah Al-Mā'idah (5): 100

<sup>31</sup> Surah Yusuf (12): 111

<sup>32</sup> Surah Al-Ra'd (13):19

<sup>33</sup> Surah Ibrāhīm (14): 52

<sup>34</sup> Surah Šād (38): 29

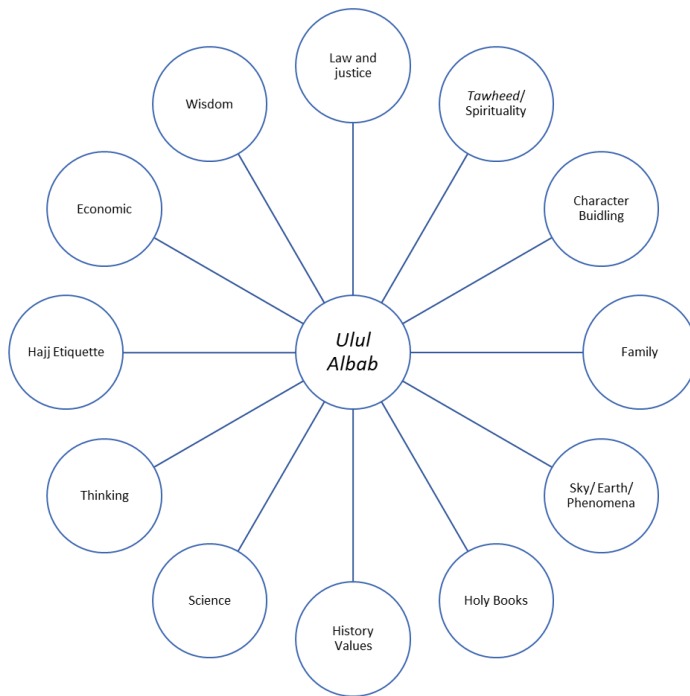
<sup>35</sup> Surah Šād (38): 43

<sup>36</sup> Surah Al-Zumar (39):9

<sup>37</sup> Surah Al-Zumar (39):21

which was revealed to the Prophet Moses<sup>38</sup>; and the command to be pious<sup>39</sup>. Therefore it can be seen that the contents of the verses of *Ulul Albāb* have interconnected values and cannot be separated.

Based on the term *Ulul Albāb*, which is mentioned in 16 verses of the Qur'ān, the *Ulul Albāb's* profile can be formulated as described in diagram 1. *Ulul Albāb* is the type of trusted, educated individual who can achieve a comprehensive synergy between spirituality, humanity, charity, and mental attitude in responding to the verses of Allah, whether the written verses (the Qur'ān) and the cosmic verses (the nature and the phenomenon).



*Diagram 1: The Values of Ulul Albāb Verses*

### 3.0 THE ISLAMIC ECONOMICS VALUES OF *ULUL ALBĀB* VERSES

<sup>38</sup> Surah Ghāfir (40): 53-54

<sup>39</sup> Surah Al-Ṭalāq (65):10



The terminologies related to business ethics such as *ribā*, *maisir*, *gharar* (speculative, uncertain quality, gambling), *halāl*, etcetera are quite prominent in the Qur'an.<sup>40</sup> It proves that the Qur'an is concerned with economic problems; therefore, it is not surprising that many verses are related to economic issues, including *Ulul Albāb*. Besides, humans, of course, cannot be separated from financial problems<sup>41</sup>.

Out of the sixteen (16) verses, seven (7) verses are related to Islamic economics, either directly or indirectly<sup>42</sup>. Some of the verses mentioned are as follows.

... وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ

Al-Baqarah: 197

...And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best of provisions is right conduct. So fear (Me), O ye that are wise.<sup>43</sup>

It is related to the problem of provision that must be brought along when performing the pilgrimage. It can be in the form of financial, food, drink, and spiritual provision. However, a good state of one's *taqwa* is said to be a better provision than any of other types. Therefore, the values that could be briefly summarized from it are *tawheed*, *taqwa*, and balancing between materiality and spirituality in the pilgrimage process are important.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Al-Baqarah: 269

<sup>40</sup> Waemustafa, W., & Suriani, S (2016). Theory of Gharar And Its Interpretation of Risk and Uncertainty From The Perspectives of Authentic Hadith and The Holy Quran: Review of Literatures. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 10(1), 1–27.

<sup>41</sup> Kuran, T. (2018). Islam and economic performance: Historical and contemporary links. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 56(4), 1292-1359.

<sup>42</sup> Surah al-Baqarah (2): 197, 269; Surah Ali Imran (3): 100, 190; Surah al-Maidah (5): 100; Surah Yusuf (12): 111; Surah al-Ra'd (13): 19.

<sup>43</sup> Ali, Abdullah Yusuf, & Brown, W. B. *The Holy Quran (Koran)*.

*He granteth wisdom to whom He pleaseth and he to whom wisdom is granted receiveth indeed a benefit overflowing, but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding.*<sup>44</sup>

This verse does not stand on its own, nor it is “independent” of other verses. To understand holistically, it is necessary to connect it to the “surrounding” verses, Surah al-Baqarah (2): 261-268, and 270-283. Those verses correlate with the aspects of charities in the path of Allah with clean assets (*halal*); management of natural and human resources, and even Satan's relationship with poverty and criminal; and the danger of usury. But also, on the other hand, there are Allah's promises of His forgiveness and sustenance. Thus, the values which can be used as guidance and to be followed: ethics of charities, *halal*, justice, and anti *riba*.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالاخْتِلافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ.

Āli Imrān: 190

*Behold! The creation of the heavens and the earth, and alternation of Night and Day --There are indeed Signs for men of understanding.*<sup>45</sup>

In the *Ulul Albāb*'s view the creation of the heavens and the earth is not in vain. Hece, it should not be exploited arbitrarily for economic interests. The fundamental values of Islamic economics are how humans build a positive relationship with Allah and conduct responsible natural resources management.

قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْحَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْحَبِيثِ. فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

Al-Māidah: 100

*Say: "Not equal are things that are bad and things that are good, even though the abundance of the bad may dazzle thee; so fear Allah, O ye that understands; that (so) ye may prosper"*<sup>46</sup>

At a glance, it is as if this verse is not related to economic problems. However, if examined more deeply it is still associated with economic activities such as liquor

<sup>44</sup> Ibid

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

trading, corruption, bribery, and others. Thus, its values are the ethic of production, an ethic of business, and halal industry.

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَكِن تَصَدِيقَ  
الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Yūsuf: 111

*There is, in their stories, instruction for men endued with understanding. It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went before it, -- a detailed exposition of all things, and a Guide and a Mercy to any such as believe<sup>47</sup>*

The verse is connected to the life story of Prophet Yusuf (a.s.) and his family, natural resources management, and leadership management model.

أَفَمَنْ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَىٰ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Ar-Ra'd: 19

*Is then one who doth know that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the truth, like one who is blind? It is those who are endued with understanding that receives admonition.<sup>48</sup>*

It is related to verses 21-24 that follow after. The contents are relevant to ethics and economic activities. Here *Ulul Albab* is described as a person who fulfills his promise to Allah, does not betray the agreement; carries out what Allah commands, fears his Lord, always concerned about the Day of Resurrection; always patient, always ensuring the performance of prayers (*ṣolat*), donating (*infāq*) sincerely, repaying evil actions with good. As for the fundamental values, they are *Tawheed*, hereafter belief, management of wealth and charity, and trust (*amanah*)

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَلَكَهُ يَنَابِيعَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُ بِهِ زَرْعًا  
مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيَجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ حُطَامًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرًا لِأُولِي  
الْأَلْبَابِ

<sup>47</sup> Ibid

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

## Az-Zumar: 21

*Sees thou not that Allah sends down rain from the sky and leads it through springs in the earth? Then He causes to grow, therewith, produce of various colors: Then it withers; thou wilt see it grow yellow; then He makes it dry up and crumble away. Truly, in this, is a Message to men of understanding.*<sup>49</sup>

It is about natural resources such as water and plants that need to be paid attention to. All of them are part of the economic problems. So, the fundamental value of Islamic economics here is to keep balancing natural resources.

Based on the seven (7) *Ulul Albāb* verses above, classification can be made based on four (4) aspects: (i) Spirituality aspects: These aspects include *Tawheed* and the last day; (ii) Humanity aspects: These include values of Prophet Muhammad's traditions, Islamic charity (*zakat, infaq, sodaqah*), history (valuable messages from the Prophet Yusuf's story), and justice; (iii) Ethical aspects are associated with production ethics, balancing material and spiritual needs, and trustworthiness; and (iv) Technical aspects: These are related to the *halal* industry, asset management, balanced natural resource management, and the system.

It is essential to say that the Qur'anic worldview is generally "systemic" in every issue. When it describes any human problem, it never separates from the matter of faith in Allah (s.w.t.), the life in this world, and its consequences in the hereafter. Likewise, in the context of Islamic economics, especially in the four (4) aspects of the fundamental values of Islamic economics in the seven (7) verses on *Ulul Albāb* above.

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid

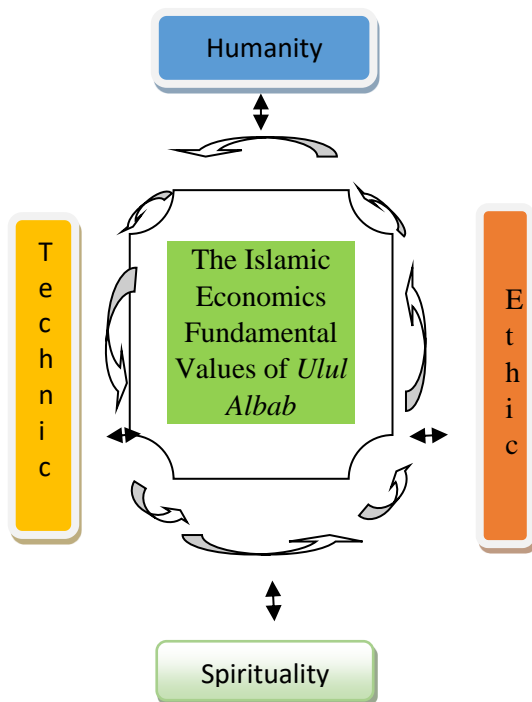


Diagram 2: The *Ulul Albab* Relationship to the Fundamental Values of Islamic Economics

#### 4.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the term *Ulul Albab* mentioned in 16 verses of the Qur’ān, an *Ulul Albab* is defined as a trusted and educated individual, who can achieve a comprehensive synergy between spirituality, humanity, charity, and mental attitude when responding to the verses of Allah, whether these are the written verses (the Qur’an) and the cosmic verses (nature and its phenomenon).

In a different and a more comprehensive expression, the scholar Kamal Hassan described *Ulul Albab* as a "complete" figure:

“*Ulul Albab* as the "possessors of sound intellect referring to the production and growth of more Islamic intellectuals, scholars, scientists, professionals, political leaders and educated classes, who combine or unify scientific and worldly knowledge, with religious values, thinking and contemplation (*fikr* and *tafakkur*) with spiritual remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allah (swt), worldly means with

otherworldly ends, reason with Divine revelation, professionalism with *taqwa* (that deep ethical consciousness of the pleasure and displeasure of Allah), and are not afflicted with the diseases of the spiritual heart, which al-Ghazali called *al-mublish* (destructive elements)"<sup>50</sup>.

*Ulul Albāb* personality is the ideal output intended for all graduating students in an educational institution. For example, the character of *Ulul Albāb* is used as a symbol of the UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang campus. This State Islamic University describes *Ulul Albāb* as a person who has spiritual depth (awareness of Allah's presence, ability to admire Allah's creation, fear nothing but Allah); keeping morals at high ground (continuously improving his quality of life, patient/*sabr* upon trial, has the ability to distinguish between good and bad); demonstrating the vastness of science (seeking knowledge seriously, optimizing his brain/*aql*, ability to use his *qalbu* (emotion/heart)); having professional maturity (acts based on knowledge, ready to serve the knowledge, plays the role as a problem solver)<sup>51</sup>.

Scholars have not widely pursued research on the relationship between *Ulul Albāb* and economics. However, there has been much discussion about the principles of Islamic economics as described below:

- (i) *Tawheed* as the core of economic principles and, of course, also the basis for creating prosperity and benefits for all humankind.<sup>52</sup>
- (ii) Another economic principle that is also very important is usury. A study conducted by Lawal showed that all religions forbid the practice of usury in any form. It's practice will impoverish the world economy.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Subirin, N. A., Alwi, N. H., Fakhrudin, F. M., Manaf, U. K. A., & Salim, S. S. (2017). *Ulul Albab Generation: Roles of Ulul Albab Teachers in Malaysian Selected School*. In *Proceedings from 4th International Conference on Educational Research and Practice* (Vol. 7, pp. 1022-1032).

<sup>51</sup> Khaerani, I. F. S. R., Muhammad, A., & Syihabuddin, M. (2017, November). Internalization Of Ulul Albab Value (A Study Of Living Qur'an Among The Students of UIN Malang). In *International Conference on Qur'an and Hadith Studies (ICQHS 2017)* (pp. 161-168). Atlantis Press.

<sup>52</sup> Hilmiyah, N., Possumah, B. T., & Shafiai, M. H. M. (2019). Tawhid and Shariah Economics: Positioning Tauhid as Philosophical Foundation of Shariah Economics. *AL-FALAH: Journal of Islamic Economics*, 4(2), 145-162.

<sup>53</sup> Lawal, I. M. (2016). Riba (Usury); a Tool that should be Carved out of Financial Transactions. *Turkish Journal of Islamic Economics*, 3(2), 13-24.

- (iii) Any resource in this world is a gift from God to humans, as a trust, and becomes a medium for worshipping Him<sup>54</sup>.
- (iv) Life in the world is viewed by Islamic Economy as only temporary in its nature, and eternal life is in the afterlife. Hence economic activity should not be separated from the background of the existence of this afterlife.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : لا تَزُولُ قَدَمَا عَبْدٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُسْأَلَ عَنْ عُمُرِهِ فَيَمَّا أَفْتَاهُ وَعَنْ عِلْمِهِ فِيمَ فَعَلَ وَعَنْ مَالِهِ مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ وَفِيمَ أَنْفَقَهُ وَعَنْ جِسْمِهِ فِيمَ أَبْلَاهُ (رواه الترمذی)<sup>55</sup>

*A man's feet will not slip (into Hell) on the Last Day until he is asked about four characteristics: His age, how He lived it; about his knowledge, for what purpose did He use it? About his wealth, how He got it, and what He spent it for, and about his body, what He used it for.*

- (v) Islam recognizes personal property rights, but Islam also provides regulations for property owners not to endanger themselves, others, and the environment<sup>56</sup>.
- (vi) In Islamic economics, wealth should not only circulate among the rich; to ensure that welfare from the wealth can also be enjoyed by the poor. Here, Islam teaches economic equity and mutual help (*ta'āwun*)<sup>57</sup>.
- (vii) The concept of *halal* is fundamental as it deals with basic materials, processes, and goals. In Islamic economics, Allah determines *halal* and

<sup>54</sup> Hilmiyah, N., Possumah, B. T., & Shafiai, M. H. M. (2019). Tawhid and Shariah Economics: Positioning Tauhid as Philosophical Foundation of Shariah Economics. *AL-FALAH: Journal of Islamic Economics*, 4(2), 145-162

<sup>55</sup> *Sunan al-Tirmizī*, Vol. 4, Kitāb Şifati al-Qiyāmah wa al-Raqāiq wa al-Warā' 'an Rasūlillah, Bāb Mā Jā'a fī Sha'ni al-Hisāb wa al-Qisās, Number of Hadith: 2417, 529. It is good hadīth (حديث حسن)

<sup>56</sup> Syahir, B., & Abdullah, M. (2017). The Property In Islam (Imam Muhammad Abu Zahrah's Perspective). *ISLAMICONOMIC: Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, 8(1).

<sup>57</sup> Rasheed, A. (2020). The Islamic Concept of Wealth Consuming and Its Limitations. *Al-Idah*, 38,-2 (Dec. 2020), 159, 169; Aprianto, N. E. K. (2017). The concept of wealth in the view of maqashid al-sharia. *Journal of Islamic Economics Lariba*, 3(2), 65-74.

*haram*, and humans should make choices according to Allah's pre-ordained decision or what has been decided by Allah<sup>58</sup>.

## 5.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper used a qualitative and descriptive approaches. A thematic approach by accessing the *Ulul Albāb* verses (16 verses) was taken to construct the fundamental values of Islamic economics based on the term *Ulul Albāb* in the Qur'an. These verses dealt with fundamental values of Islamic economics (7 verses), especially Surah al-Baqarah (2): 197, 261-268, 269-283. Relevant literature including books of hadith and *asbab al-nuzul*, Arabic-English dictionaries, articles, research papers on *Ulul Albāb*, Islamic economics books, books of *Tafsīr* particularly *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Ay al-Qur'ān*; *Tafsīr al-Jāmi' Li Ahkām al-Qur'ān*; *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*; *Tafsīr al-Tahrīr Wa al-Tanwīr*; and *Tafsīr Misbah. The Holy Quran (Koran)* by Yusuf Ali and Brown was used to translate Quranic text to English throughout the paper.

## 6.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Surah al-Baqarah (2): 197

This verse is related to verses 198-202 in the same surah. The main point is about the case of Hajj (pilgrimage), but it also mentions the issue of "supply" (provisions) that must be provided for. The provision (تَزْوُدًا) in this verse can be in the form of money or food and drink.

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَةٌ ۗ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ  
فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَّعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى ۗ وَاتَّقُوا  
يَأُولَى الْأَيْبَابِ

Al-Baqarah: 197

*For Hajj are the months well known. If anyone undertakes that duty therein, let there be no obscenity, wickedness, or wrangling in the Hajj. Moreover, whatever good ye do, (be sure) Allah knoweth it.*

<sup>58</sup> Asa, R. S., & Azmi, I. M. A. G. (2018). The concept of halal and halal food certification process in Malaysia: Issues and concerns. *Malaysian Journal of Consumer and Family Economics*, 20, 38-50.



*Furthermore, take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best of provisions is right conduct. So fear Me, O ye that are wise.*<sup>59</sup>

At least there are 23 narrations (الروايات) that explained the *asbāb al-nuzūl*, which is the "background" for the revelation of that verse<sup>60</sup>. These narrations can be categorized into two (2): (i) Regarding the pilgrims. In those days there were Yemenis, who had been going to perform the pilgrimage, without bringing along the various physical provisions because they said it was enough just to put trust in Allah. (ii) About the types of provision. The requirements in these narrations are food supplies or money. This verse taught them to bring along the provisions so as not to trouble themselves and others while performing the pilgrimage. It also emphasized that the provision of piety is, actually, better for them.

There are three (3) factors in this verse that can be analyzed: (i) The ritual of pilgrimage, (ii) Provision of pilgrimage, and (iii) The command of piety to Allah. These three (3) aspects have a systemic relationship with each other. For example, the ritual of pilgrimage is related to the worship issue and related to a physical problem, human relationship, exemplary behaviours, ethics, facilities, and wealth management.

For instance, it can be illustrated that there are many Muslims (term to also include Muslimahs) who have good morals, yet cannot fulfill the Islamic fifth pillar. Among the reasons is the lack of sufficient "provision" of materials. Likewise, there are many Muslims who have adequate provisions and facilities, yet are still unable to perform the pilgrimage because their mental state and spirituality do not support them. They are tied down by many matters such as family, business, political interest, work, to the point that they are just not "ready" to perform the Haj. There are also cases of Muslims who had arrived in the Holy City of Mecca during the pilgrimage trip, but still could not perform the Haj rituals because of serious medical problems, which rendered them unconscious, e.g., a severe stroke. This illustration shows how the "provision," be it in physical form or others becomes a crucial factor that could affect the conduct of the pilgrimage.

In an attempt to construct the Islamic economics fundamental values of *Uhlul Albāb* from the pilgrimage verses above, the provisions are divided into two (2)

<sup>59</sup> Ali, Abdullah Yusuf, & Brown, W. B. *The Holy Quran (Koran)*.

<sup>60</sup> Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabari, Muḥammad (2001), *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*, in Muḥammad Shākir, Mahmud & Muḥammad Shākir, Aḥmad (Eds), Vol. 4, Cairo: Maktabah Ibn Taimiyah

parts: (i) Spiritual provision (*Tawheed* aspect and ethical aspect); and (ii) Material provision (humanity aspect and technical aspect) as described below.

- (i) Spiritual provision: The relationship between the pilgrimage ritual and the fundamental values of Islamic economics lies in the issue of the provision. The relationship between the two kinds of provision can be seen. The provision of spirituality can exist by establishing a harmonious "communication" with Allah. This harmonious relationship will make a person wiser in accepting whatever happens, whether during in preparation, traveling, or the pilgrimage ritual process itself. God's "involvement" is essential in building this relationship because God is the Creator of nature and humans. He knows all or everything; He is the source of universal laws and regulations, and the One who created the world and its contents<sup>61</sup>.
- (ii) Material Provision: The material provision relates to the issue of humanity, namely building constructive relationship between fellow humans and with nature. This material provision is also associated with technical issues, including economic activities. There are various forms; for example, being a professional in a company, an educator, a businessman, and anything that can legally generate capital or wealth to perform the pilgrimage.

The command to *Ulul Albāb* to be devoted to Allah in verse 197 of Surah Al-Baqarah is a strong reminder that the ritual of pilgrimage is a practice of holy worship that deserves attention because it relates to the provision of spirituality, humanity, technical and ethical aspects.

Thus, the term *Ulul Albāb* here does not only mean textually about a person with intelligence and cognitively correct thoughts. However, it can also be interpreted more broadly, such as an institution representing the community, a governmental organization that regulates financial regulation and accommodation comfort, and a Hajj travel agency responsible for managing the pilgrims during their pilgrimage. It shows that the term *Ulul Albāb* in pilgrimage context here cannot be separated from the economy and its fundamental values.

### Surah al-Baqarah (2): 269

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<sup>61</sup> Surah al-An'am (6): 57; Surah Yusuf (12): 40, 67; Surah Fussilat (41): 53; Surah Yusuf (11): 6; Surah al-Baqarah (2): 156; Surah al-'Adiyat (51): 56; Surah al-Baqarah (2): 178 and 231; al-Nahl (16): 75.

Islamic economics is the science and the practice of economic activity based on Islamic teaching or at least not contradicting the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (saw), either explicitly or implicitly, with the vision of realizing human happiness and welfare in this world and the hereafter<sup>62</sup>. However, the definition is more specific, namely, the effort to implement the orders of Allah relating to economic affairs at the Micro-level (involving individual lives), at the Meso level (involving communities), and at the Macro level (involving the Ummah).

Based on the above definition, Islamic economic values can be constructed from Surah al-Baqarah (2): 269:

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Al-Baqarah: 269

*He grants wisdom to who He pleases, and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted abundant wealth, but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding.*<sup>63</sup>

This verse, when viewed textually, does not seem to be related to economic problems. However, if the verses before and after it are read carefully and comprehensively, together they will appear to be related to economic issues.

The most interesting fact about verse 269 is that it becomes a "conjunction verse" between the verses mentioned before (261-268) and after (270-283) it. One of the most critical points that can be seen from this verse is the relationship between wisdom (*hikmah*) and *Ulul Albāb*. From this relationship, it can be stated that *Ulul Albāb* has a vital role in building the fundamental Islamic economics values in the verses surrounding it.

The classification of verses (Surah al-Baqarah (2): 261-268), in general, can be seen as follows:

- (i) Regarding the importance of the role of *infaq*, ethics, economy and prosperity: (261-267).
- (ii) The Evil's provocation that connects *infaq* with poverty:

<sup>62</sup> Tahir, S. (2017). Islamic economics and prospects for theoretical and empirical research. *Journal of King Abdulaziz University: Islamic Economics*, 30(1).

<sup>63</sup> Ali, Abdullah Yusuf, & Brown, W. B. *The Holy Quran (Koran)*.

الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَاءِ

Al-Baqarah: 268

*The Evil One threatens you with poverty and bids you to conduct unseemly..*<sup>64</sup>

- (iii) Allah's guarantee for infaq perpetrators to get forgiveness and gifts from Him:

وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلًا وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Al-Baqarah: 268

*Allah promiseth you, His forgiveness and bounties. And Allah careth for all, and He knoweth all things.*

The verses above clearly explain the issues of the fundamental values of Islamic economics with the term *Ulul Albāb*. The suggestion here is that verse 269 functions as "the conjunction verse" because *Ulul Albāb* in this verse has a significant role in explaining and formulating the economic concepts of revelation in the previous verses 261-268.

As for the following verses (Surah al-Baqarah (2): 270-283) the issues being considered are: (i) The relationship between charity and *Tawheed* (270); (ii) Ethics of charity (271); (iii) *Infāq* has economic and spiritual dimensions (272 and 274); (iv) being poor but with high integrity (273); (v) The danger of usury (*riba*)(275-281); (vi) The doctrine of the principle of debit and credit, buying and selling, pawning, testimony, writing (documentation), transparency and honesty in economic practice (281-283).

*Ulul Albāb's* role in verse 269 is to "formulate" four (4) fundamental values that form the basis for building Islamic economic concepts and activities: (i) Spiritual aspects which determines that *Tawheed* becomes the basis for economics concepts and activities; (ii) Humanity aspects which resolves that both economics and charities (*infāq, ṣadaqah*) are must be oriented towards prosperity and the satisfaction of human life; (iii) Ethical aspects which includes anti-usury, honesty, justice, testimony, trustworthiness, rejection of the devil's propaganda that *infāq* and *ṣadaqah* cause poverty; and (iv) The technical aspect, which includes all

<sup>64</sup> Ali, Abdullah Yusuf, & Brown, W. B. *The Holy Quran (Koran)*.

equipment, accommodation, and systems are to be based on *Tawheed*, humanity, and Islamic ethics.

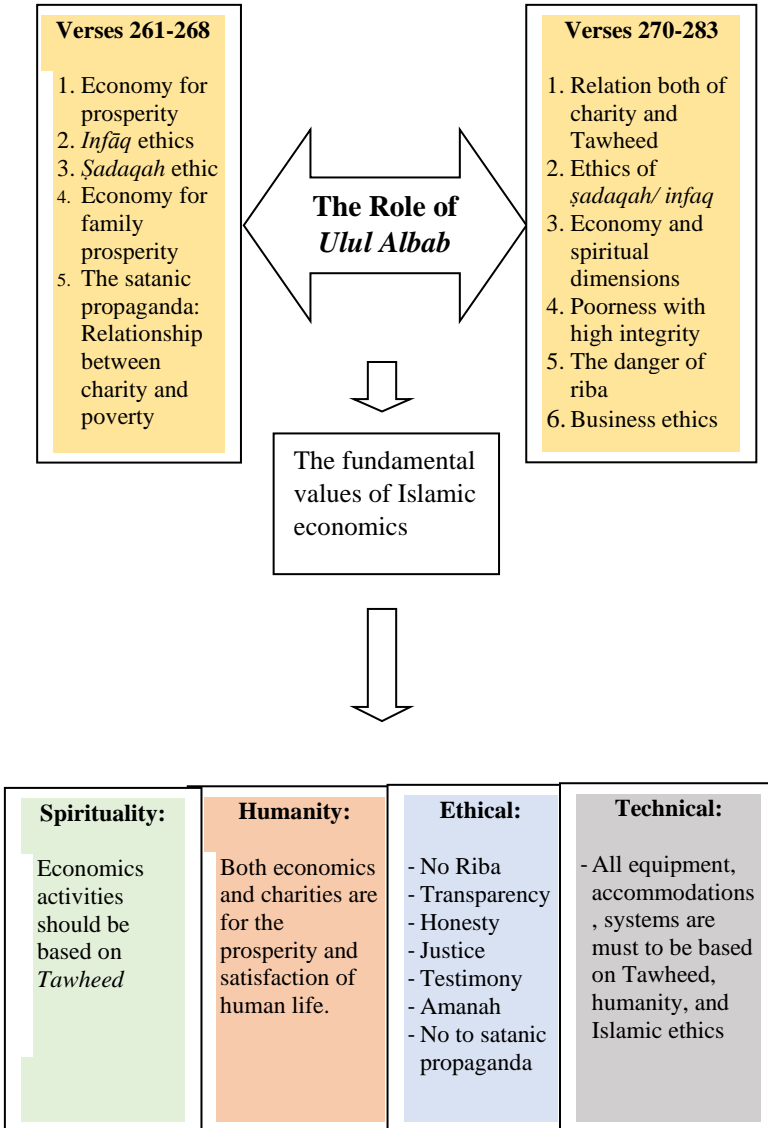


Diagram 3: *The Roles of Ulul Albāb in Surah al-Baqarah, Verse 269*

*Ulul Albāb*, in this context, has a broader meaning that includes an alliance of Muslim scientists, *ulamā'*, professionals, and government agencies. Their

essential role in verse 269 is to formulate the core values of Islamic economics in concepts, ethics, and economic systems based on *Tawheed*, humanity, ethical, and hereafter orientation that differ from conventional economics. As for technical matters, they are flexible and must be related to the characteristics of the four (4) values mentioned earlier (spirituality, humanity, ethical, and technical aspects). It is part of the *hikmah* possessed by *Ulul Albāb* as promised by Allah :

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ. وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا. وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا  
أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Al-Baqarah: 268

*He grants wisdom to who He please, and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted abundant wealth, but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding.*

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

From the systematic review of *Ulul Albāb* verses in the Qur'an, it can be conclude that *Ulul Albāb* is a symbol of trusted, educated individuals, who can achieve a comprehensive synergy between spirituality, humanity, charity, and mental attitude in responding to the verses of Allah, whether the written verses (the Qur'an) and the cosmos verses (nature and its phenomenon).

Seven (7) of the sixteen (16) verses in the Qur'an are correlated with Islamic economic problems, either directly or indirectly. The formulation of these seven (7) verses constructed the fundamental values of Islamic economics, namely spirituality, humanity, ethics, and technical matters. These four (4) identified values have been used to analyze the term *Ulul Albāb* in Surah al-Baqarah (2): 197 and 269.

In Surah al-Baqarah (2): 197, it is connected to (i) The ritual of pilgrimage; (ii) The provision of pilgrimage; (iii) The command of piety to Allah. These three (3) aspects have a systemic relationship with each other. The ritual of pilgrimage is related to the worship issue and related to a physical problem, human interaction, exemplary behaviours, ethics, facility, and wealth management.

The term *Ulul Albāb* here can also be interpreted as institutions representing the communities, the government agencies that regulate financial regulation and accommodation comfort, and a Hajj travel agency responsible for managing

pilgrims during their pilgrimage. It shows that *Ulul Albāb*, in the context of Hajj, cannot be separated from economic problems and its fundamental values.

As for the Surah al-Baqarah (2): 269, it becomes a "conjunction verse" between the verses mentioned before (261-268) and after (270-283). *Ulul Albāb* here is a symbol that has an essential role in formulating and realizing the values of Islamic economics in concepts, ethics, and economic systems based on *Tawheed* and humanity.

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