

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji Penyaliban Yesus dalam pandangan Kristen dan Muslim. Untuk mengungkap peristiwa tersebut, tidak akan lepas dari pengkajian tentang pribadi Yesus. Metode yang digunakan untuk mengkaji perbedaan pendapat antara Kristen dan Muslim tentang Penyaliban Yesus itu adalah metode sintesis atau pendekatan ilmiah-cum doctriner atau scientific-cum-suigeneric. Perspektif ini bukan hanya berbicara tentang doktrin saja tetapi juga mempertimbangkan sisi sejarah dan eskatologi dalam perspektif Kristen dan Muslim. Kemudian peneliti membandingkan kedua pemikiran tersebut secara obyektif. Penelitian ini tidak berangkat dari kepercayaan bahwa Yesus disalib, tetapi memahami secara menyeluruh apa yang terjadi pada penyaliban. Kemudian akan mendapat suatu perdebatan yang sehat antara Kristen dan Muslim tentang Penyaliban Yesus. Meskipun terdapat perbedaan pendapat diantara Kristen dan Muslim dan juga di dalam tubuh kedua agama tersebut, terdapat titik persamaan yang memungkinkan untuk saling memahami antara kedua agama. Kedua agama tersebut terdapat kesamaan dalam memandang Yesus sebagai seorang Nabi, seorang Juru Selamat, meninggal dunia sebagai perwujudan kecintaan dan kemenangan Tuhan, tentang konsep kemuliaan Tuhan, dan menjunjung nilai kemanusiaan. Pembahasan tentang Penyaliban Yesus tersebut dapat menangkap bagaimana makna Penyaliban Yesus bagi Kristen dan Muslim. Bagi Kristen, Penyaliban Yesus adalah peristiwa yang terjadi sebagai perwujudan kasih dan kemenangan Tuhan. Yesus telah rela hati menderita untuk menebus dosa besar umat manusia. Dengan kebangkitan Yesus, Tuhan telah membuktikan cinta dan kemenangan-Nya. Kristen tetap hidup dengan spirit Yesus di dada mereka dan dengan selalu berpegang pada apa yang diajarkan oleh Yesus, Kristen menebarkan kasih dan sayang kepada umat manusia. Bagi Muslim, makna Penyaliban Yesus adalah merupakan wujud kecintaan dan kemenangan Tuhan. Tuhan telah menempatkan Yesus sebagai manusia suci yang menebarkan kedamaian di muka bumi. Tuhan dengan kecintaan dan kekuasaannya telah menyelamatkan Yesus dari penyaliban.

Kata Kunci: Penyaliban Yesus, teologi, Kristen dan Muslim

The Crucifixion of Jesus (A Theological Debate between Christians and Muslims)

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A. Introduction

The crucifixion of Jesus is an event of which the authenticity is always questioned. To explain this event, we must not forget who Jesus is. There are views about the personality of Jesus himself, especially from Christian and Muslim perspectives. Both religions have distinct arguments about the crucifixion of Jesus, because both Christians and Muslims maintain the authenticity of their Holy Scriptures when seeking to understand this event.

From a Christian perspective, the phenomenon of crucifixion is central to the religion and has theological roots. Christians obviously believe in the crucifixion of Jesus. This is based on the belief that Jesus is God and a sacred man. Related to Jesus as a manifestation of God in the world, the event of crucifixion is an important event, because without him, human beings could not receive redemption for their sins. According to Christians, crucifixion was real and Jesus was pleased to suffer and to be crucified for the sake of humans.

Currently, the event of the crucifixion of Jesus is not debatable in Christianity. In general, Christians believe that Jesus was crucified and thus died. This is based on the Holy Bible.¹ In Christianity, the finding of Jesus' shroud with the investigation by *The International Foundation for the Holy Shroud* was used to support that Jesus really was dead on the Cross. People claim that these discoveries are scientifically irrefutable since 1959. It is based on many experts, in the Vatican who have recognized the accuracy of the discoveries.²

Islam as a religion also respects the death of Jesus. According to Almirzanah, in the Qur'an, Jesus was described as a prophet and human. About the death of Jesus, the Qur'an does not speak about the historical event. It shows God's superiority over the Jewish plan.³ The Qur'an especially in surahs 4:157-158, denies that Jesus was crucified. He did not die on the cross, but Jesus moved up to heaven.

Muslims also have different opinions about the death of Jesus which is divided into two groups. The first group believes that Jesus did not die on the cross, although Muslims have different interpretations. Perhaps, this is based on surahs 4:157-158, which obviously explain that. However, the problem arises about the interpretation of *a muttasabihāt verses*.

The second group of Muslims agrees that Jesus was crucified but he did not die on the cross. They believe this to respond to the discovery of the shroud of Jesus, and the proof of Jesus' grave in Kashmir. For example, Ahmadiyah is one Muslim group that supports these ideas. Another example of groups with different opinions is one Syi'ah group which looks at the event of Jesus' death by an ordinary Hadith. To interpret this Hadith, they imagine that Jesus was killed and crucified, but not all Syi'ah agree with this statement.⁴

Coming back to reality, when we live in plural society, different ideas, especially about the crucifixion of Jesus, are a normal phenomenon. Human beings increasingly interact with each other. This supports the emergence of different ideas. Usually, the different ideas become a source of conflict, especially when we debate academically.

¹ About the death of Jesus, we can look at Matthew 37.45-61, Mark 15.33-47, Luke 23.44-56, and John 19. 25-42.

² Syafi R. Batuah, *Nabi Isa dari Palestina ke Kashmir*, (Indonesia: Jema'at Ahmadiyah, 1991), p. 14.

³ Safa'atun Almirzanah, "Isa Almasih, Wafat dan Kebangkitannya (Gagasan Kristologi Islam)", in *Al-Jami'ah*, No. 64/XII/1999 H, p. 120.

⁴ Mahmoud Mustofa Ayoub, *Mengurai Konflik Muslim-Kristen dalam Perspektif Islam*, (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2001), p. 121.

Relating to this phenomenon, this research explores the different ideas of Christians and Muslims about the crucifixion of Jesus. This can become a bridge to unify them and to understand deeply the crucifixion of Jesus according to both Christians and Muslims.

Related to this research, some important problems arise related to the crucifixion of Jesus. These include “How do Christians and Muslims talk about the crucifixion of Jesus?” and “Is there any possibility to make a mutual understanding between Christians and Muslims about the crucifixion of Jesus?”

This is library research and uses many sources to explore the crucifixion of Jesus from Christian and Muslim perspectives. This research will use many methods to explore the crucifixion of Jesus. These include method of gathering data from literature, method of data interpretation and method of analyzing the data

This research will use synthesis methods or academic-cum doctriner or scientific-cum suigeneric perspective to explain the issue of the crucifixion of Jesus. Synthesis methods means that we can understand an object with scientific and doctrine.⁵ In this research, scientific-cum suigeneric approach does not mean to only talk about doctrine itself, but also considers historical and eschatological impacts in Christian and Muslim perspectives. Then, this research compares both religious opinions about the crucifixion of Jesus objectively. Therefore, this research does not start from the belief of Jesus in the crucifixion, but attempts to understand fully what happened on the cross. Thus, Christians and Muslims could have a healthy debate about the crucifixion of Jesus.

B. The Issue of Crucifixion of Jesus

The discourse about Jesus is debatable when we discuss the figure of Jesus from Christian and Muslim perspectives, but it does not negate the possibility of understanding of the figure of Jesus in both religions. Christians and Muslims have a similar view of Jesus as Prophet and as redeemer although Muslims do not agree with the concept of inherited sin in Christianity.

Literally, both the Bible and the Qur’an have different arguments about the crucifixion. The Qur’an mentions that Jesus was not crucified. Based on the Bible, the whole construction of Christianity as a religion is based on the belief in that crucifixion. Logically, the Christian version about Jesus should be rejected, if we accept the version in the Qur’an.

To make a meeting point between Christians and Muslims, it is separated into three issues to explore the crucifixion of Jesus, which are theological, historical, and eschatological.

1. Crucifixion as a Theological Issue

The crucifixion of Jesus is an event that is involved in the theological issue, because these events include also the divinity aspect, and automatically includes the role God plays. It is related to the position of Jesus in Christian belief that Jesus did not only have a position as human, but also as God.

⁵ Taufik Abdullah and M. Rusli Karim, *Metodologi Penelitian Agama Sebuah Pengantar*, (Yogyakarta: PT Tiara Wacana Yogyakarta, 1991), p. 47.

Based on this explanation, the theological issue of crucifixion of Jesus can be classified to three parts. They are: cause, meaning and function of crucifixion. Therefore, the root of theological aspect can be clearly understood.

a. The Cause of Crucifixion

Matthew G. Easton explains that *crucifixion* is a form of punishment. It was known by several nations who worshipped the idol in the first century. The Ancient Jews did not use this punishment, because The Mosaic Law of *Taurat* did not use death by crucifixion but death by sword (Exodus 21), burning (Leviticus 20:14), or stoning. (Deuteronomy 21:21).⁶

According to Christians, the law of Roman crucified Jesus. He was crucified between two thieves, (Isaiah, 53:12, Luke 23:32) and the Roman army with their leader witnessed it, (John 19:23, Matthew 27:36, 54), but the process of crucifixion was not generally used as the punishment. Jesus was mocked before the punishment was done. He did not use the cup of vinegar and he maintained his consciousness (Matthew 27:24). The fracture of the foot was generally done to speed death, (John 19:31), but Jesus's foot did not fracture (John 19:33). Jesus died because of the failure of his kidney and the blood from his stomach. This is evidence that Jesus died by the Roman army. (John 19:34).⁷

Based on these Christian sources, the causes of crucifixion are Roman authority and Sadduceans. Roman authority suggests that Jesus was a challenge. Sadducean, a religious group of Judaism also supported the arrest of Jesus. Then, they were included in the cause of crucifixion of Jesus.

From the Islamic perspective, the Qur'an explains the cause of crucifixion, although the Qur'an does not speak about historical events concerning Jesus' death. Islam supports that Jews in this event. It shows God's superiority over the Jews' plan and claim of the success to crucify Jesus. Generally, surah 4:157 mentions anger to Jews, because they tried to kill the Prophet Isa. Mahmoud Ayoub describes that Israelis directed those surahs 4: 157-158.⁸ Related to this case, Christian supported Jesus was executed by Roman punishment and Islam also support that Jews also include on this event.

b. The Meaning of Crucifixion

Crucifixion is death by nailing to the cross. Relating to Jesus' case, Jesus was punished by Roman and Jews (John 18:32) with crucifixion. In the Christian perspective, Jesus was not afraid to be crucified, because he accepts this punishment. (John 10:11, 15, 17, 18; John 15: 13).

When we look for the cause of crucifixion, we can see the meaning of crucifixion. The first meaning is the Roman plans to lose the authority of Jesus and to destroy Christianity after Jesus' death. On other hand, the death of Jesus did not make Christianity stop believing in this Christ. Although Jesus

⁶ Matthew G. Easton, in <http://www.Christiananswers.net/Indonesian/q-eden/crucifixion-i.html>.

⁷ Matthew G. Easton, <http://www.christiananswers.net/indonesian/g.eden/crucifixion-i.html>.

⁸ See Almirzanah, "Isa Almasih.....", p. 126. Mahmoud M. Ayoub, *Op. Cit.*, p. 94-95.

was dead, the message of Jesus' spirit still lives in his followers. Thus, Christianity tries to use the death of Jesus as a symbol.

Related to this case, the crucifixion is the symbol Jesus of triumph and victory. Then, although Jesus died, Jesus still lives in their lives. They use the symbol of Jesus' crucifixion to show their obedience to Jesus. Jesus on the cross is the symbol of victory because Jesus is the redeemer of sin with crucifixion. In Muslim perspective, crucifixion is punishment that will be done to people who fight against God and the prophet (surah 5: 33).

Based on this explanation, Christian assumes that the crucifixion of Jesus will symbolize the triumph of God. Although Jesus died, the spirit of Christianity still exists. Islam suggests that God with his power saved Jesus from death and proves the authority of God over the Jew's plan, and then Jesus was crucified on the cross.

c. The Function of Crucifixion

The function of crucifixion can refer to the symbol of the cross. Although Jesus Christ was dead, Christian still believe that Jesus still live with the spirit of Jesus on the cross. They use the symbol of Jesus on the cross. This proves that the reign of God is still well and Christianity still lives until now. The reign of God still lives although Jesus died on the cross. Again, this appreciation to the cross cannot be separated from the idea of resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus proves the divine love and divine triumph.

From the Muslim's perspective, the Qur'an does not speak of the function of crucifixion directly. Muslims commonly say that with divine love and divine triumph, Jesus was not killed on the cross because God took him. It means that in the event of crucifixion, God with his love saved Jesus.

Based on this case, when Christians look at the crucifixion of Jesus to symbolize the symbol of both divine love and divine triumph, Muslims also look at the crucifixion of Jesus to symbolize as divine love and divine triumph because God with his love saved Jesus from death on the cross with his triumph and love, and he did not die on the cross.

2. Crucifixion as a Historical Issue

Concerning crucifixion from the theological side, basically, Christianity is looking for a historical religion. Usually, Christians suggest that their history is the plan of God. It reached its peak in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus as Christ. The death of Jesus is a part of the plan of God.

Historically, the death of Jesus was always debated among followers, Christians and Muslims, because the crucifixion of Jesus according to both scriptures has an ambiguous manner. What happened on the cross is opened to interpretation.

Furthermore, the event of crucifixion is a historical issue because the Bible and the Qur'an have a different orientation on this event. The Gospel of John especially talks about crucifixion historically, and the Qur'an does not speak historically.

Although both religions do not agree on this event, we must explore this event historically from Christian and Muslim perspectives with interpretation mediation. Interpretation is a way to look the event of crucifixion and the

participant in the crucifixion completely, and then we can get this event clearly by looking at both religions. Then we do not close a mutual understanding about this event.

a. The Event of Crucifixion

The event of crucifixion can refer to Christian' history. Historically, before the event of crucifixion, Jesus and his disciples celebrated Palm Sunday, recalling Jesus' entry into Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. Sloyan notes that the event of crucifixion happened on Friday evening.⁹ In the execution of Jesus, the situation is darkness.

At that time, the Romans led him outside the city to a place called Golgotha. Then the Romans fastened him to a cross, after torturing Jesus, where he remained until he died at about three in the afternoon. The witnesses of this event are only the female disciples and the male disciples that kept watch at the cross.

Then, Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27:32-44; Mark 15:20b-32; Luke 23:26, 33-43; John 19:17-24). After three hours, Jesus died at 3:00 pm. (Matthew 27:45, 50; Mark 15:33-34, 37; Luke 23:44, 46). Based on this case, Christians believe that Romans crucified Jesus and he died at 3:00 pm.

b. The Participant in the Crucifixion

Muslims and Christians have different arguments about the participants in the Crucifixion. This is based on the interpretation of scripture and also the data of both Christianity and Muslim scriptural explanations of the event.

In Christianity, the crucifixion of Jesus is not debatable. Based on the Holy Bible, Christians believe that Jesus died on the cross. It is contrary to the common opinion of Muslims. The four Gospels of Christians mention this event. The Letters of Paul are more detailed descriptions. It also can be seen in John (19:34). John was the only 'eyewitness' of the crucifixion.

Currently, *The International Foundation for the Holy Shroud* investigated Jesus's shroud. The president of the Foundation is Kurt Berna. Because many experts investigated these discoveries scientifically, people claim the accuracy of the discoveries, since 1959.¹⁰ This investigation supported that on the cross, Jesus Christ died.

However, Islam respects the death of Jesus. The Qur'an mentions Jesus as human and as God's messenger with special qualities. According to Almirzanah, the Qur'an mentions Jesus' death not as a historical event.¹¹ The Qur'an mentions God's superiority over the Jewish plan. The Qur'an denies that Jesus was crucified. He did not die on the cross, but Jesus moved up to heaven. (Look at surahs 4:157-158).

Regarding the death of Jesus, Muslims have different opinions. The first Muslim groups believe that Jesus did not die on the cross, although Muslims

⁹ Gerard S. Sloyan, *The Crucifixion of Jesus, History, Myth, Faith*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), p. 17.

¹⁰ Batuah, *Nabi Isa*, p. 13.

¹¹ See Almirzanah, "Isa Almasih", p. 120. Kenneth Cragg, *Jesus and the Muslim*, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985); Geoffrey Parrinder, *Jesus in the Qur'an and Christianity*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

have different interpretations. It is based on surahs 4:157-158. However, the issue arises about the interpretation of *the muttasabihāt verses*. These verses have a double meaning and are open to interpretation. Many experts include Ibn Abbas, Wahb bin Munabbih, Razi and so forth, and who interpret the meaning of *mutawaffika* and *shubbiha*.

The second Muslim groups agree that Jesus was crucified but did not die on the cross. The reason is that they believed, responded and sympathized with the proof of Jesus' grave in Kashmir. For example, Syi'ah group¹² uses an ordinary Hadith to look at the event of Jesus' death. They interpret and then imagine that Jesus was killed and crucified. Another example is Ahmadiyyah. They believe that Jesus was crucified but did not die on the cross.

Based on this case, when Christians believe that Jesus died on the cross to be based on the Bible, Muslims commonly believe that Jesus did not die on the cross.

3. Crucifixion as a Eschatological Issue

Christians and Muslims have different perception in looking at the event of crucifixion. This is because both scriptures do not explain the issue clearly. It also implicates another issue. Historically the death of Jesus on the cross has been issue among Muslims and Christians; it implicates an issue in eschatological aspect.¹³

a. The First Coming of Jesus

Talking about the first coming of Jesus, we first refer to the raising of Jesus. Jesus had an image as the King of Israel. At that time, people claimed that he was the Messiah because people felt that Jesus gave safety and a new paradigm. In the Roman Empire he was popular in the Jewish community.

At that time, Jews believed in the coming of Messiah because they lived in the Roman Empire. All Jews did not have freedom to do their political activities, although many Jews collaborated with the Romans. In that time, Jesus was clearly reported to have performed miracles to back up his message and proclaim the kingdom of God. Some Jews thought that Jesus was the agent of God that they were waiting for. Based on this case, some Jews needed and believed that Jesus was the Messiah.

b. The Second Coming of Jesus

Concerning the death of Jesus, the spirit of Christians did not die because they believed he would come again. In Christianity, the first idea of the second coming of Jesus is the belief of Christians that Jesus was resurrected after his death.

¹² Not all of hadith agreed with this statement. Mahmoud Mustofa Ayoub, *Mengurai Konflik Muslim-Kristen Dalam Perspektif Islam*, (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2001), p. 121.

¹³ Eschatology means the science of teaching concerning the last things. Messianism is one form of eschatology. Look at R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, "Eschatology: An Overview", in Mercea Eliade, *The Encyclopedia of religion*, Volume 5, New York, Simon & Schuster Macmillan, p. 149.

The second idea is among the Christians there have always been several groups believing in the second coming of Jesus. It means that Jesus will come again before the Day of Judgment. They are called millenarian groups who are minority among the Christians and perhaps regarded as Christian heresy.

Relating to Mark 11:12-14; 13:32, and Matthew 19:28, these verses support that Jesus will come again in the last day.¹⁴ The last day meant that Jesus will come in the future and only God know when Jesus will arise.

Concerning general Christian opinion, Muslims have a different argument about the second coming of Jesus. According to Toto Tasmara, the first argument is Prophet Isa is dead and will not arise in the world. It refers to the exegeses of the Qur'an surah 3:55, 5:117. The second argument is other Muslims respond to the second coming of Jesus in the future. It is based on the Hadith and also on the Qur'an. Jesus in the Hadith, was identified as the Mahdi. He arises in the last day.

Relating to this case, Muslims and Christians have different arguments about the coming of Jesus. Commonly, Christians believe that Jesus arose three days after he died, taken up to heaven and will come again in the last day. While some Muslims only believe that Jesus did not die on the cross, was taken up and will come in the last day and others argue that Jesus was dead and will not come in the world.

C. Mutual Understanding between Christians and Muslims about the Crucifixion of Jesus

Systematically, in fact there are four models of dialogue in order to explore the dynamics of the praxis of debate, which are Replacement Model, Fulfillment Model, Mutual Model and Acceptance Model.¹⁵ The four models in approaching inter religious debate is principle, and not only a matter of fact. Each model provides a unique way for all religious to seek their own model to open a gate of debate. The need for debate is both at the intra-religious and inter-religious levels.

Relating to the problem of the crucifixion of Jesus, the mutual model¹⁶ is most innovative and controversial to make mutual understanding between

¹⁴ Michel Azkoul explains about the last day. He said : “ the Greek language has two words for “end”. Firstly *telos* meant “finished” or “completed”. The example is “I have fought the good fight, I have ended (teteleka) my course” (II Tim. 4:7). Secondly, *eschatos* rendered the “last” or “the last preceding something else. The example is “the last state (ta eschata) of that man is worse than the first” (Matt. 12:45).The scriptures understand the phrase “in these last days” (ep’ eschaton ton hemron touton), or “times” (ep’ eschaton chronon). The word of *eschaton* applies to Christ Himself. “Fear not”, says the Lord. “I am the first and the last (ho eschatos). “I am He who lives, having once been dead” (Rev. 1:17). The last men has come in the last days, the last of the Hebrew economy, the first and the last of the final age before the end of the world.” See Fr. Michael Azkoul, *The teachings of the Holy Orthodox Church*, (USA: Dormition Skete Publications, 1986), pp. 159-160.

¹⁵ I found this argument from Paul F Knitter who teaches Comparative Religious Studies in Center for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies, Gadjah Mada University.

¹⁶ The mutual model-I discuss with Paul F Knitter in Comparative Religious Studies in Center for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies, Gadjah Mada University in 2002- is representative of those who understand that there are many true religions called to debate. This model is about avoiding all absolute or final claims, affirms genuine differences and seeks to find what we have in common. In order to express this affirmation we need a level playing field for

Christian and Muslim perspectives. That means both religions can be included in the debate with basis on the belief that many religions are true. A religion needs another religion to get more understanding and critics and needs to debate.

Concerning mutual understanding, Christians and Muslims was meeting and Christians and Muslims have different argument about the crucifixion of Jesus, because they are based on their scriptures.

Regarding differences, Christian and Muslim have differences in interpreting the crucifixion of Jesus. It is related on the understanding of Jesus Christ on the cross. In Christianity, the human and the divine can be found in the body of Jesus. Then, Jesus is a symbol of humanity and divinity. Talking about Jesus is talking about God. Then, Jesus is God, because in the body of Jesus can be found the divine. In Muslim perspective, Jesus is a human prophet.¹⁷

Christians and Muslims also have different arguments about the participants in the crucifixion and the coming of Jesus. Christians and Muslims have different argument about the participants of crucifixion. When Christians believe that Jesus died on the cross, based on the Bible, Muslims commonly believe that Jesus was not died on the cross.

Based on this, among Muslim followers there are different interpretations about the event of Jesus' crucifixion. It is based on among religion, which does not mix their ideas to unify their argument as one agreement. It is known that all Muslims do not believe that Jesus did not die on the cross. For example, Muslims commonly believe that Jesus did not die on the cross and did not crucify, on other hand, Ahmadiyah support that Jesus was crucified but did not die on the cross.

Muslims and Christians also have different arguments about the coming of Jesus. Commonly, Christians believe that Jesus rose three days after he died and will come again in the last day. Muslims believe that Jesus will come again in the last day. Then, Jesus will come to destroy the *dajja'* as the sign of the coming of the Day of Judgment. Other Muslims believe that Jesus died and will not come in the world.

Besides differentiation, Christians and Muslims have similar arguments about Jesus the Prophet, Jesus as redeemer, Roman and Jews as the cause of crucifixion, the triumph of God concerning the meaning of crucifixion, and the triumph and love of God concerning the function of crucifixion.

Christians and Muslims have a similar view of Jesus as Prophet and Jesus as redeemer although Muslims do not agree with the concept of inherited sin in Christianity. Looking in the Bible, Jesus as prophet is a manifestation of God in the world.

debate. Something unique from this model is the wide openness of recognizing a core mystical experience within all religions based on the understanding that the one "Divine Reality" will take many cultural forms. One strong encouraging power for this model is its existences as an ethical-liberationist action measured from the awareness of facing common problems surrounding all religions.

¹⁷ Michael G. Fonner, "Jesus' Death by Crucifixion in the Qur'an: An Issue for Interpretation and Muslim-Christian relations", *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 29:3-4, Summer fall, 1992, p. 446.

In Islam, the redemption of Christian doctrine is also a problematical matter. Fonner explains that in the Qur'an, Jesus is not called a redeemer. On other hand, In Islam, the concept of Mahdi can be found in Syi'ah. In Syi'ah, we can see two Messiah figure who are Husayn and Jesus.¹⁸ In Christianity, redemption is an important thing. Jesus' cross is a way to atonement, then, human beings can reach salvation.¹⁹

Concerning this case, both Christians and Muslims have similarities about Jesus as the redeemer although Muslims do not agree with the concept of inherited sin from Christians. According to Almirzanah, Jesus is a redeemer with the meaning that this redeemer does not mean a person died to redeem the sins of other people, but a man cures the sick soul of man; a man blows the livelihood in the soul of death with spirit and his soul. Almirzanah quoted Mahmoud Ayoub's opinion that salvation in an original definition is cure, health and recovery to live. According to the Qur'an, this is Jesus' mission.²⁰

Both religions have similarities about the cause of crucifixion. Theologically, Christians support that Jesus was executed by Roman punishment and Islam also supports that Jews were included on this event.

About the meaning of crucifixion, both religions have similarities. Christians assume that the crucifixion of Jesus symbolizes the triumph of God. Christians believe that Jesus was crucified on the cross, then Jesus was resurrected from the death. It proves the triumph of God. Then, although Jesus died, the spirit of Christians still exists. Islam suggests that God with his power saved Jesus from death and proves that the authority of God over the Jew's plan, then Jesus was crucified on the cross.

Both religions have a similarity about the function of crucifixion. When Christians look at the crucifixion of Jesus to symbolize the symbol of both divine love and divine triumph, Muslims also look at the crucifixion of Jesus to symbolize divine love and divine triumph because God with his love saved Jesus' death on the cross with his triumph and love, and he did not die on the cross.

Another similarity between Christians and Muslims is about the dignity of humanity. In Muslim perspective, the humanity falls, when Jesus died on the cross. In Christian perspective, although the cross of Jesus can debase humanity, the resurrection of Jesus is the proof of returning humanity.

Besides looking for differences and similarities between Christians and Muslims, it can be found the issue on the Muslim and Christian sides. On the Muslim side, the issue is the honor and divine singularity of God. God is not reduced to Jesus' body. Then, the impact of unity of both God and Jesus is the confusion of theological divinity with *jesusology*. Fonner explain that the Muslim understands the transfer from *christocentrism* to *theocentrism* in Christian

¹⁸ Fonner, "Jesus' Death by Crucifixion in the Qur'an.....", p. 448. See also Mahmoud Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering in Islam: A Study of the Devotional Aspects of "Ashura" in Twelve Shi'isme*, (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1978).

¹⁹ Fonner, "Jesus' Death by Crucifixion in the Qur'an", p. 448.

²⁰ See Almirzanah, "Isa Al Masih.....", p.138. See also Mahmoud Ayoub, "The Miracle of Jesus: Muslim Reflection on the Divine Word" in Robert F. Berkey and Sarah A. Edward, eds., *Christology in Dialogue*, (Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 1993), p. 226.

articulations as *jesusology*. On the Christian side, the issue is selectivity of the perception of the Qur'an to approve and describe about Jesus. Actually, some believe that the Qur'anic Jesus is a Christian Jesus. Fonner suggests that both religions can meet on the idea of Jesus is a prophet.²¹

Concerning the similarity between Christian and Muslim opinions, it can become mutual understanding in both religions. Although both religions have different ideas about the participants of crucifixion and the rise of Jesus, similar ideas can be seen about the crucifixion of Jesus. There are those that believe that the event of crucifixion is really accord, argue Jesus is a prophet, a savior, a redeemer, died with divine love and divine triumph, the honor of God, and the dignity of humanity.

Regarding this explanation, it can be understand the meaning of crucifixion of Jesus according to both religions. For Christians, the meaning of crucifixion of Jesus is a proof of love and triumph of God. Jesus is an incarnation of God dead to redeem a great sin of human being and he was resurrected. For Muslims, the meaning of crucifixion of Jesus is a proof of love and triumph of God. God save Jesus from death on the cross with take Jesus beside God. Then, Muslims can understand how God sent Jesus as human to redeem human beings and God loves Jesus as a prophet with special status.

D. Conclusion

The crucifixion of Jesus is different understanding in Christian and Muslim perspectives. Many Muslim and Christian scholars maintain their argument based on their beliefs, and commonly they support their ideas with scripture, influence of historical discovery and the interpretation of scripture.

Christians and Muslims have different arguments about the participants in the crucifixion and the coming of Jesus. Commonly, Christians believe that the crucifixion of Jesus really happened, based on the Bible. Jesus died on the cross, then he was resurrected in the world and will come again in the future days. Some Muslims believe that Jesus was not die on the cross, will come in the last day and others argue that Jesus was dead and will not come in the world.

Although among Christian and Muslim followers there are different arguments about the crucifixion of Jesus, both religions have a similarity about the crucifixion of Jesus and possible to get an agreement with a mutual understanding among them. That means both Christian and Muslim opinions about the crucifixion of Jesus can be comparing and can see similarities and can reach a mutual understanding concerning the crucifixion of Jesus.

Christians and Muslims have similar argument about Jesus as Prophet, and Jesus as redeemer, Christians and Muslims have similarity argument about Jesus a Prophet, Jesus as redeemer, the honor of God, the dignity of humanity, Roman and Jews as the cause of crucifixion, the triumph of God concerning the meaning of crucifixion, the triumph and love of God concerning the function of crucifixion.

²¹ Fonner, "Jesus' Death by Crucifixion in the Qur'an., ...pp.447- 449. See also Jane Dammen McAuliffe, *Qur'anic Christians: An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis*, (Cambridge and New York: Cambride University Press, 1991), pp. 287-288.

Then, the meaning of crucifixion of Jesus according to both Christians and Muslims is a proof of love and triumph of God. For Muslims, God save Jesus from death on the cross with take Jesus beside God. This meant God loves Jesus with special status as a prophet and God sent Jesus as human to redeem human beings. For Christians, Jesus is an incarnation of God dead to redeem a great sin of human being and he was resurrected.

The explanation about mutual understanding in synthesis methods is not enough, and it can be investigated in another aspect. Synthesis methods is only a part of the aspect to research the problem of faith and it is more real when it will be research in reality of the lay people. For example, this argument must be verified in sociological, and geographical perspectives in this era. It can reach a mutual understanding among Christians and Muslims in how far the religiosities of both religions believe. Their attitude is part of understanding the circle of crucifixion of Jesus.

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