

## Dhikr in Surah Al-Baqarah Verse 152 According to Syekh Ibnu Ajibah (An Analytical Study of the Book of Tafsir Bahrul Madid)

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### Article Info

#### Article History:

Received: 17 December 2025  
Revised: 27 January 2026  
Accepted: 15 March 2026  
Published: 23 March 2026

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#### Keywords

### Abstract

In the contemporary era, human life is increasingly marked by anxiety and psychological unrest arising from various personal and social problems. These conditions often disturb inner peace and weaken faith. To maintain spiritual stability, Islam offers *dhikrullah* as a medium for continuously remembering Allah, which functions as a means of strengthening and stabilizing faith. The Qur'an emphasizes that Allah bestows divine light upon those who engage in remembrance, causing their hearts to tremble in reverence. This study aims to examine Ibnu Ajibah's interpretation of *dhikr* in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 152 and to analyze its relevance in contemporary life. This research employs a descriptive-analytical method with a qualitative approach, utilizing documentation techniques by examining primary sources particularly *Tafsir al-Bahr al-Madid* as well as relevant secondary literature such as books, journals, and scholarly articles. The findings reveal that according to Ibnu Ajibah, the command to remember Allah entails remembrance performed with a pure heart, a cleansed soul, firm monotheism, and strong faith. In return, Allah remembers His servants by unveiling the heart, removing spiritual veils, elevating their spiritual rank, and granting divine assistance. Gratitude (*shukr*) through remembrance is emphasized as a safeguard against spiritual negligence and shirk. The relevance of this interpretation in daily life is evident in its profound impact on both psychological and spiritual well-being, manifesting as inner peace, mental stability, and authentic happiness.

Dhikr, Ibnu Ajibah, Al-Baqarah: 152, Tafsir al-Bahr al-Madid, Spiritual Well-being

### Abstrak

Pada era kontemporer, kehidupan manusia diwarnai oleh berbagai persoalan yang memunculkan kecemasan dan kegelisahan batin, sehingga mengganggu ketenangan jiwa dan kestabilan iman. Islam menawarkan *dzikrullah* sebagai sarana untuk senantiasa mengingat Allah SWT, yang berfungsi sebagai media penguatan dan peneguhan iman. Al-Qur'an menegaskan bahwa Allah menganugerahkan cahaya kepada hamba-Nya yang berdzikir, sehingga hati mereka menjadi hidup dan tunduk kepada-Nya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji penafsiran Syekh Ibnu Ajibah tentang dzikir dalam Surah Al-Baqarah ayat 152 serta menganalisis relevansinya dalam kehidupan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui studi kepustakaan (*library research*) dengan menelaah sumber primer, yaitu *Tafsir al-Bahr al-Madid*, serta sumber sekunder berupa buku, jurnal, dan artikel ilmiah yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa menurut Ibnu Ajibah, perintah untuk mengingat Allah mengandung makna dzikir yang dilakukan dengan hati yang jernih, jiwa yang bersih, tauhid yang murni, dan iman yang kokoh. Sebagai balasan, Allah akan mengingat hamba-Nya dengan membuka mata hati, menyingkap hijab spiritual, meninggikan derajat, serta melimpahkan pertolongan-Nya. Dzikir juga dipahami sebagai bentuk syukur atas nikmat Allah dan sebagai penjaga dari kesyirikan. Relevansi dzikir dalam kehidupan tampak pada pengaruhnya terhadap ketenangan batin, kestabilan mental, dan tercapainya kebahagiaan sejati.

**Kata Kunci:** Dzikir, Ibnu Ajibah, Al-Baqarah:152, Tafsir al-Bahr al-Madid, Ketenangan Batin

## **INTRODUCTION**

Human life in the contemporary era is colored by various problems that trigger anxiety and inner anxiety, disturb the peace of mind and stability of faith. This condition demands a spiritual response that is able to bring peace in the midst of the complexity of modern life (Damono, 2000). Islam offers dzikrullah as a means to always remember Allah SWT, which functions not only as a ritual of worship, but also as a medium of strengthening and strengthening faith in facing the dynamics of life (Musthofa & Tisnawati, 2007). Abu Talib as quoted in the Sufism literature emphasized that facing the trials of life, both blessings and difficulties, requires two main responses: gratitude when there is space and patience when it is narrow, both of which grow from the intensity of dhikr that keeps the consciousness of the heart connected to Allah (Al-Marāghī, 1946).

Dhikr in the Islamic perspective has a wide dimension of meaning. In a narrow sense, dhikr is a memory that is manifested through the mouth and heart, such as reciting the sentence of *thayyibah*, reciting the Qur'an, and praying as a form of direct communication with Allah (Shihab, 2007). As for in a broad sense, dhikr includes religious awareness that encourages the implementation of His commands and stays away from His prohibitions, transforming into attitudes and behaviors that are in harmony with religious teachings (Al-Qusyairi, 2007). The Qur'an itself emphasizes the virtue of dhikr in QS. Ar-Ra'd: 28, that it is only by remembering Allah that the heart becomes at peace, which shows a direct relationship between the practice of dhikr and mental and spiritual health (Qutb, 2004).

Sufism scholars pay great attention to the practice of dhikr as a way to *ma'rifatullah*. Dzun Nūn al-Miṣrī stated that dhikr in the perspective of Tawheed Ulūhiyah is the core of *sufistic praxis* because it is an effective way to deep knowledge of Allah (Al-Hujwiri, 2007). In practical Sufism, dhikr is not just a repetition of words, but a method of *tazkiyah* that directs the heart away from vices and strengthens the orientation of worship (Al-Ghazali, t.th.). Al-Marāghī adds that dhikr brings spiritual light that penetrates the heart, beyond mere silent prayer, because it fosters an active and transformative divine consciousness (Al-Marāghī, 1946).

Previous research on dhikr has been done from various perspectives. A study conducted by Nasution (2021) examined the influence of dhikr on the mental health of urban communities, finding that the practice of regular dhikr significantly reduced stress and anxiety levels. Another study by Rahman and Hakim (2022) analyzed the concept of dhikr in contemporary Sufi interpretation, highlighting the method of purification of the soul through the practice of dhikr. Meanwhile, a study of Ibnu Ajibah as a Sufi mufassir has been carried out by Ayad (2021) who explains the methodology of *ishari's* interpretation in *Al-Baḥr al-Madīd*, but has not specifically discussed the interpretation of verses about dhikr in Surah Al-Baqarah. Research on Sufistic interpretation was also conducted by Fathurrahman (2023) who examined Sufism thought in *tafsir*, but focused on other figures.

From the mapping of previous research, there is an academic gap that has not been filled, namely an in-depth study of Syekh Ibnu Ajibah's interpretation of the dhikr verses in QS. Al-Baqarah verse 152 integrates theological, spiritual, and practical dimensions in one Sufistic interpretation framework. The novelty of this research lies in a comprehensive analysis of Ibnu

Ajibah's interpretation of dhikr which includes the level of dhikr with heart, soul, spirit, and sirr, as well as its relevance in contemporary life that requires inner peace and mental stability. This research also reveals the reciprocal relationship between the dhikr of servants and the memory of Allah which is manifested in the opening of the eyes of the heart and the increase of spiritual degree.

Based on this background, this research is formulated to answer two main questions: first, how is Shaykh Ibnu Ajibah's interpretation of dhikr in QS. Al-Baqarah verse 152 in the book *Tafsir al-Baḥr al-Madīd*? Second, how is the relevance of this interpretation in contemporary life? The purpose of this study is to analyze in depth Ibnu Ajibah's interpretation of dhikr and identify its practical implications for the development of modern Muslim spirituality.

## **METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of library research. This approach was chosen because the object of study is in the form of texts, namely the verses of the Qur'an about dhikr and their interpretation in *Tafsir al-Baḥr al-Madīd* by Syekh Ibnu Ajibah, which demands in-depth interpretive reading (Zed, 2008). Operationally, research is carried out through the identification of verses that contain the term dhikr and its derivatives, then an intensive reading of Ibnu Ajibah's interpretation is carried out as the main focus. The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the dimensions of meaning, conceptual structure, and spiritual-epistemological framework behind the interpretation (Moleong, 2017).

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data include the Qur'an as the main normative text and the book of tafsir *Al-Baḥr al-Madīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd* by Syekh Ibnu Ajibah (1999) as the central object of analysis. Secondary data includes other relevant books of tafsir such as *Tafsir al-Qusyairi* and *Tafsir al-Tustari*, works of Sufism such as *Ihya' Ulumuddin* and *Al-Risalah al-Qusyairiyah*, academic books on the study of the Qur'an and Sufism, as well as indexed scholarly journal articles that discuss dhikr, the hermeneutics of Sufistic interpretation, and related theoretical frameworks. The data collection technique is carried out through documentation studies, namely systematic literature search in libraries and online journal databases, classification of verses and themes, recording of key citations, and grouping of data based on predetermined conceptual categories (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data analysis techniques are carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2020). First, the researcher selects and focuses the data on the interpretation of Ibnu Ajibah which is directly related to the concept of dhikr in QS. Al-Baqarah verse 152 and related verses. Second, the data that has been disaggregated is analyzed descriptive-analytically by examining the structure of argumentation, key terms, and spiritual context in the interpretation. Third, a limited comparison with secondary literature and previous research was carried out to strengthen or criticize the findings, resulting in a systematic conceptual synthesis of Ibnu Ajibah's thoughts on dhikr. With these steps, this research does not just quote, but constructs an argumentative and scientifically responsible understanding of the theme being studied.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Biography and Methodology of Tafsir of Sheikh Ibnu Ajibah

Syekh Ibnu Ajibah, whose full name is Ahmad bin Muhammad bin al-Mahdi bin al-Husain bin Muhammad bin ‘Ajibah al-Hujuji al-Hasani, is also known by the ratios of al-Anjari, al-Tatauni, and al-Hujuji which show the origin of the tribe and its territory. He was born in 1161 H/1740 AD in Abajasyi Village and died on 7 Shawwal 1224 H/1803 AD while heading to the grave of his teacher, al-Buzidi. His nasab is connected to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH through Hasan bin Ali and Sayyidah Fatimah RA. He was a great scholar in the field of Sufism and tafsir, and his works remain an important reference in Islamic studies (‘Ajibah, 1999a).

In the muqaddimah *Al-Bahr al-Madid*, Ibnu Ajibah emphasized that tafsir is a field that gathers all disciplines and the main means of expressing clarity of thought. However, the ability to interpret the Qur’an is only bestowed on those who have intelligence and scientific maturity, namely those who have mastered the sciences of *zhabir* such as Arabic, nahwu, sharaf, balaghah, fiqh, hadith, and history (R. Rahmawati et al., 2025). In addition, he emphasized the importance of deepening Sufism through the guidance of teachers who have dzauq, so that the inner meaning of the Qur’an can be captured in a complete and proportionate manner (Ayad, 2021).

Ibnu Ajibah paid serious attention to the conditions that must be met in interpreting the Qur’an. A mufassir is required to have competence in the sciences of *zhabir* as a foundation to understand the content of sharia before stepping into the inner meaning (Djuned et al., 2025). In addition, he emphasized the importance of the learning process for a murshid who is not only spiritually mature, but also solid in understanding sharia. According to Ibnu Ajibah, the Qur’an has a dimension of the meaning of *zhabir* that can be understood by those who master the external sciences, as well as a dimension of inner meaning that can only be felt by those who have inner knowledge (Muslihin, 2023). The interpretation of the mind, he emphasized, is invalid when one ignores the meaning of *zhahir*. The inner meaning can only be expressed correctly after the recognition of the meaning of *zhahir*, and then expressed with subtle language and proper guidance (‘Ajibah, 1999a).

To strengthen his view, Ibnu Ajibah quotes the statement of Ibn ‘Atha’illah al-Sakandari as stated in *Lat’if al-Minan*. According to Ibn ‘Atha’illah, the expressions of the Sufis who seem strange in interpreting the verses of the Qur’an and hadith are not a form of neglect of the meaning of *zhahir*. The meaning of *zhahir* is still understood based on the rules of language, while the inner meaning can only be grasped by those whose hearts have been opened by Allah. The Sufis still acknowledge the existence of the meaning of *zhabir*, while accepting the inner meaning as a divine gift (‘Ajibah, 1999a). Thus, studying the inner meaning of the Qur’an is not forbidden, as long as it does not deny the meaning of *zhahir* and does not claim that a verse has only an inner meaning. From this it can be concluded that in Ibnu Ajibah’s view, mental interpretation is exclusive and can only be accessed by certain circles who have attained spiritual readiness (Husein et al., 2026). Nevertheless, the existence of inner meaning is an inevitability that always departs from the understanding of the meaning of *zhahir*, and is not intended to violate or eliminate it.

## **Interpretation of QS. Al-Baqarah Verse 152 in Tafsir al-Baḥr al-Madīd**

As He said about dhikr in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 152:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرْكُمْ وَأَشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونَ

“Remember me, therefore, and I will remember you. Give thanks to Me and do not disobey Me.” (Al-Baqarah: 152)

Syekh Ibnu Ajibah began his interpretation by describing the meaning of the word “*fadzkuruni*” contained in the verses of the Qur’an. According to him, this command means “then remember Me” with full obedience and courtesy. In this case, dhikr does not only involve the verbal mention of Allah’s name, but also includes consistent acts of obedience and sincere devotion. Dhikr means presenting Allah in every aspect of life, with a commitment to obey all His commandments and avoid His prohibitions, and to strive to do maximum good in all actions. Next, Syekh Ibnu Ajibah explained the meaning of the word “*adzkurkum*” which means “I remember you.” In his interpretation, he stated that Allah SWT repays the devotion of His servants by giving the best and most perfect reward. This shows that when a person dhikr and obeys Allah’s commands, Allah not only gives attention, but also abundant and excellent rewards (Ajibah, 1999a).

Syekh Ibnu Ajibah in his commentary on the Isyārī on the order “*fadzkurūnī adzkurkum*” elaborates that dhikr has a level of inner awareness. “Dhikr to Me with your heart” means to bring forth a deep awareness that gives birth to *basirah* (the sight of the eyes of the heart). “Remember Me with the soul” refers to the total involvement of the inner dimension so that Allah unveils the hijab and presents the understanding of the essence. As for *dhikr* with monotheism and faith, it confirms belief, which has implications for the glory of the degree in the sight of Allah (Emra et al., 2025). Dhikr with pleasure and tawakal gives birth to divine guidance and sufficiency in living destiny, while dhikr with gratitude brings additional blessings. Dhikr with longing (*syauq*) and love (*mahabbah*) leads to closeness and *wuṣūl* to Him. All of them affirm that the quality of the mind determines the form of spiritual retribution that the servant receives (Ajibah, 1999a).

In more depth, Ibnu Ajibah explained *dhikr* with the spirit and *sirr* as the highest spiritual level. *Dhikr* with the spirit means presenting the entire essence of the soul sincerely and consciously, while *dhikr* with *sirr* points to the deepest core of the relationship between the servant and Allah which is very intimate and contemplative. At this level, dhikr is no longer just a recitation, but a constant presence of the mind, until Allah bestows witness and continuous closeness. In this context, he also alludes to the role of prophets and murshid as spiritual educators who guide people towards the purification of monotheism and the testimony of the essence. This entire interpretation is closed with an affirmation of the importance of gratitude and *husnuzan* to Allah, because the relationship of dhikr is reciprocal: the deeper the awareness and sincerity of the servant, the more real the *tajalli* and divine guidance he receives (Ajibah, 1999a).

## **Correlation of Verse 152 with the Previous Verse (QS. Al-Baqarah: 151)**

Before entering into Syekh Ibn Ajibah’s interpretation of Verse 152, it is necessary to see the correlation with the previous verse, namely verse 151 which discusses the pleasure given by Allah SWT in the form of refinement of the direction of the Qibla as sent by the Messengers.

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ

“As (We have perfected blessings for you), We have sent to you a Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) from among you who recites to you Our verses, purifies you, and teaches you the Book (Qur’an) and wisdom (sunnah), and teaches you what you do not know.” (Al-Baqarah: 151)

In this verse 151, Allah SWT mentions that He has changed the qibla towards the Grand Mosque to perfect His favor. The perfection of this pleasure is like the perfection when I sent you a Messenger, which is the greatest pleasure. In the interpretation of this verse, Syekh Ibnu Ajibah explained the method of *tazkiyah*, which is the purification of the soul obtained through dhikr. After looking at Syekh Ibn Ajibah’s interpretation in verse 151, there is a correlation with verse 152 which is clearly displayed at the beginning of his interpretation in Bahrul Madid’s commentary using the sentence “As I remember you by sending the Messenger, so remember Me with your noble words and your spiritual state” (Ajibah, 1999a). This verse discusses about Allah SWT giving pleasure in the form of moving or perfecting the direction of the Qibla to the Grand Mosque, thus Allah SWT answered the prayer of the Prophet Ibrahim (as), just as Allah SWT gave pleasure in the form of sending the Messengers.

### Analysis of the Interpretation of Dhikr According to Sheikh Ibn Ajibah

The interpretation of *dhikr* of Syekh Ibn Ajibah in verse 152 of Surah Al-Baqarah contains many meanings that are born from the sufistic side such as the presence of the heart, the clarity of the heart, the soul that is always aware of the presence of God, and the mortality or melting of servants to Allah SWT where dhikr is only for the purpose of getting closer to the owner of the universe, namely Allah SWT (Syahid et al., 2025). Thus, the aspects of interpretation born from the sufistic side regarding dhikr are not only calculating the abundance of rewards from the results of worship but the purification of servitude itself.

#### 1. Dhikr with Obedience

Syekh Ibnu Ajibah began his interpretation by explaining the meaning of the word “*fadzkuruni*” which means “remember Me” with full obedience and ihsan. This shows that dhikr must always involve obedience and good deeds. Furthermore, Ibnu Ajibah explained that the word “*adzkurkum*” means “I will remember you” by giving the best reward (Ajibah, 1999a). Then, Ibnu Ajibah strengthened his interpretation by quoting the hadith of the Prophet which reads, “Whoever obeys Allah, then he truly remembers Allah, even if his prayers, fasting, and recitation of the Qur’an are few. On the other hand, whoever disobeys Allah, he has completely forgotten Allah, even though he prays, fasts, and recites the Qur’an a lot.” This hadith of the Prophet very clearly shows the meaning of the essence of dhikr and ghafl which has no influence at all on the quantity of worship carried out by a servant if he is still disobedient then it is called ghafl or forgets Allah SWT, on the other hand when he is always in obedience even though the quantity of worship is small, it is still called dhikr, namely remembering Allah SWT.

## 2. *Dhikr* with the Heart

*Dhikr* with the heart means carrying out *dhikr* with deep awareness and sincerity. It is not just about repeating words, but involves understanding and concentrating on the meaning of *dhikr*, feeling the presence of Allah inwardly, and associating feelings and intentions with the prayers spoken. Syekh Ibnu Ajibah in his interpretation of *dhikr* with the heart while explaining the meaning of the interpretation of Ishari, namely: “If you *dhikr* to Me with your heart, then I will remember you by giving you the blessing of the ability to see with the eyes of the heart. If you *dhikr* to Me with your soul, I will remove the hijab that covers your eyes. And if you *dhikr* to Me with monotheism and faith, I will give you a high degree in Paradise” (Ajibah, 1999a). From this interpretation, it is clear that what Syekh Ibn Ajibah emphasizes more is the view of Allah in the heart of every servant who performs *dhikr*. If Allah SWT’s reply is the opening of the eyes of the heart when *dhikr*, then the important point here is the heart and not just any heart that Allah SWT gives the pleasure of *futuh* or the opening of the eyes of the heart except the heart of *asshafa*, which is the clear heart of various kinds of impurities of the lust of a servant. When the heart has *asshafa*, this is where *dhikr* is truly accepted and rewarded (FM et al., 2023).

## 3. *Dhikr* with Love

*Dhikr* with love means presenting Allah not only in words, but in inner vibrations full of love, longing, and emotional closeness. *Dhikr* at this level does not stop at verbal repetition, but rather becomes an expression of gratitude and longing that unites the heart with the Remembered. Syekh Ibnu Ajibah emphasized this reciprocal dimension in his commentary: “Remember Me with longing and love, I will surely remember you with closeness and *wuṣūl* (until) to My presence” (Ajibah, 1999a). That is, the quality of love in *dhikr* determines the degree of divine closeness bestowed on servants.

Love for Allah begins with deep knowledge through *musyāhadah*, which is inner awareness in witnessing His presence and majesty. The deeper the *ma’rifat* of a servant towards Allah, especially towards His beauty (*jamāl*), the stronger the love that grows in his heart. Love for God is intrinsic and unbound by changes in time or conditions, for it is rooted in the eternal Divine reality. In contrast, love for creatures tends to depend on earthly and physical aspects so that they are temporary. If love is based solely on beauty or outward conditions, then it will fade with changes in age, circumstances, or even death (Ali, 1999). Thus, love based on *ma’rifat* to Allah has a more solid and eternal quality than love that rests on material dimensions.

Deep love for Allah gives birth to a longing that makes the heart always turn to Him, to the point that in Sufi terms it is called *fanā’*, immersed in the consciousness of the Beloved so that the interests of self and the world lose their attractiveness. This longing is a human nature that at a spiritual level metamorphoses into a divine longing, bringing tears and inner vibrations. The longing finds its serenity in prayer, the intimate prayer between the servant and the Lord, as the Prophet said, “O Bilal, calm us with prayer,” because there longing is released and the soul is calmed.

## 4. *Dhikr* with *Sirr*

Syekh Ibn Ajibah interpreted, “*Dhikr* with your spirit and *sirr*, then I will remember you in your shadow.” Here Ibn Ajibah uses the word *sirr*, which is from the view of the Sufis, “the secret

of the heart (*sirr*)” is a very deep aspect and cannot be reached by the turmoil of the soul or other beings, because it is something unseen and hidden that is known only to Allah SWT. According to them, there are two types of secrets: secrets that are known only to Allah, and secrets that creatures can understand through intermediaries. This secret is described as something very hidden and can only be understood through the truth.

*Dhikr sirr* or *dhikr in sirr* refers to the form of dhikr that is done internally in the heart. It is rumored that one dhikr with the heart is equivalent to 35 million oral dhikr. It has to do with the number of blood vessels in the human body, all of which are connected to the heart. When the name of Allah is remembered with the heart, it is as if the whole body participates in dhikr. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) once said to Abu Dzar, “*Dhikr* Allah with dhikr of pregnancy!” When Abu Dzar asked about the dhikr of pregnancy, the Prophet explained that it is dhikr that is done in the heart (*khafī*) (Al-Khozini, 1940). *Dhikr* begins with verbal pronunciation, followed by *dhikr* of the heart which initially requires effort and compulsion. Over time, the *dhikr* of the heart becomes more natural and no longer forced. In the end, when Allah is in complete control of the heart, the dhikr will disappear by itself.

Dhikr reaches the stage of *sirr* when the perpetrator and the object of *dhikr* seem to disappear in the witnessing, so that all that remains is divine consciousness. At this stage the dhikr is stable, the light is constant, it does not go up and down; If it is still fluctuating, it means that it is not yet perfectly flowing into the depths of the mind. Another sign is a very subtle and profound calmness, so that the verbal feels as if it has stopped due to the sinking of consciousness in dhikr. In summary: oral dhikr is speech without the presence of the heart, dhikr of the heart brings awareness with Allah, while dhikr *sirr* (*khafī*) is dhikr without leaving consciousness other than Him.

Allah SWT says in Surah Al-A’raf verse 205:

وَأَذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

“And reverence your Lord in your heart (*nafsika*) by humbling yourselves and fearing and by not raising your voice in the morning and evening, and do not be among those who are negligent” (QS. Al-A’raf: 205).

Shaykh Ibn ‘Athallah, referring to Abu Qasim al-Qusyairi, emphasized that dhikr is not just a spiritual practice, but a symbol of a servant’s special closeness to Allah. *Dhikr* is a lamp to wushul, as well as a sign of the beginning of health and the purity of the end of the spiritual journey. According to al-Qushayri, there is no deeds that exceed dhikr, because all deeds essentially lead to it. Dhikr is the spirit of every worship and the source of meaning of all spiritual practices (‘Athallah As-Sakandari, 1980).

The permanence of dhikr that permeates the soul will shape a person’s personality, behavior, and even the direction of life. *Dhikr* is not just a routine, but a conscious exercise that must be forced until it becomes a solid spiritual habitus. Its intensity and continuity change the way we look at life events, so that reality is read in a divine horizon, not merely a material one. Therefore, dhikr is the main axis of the spiritual journey. It is not a momentary mental activity, but a sedentary existential consciousness. The consistency of dhikr gives birth to a strong awareness of God, softens the soul, improves morals, and increases piety (Nurusshobah & Fitra, 2025).

## **The Relevance of Ibnu Ajibah's Interpretation in Contemporary Life**

Ibnu Ajibah's interpretation of dhikr emphasizes that dhikr is not just a verbal repetition, but an integral activity of inner awareness. Dhikr involves the heart, mind, and action as a form of constant presence before Allah. In this perspective, dhikr is a method of tazkiyah to cleanse the heart from worldly cloudiness as well as a means of increasing spiritual awareness to achieve real closeness and experience of the Divine presence. Thus, dhikr becomes a path of existential transformation, not just a ritual practice. Its relevance is universal: it is not limited to Sufis, but is open to any Muslim who wants to deepen a relationship with Allah.

Dhikr, according to Ibnu Ajibah, serves as a means of purification of the soul, inner peace, as well as a guide to the orientation of life towards truth and virtue. Through conscious and sincere dhikr, a servant gains peace, guidance, and meaning in life that goes beyond worldly achievements, leading to true happiness in this world and the hereafter. In the context of modern life full of stress and anxiety, a comprehensive understanding of dhikr such as the one offered by Ibnu Ajibah can be an effective alternative to spiritual therapy to overcome inner anxiety and strengthen mental health (Nasution, 2021; Rahman & Hakim, 2022).

Syekh Ibnu Ajibah also hinted that one of Allah's blessings is the sending of spiritual educators, namely mursyid teachers. In the tradition of the tarekat, mursyid is a guide who has matured in the basic spiritual teachings and reached the level of ma'rifat billah, so that it is worthy of leading the student to a deeper knowledge of Allah (Al-bamar, 2001). Meeting with a murshid teacher in Sufism is a very valuable and full of spiritual pleasure for a disciple (*salik*). Mursyid teachers have deep knowledge and broad wisdom about the teachings of Sufism and Islam, assist in the process of purification of the soul (*tazkiyah an-nafs*), teach various forms of dhikr, prayer, and worship, and provide advice and solutions to students' life problems, both spiritual and temporal (S. Rahmawati et al., 2024).

## **CONCLUSION**

This research found that Syekh Ibnu Ajibah in the commentary of Al-Baḥr al-Madīd interpreted Allah's command in QS. Al-Baqarah verse 152 is a multidimensional invitation to remember Allah through complete obedience, clarity of heart, sincerity of love, and involvement of the dimensions of the soul and sirr. Ibnu Ajibah's interpretation reveals the stages of dhikr, ranging from oral dhikr, dhikr of the heart, dhikr of the soul, dhikr with love, to dhikr with sirr which is the highest level where a servant is immersed in divine consciousness. If this form of dhikr is realized consistently, then Allah will reward it by "remembering" His servants, which is manifested in the opening of the eyes of the heart, the revelation of the spiritual hijab, the increase in degree, and the bestowal of spiritual maqam such as *fanā'*, *maḥabbah*, and *ma'rifah*. Ibnu Ajibah also emphasized the close relationship between dhikr and gratitude, where dhikr is a form of gratitude for Allah's favor as well as a bulwark against shirk and spiritual negligence.

The implications of this study show that the deep understanding of dhikr as stated by Ibnu Ajibah has significant relevance in contemporary life, especially in the effort to achieve inner peace, mental stability, and true happiness in the midst of the pressures of modern life. This study has limitations because it only focuses on the interpretation of one Sufi figure on one verse, so it has

not described a broad spectrum of Sufistic interpretation of dhikr comparatively. Therefore, it is recommended that further research conduct a comparative study between the interpretation of Ibnu Ajibah and other Sufi mufassir such as Al-Qusyairi, Al-Tustari, or Ruzbihan Al-Baqli regarding the verses of dhikr. In addition, empirical research on the influence of dhikr practices based on sufistic understanding on the mental health of Muslims is also needed to test the practical relevance of these findings in the contemporary context.

## DECLARATION OF USING IA

The authors used ChatGPT to improve the quality and readability of the language. The authors remains fully responsible for the results presented above.

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