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# THE QURAN'S PERSPECTIVE AND COVID-19 IN INDONESIA

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#### **Abstract**

The Covid-19 pandemic is a serious disease that spreading to the world community. In Indonesia, Covid-19 causes health and social problems. This paper examines how the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia, how Islamic scholars and scientists in Indonesia view the Covid-19 problem, and how the Qur'an provides solutions in dealing with Covid-19. This study uses the thematic interpretation method with a conceptual analysis approach in unraveling research problems. The results show that the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia is relatively high among countries in the world, the views of clergy and scientists in Indonesia about Covid-19 are not always in line, and the Qur'an contains teachings in the form of efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus by teaching habits of maintain body hygiene, consuming nutritions, multiply zikr to gain relaxing of mind, and be smart toward receiving information about Covid-19.

Keywords: Quranic Science, Pandemic, Covid-19, Indonesia

### Introduction

Entering the end of 2019, the world was shocked by the emergence of a new variant of the corona virus which namely after as SARS COV-2. This virus was originally known to appear in the city of Wuhan, China. The very fast transmission from one person to another makes this virus quickly spread to almost all corners of the world. Indonesian people's fear of the presence of this virus became a reality in the second quarter of 2020. To date, Covid-19 has killed thousands of Indonesians.

In Indonesia, Covid-19 is not only a health threat but also poses social problems because it presents pros and cons in society. The religious culture of the Indonesian people makes it difficult for people to accept the government's steps in handling Covid-19, especially those that touch religious and worship aspects. Thus, attending of Covid-19 is seen as a testing period for the relationship between science and religion.

Based on the above phenomenon, this paper will discuss how the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia, how Islamic scholars and scientists in Indonesia view the Covid-19 problem, and how The Holy Qur'an making solutions in dealing with Covid-19. In line with this research question, the purpose of this paper is to find out the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia, the views of Islamic scholars and scientists about Covid-19 in Indonesia, and solutions of the Qur'an in tackling the Covid-19.

Previous papers related to this theme include M. Jaedi (2019) in "The Importance of Understanding the Qur'an and Science" explaining that Islam is the only religion that is suitable as a guide for human life due to the harmony between Islam and science. Meanwhile, Eva Iryani (2017) in "Al-Qur'an and Science" explains that there is no conflict between the teachings of Islam and science. Even Islam itself obliges its people to seek knowledge. The implementation of science in Islam makes human being reflect on Allah, encourage behavior that is in accordance with the provisions of the Shari'a, while also reminding us of the conceptual values contained in the Qur'an. Another view also comes from Ali Muchasan (2020), in "Relation of Religion and Science", he explains that science and religion do have methodological differences and different claims, so that the expressions of formulas and characters that appear

are also different. Religious teachings tend to invite people to return to God, while science tends to see and understand the nature and creature. Among these papers, no one has specifically linked the discussion of the integration of science and the Qur'an to the Covid-19 problem in Indonesia, as this paper will examine.

#### Covid-19 in Indonesia

The new variant of the corona virus that was discovered in Wuhan, China in December 2019 was named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV2). This virus causes the disease Coronavirus Disease-2019 (Covid-19). Research conducted by health experts shows that the homology of Covid-19 has similar DNA characteristics with viruses originating from bats, while based on phylogenetic analysis between Covid-19 sufferers and Bat Cov RaTG13 detected in bats. The similarities are very high, ranging from 96.2 % which proves that the Covid-19 that threatens human life comes from bats transmitted from other animals (Zhou et al, 2020: 4-5).

In Indonesia, the initial appearance of Covid-19 was confirmed on March 2, 2020. Until now, Indonesia is still recording growth related to this virus, as well as publishing the latest data on the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesian regions. It was recorded that as of 19 October 2021, the positive number of Covid-19 in Indonesia had reached 4.23 million cases, 143 thousand of them died, while in West Java the Covid-19 problem reached 573,438 cases with a total percentage of 18.0% of the total all cases in Indonesia. It causing the Indonesian government to take part in making decisions regarding the handling of the spread of the Covid-19 virus (Covid-19 Cluster, 2021)

Looking at the track record of the Indonesian Government's decisions and policies in following up on the Covid-19 problem, it can simply be divided into two important phases. The first phase, the phase where the government is indifferent by feeling confident that Covid-19 will not enter Indonesia. This phase takes place between December 2019 and February 2020. The second phase is where the government begins to be responsive to the Covid-19 issue due to the fact that transmission in the community has begun to emerge.

The main problem with Covid-19 in Indonesia is the case fatality rate (CFR) of 8%. This is because Indonesia occupies an area with a high spread of Covid-19, both at the world and ASEAN levels. This is due to the limitations of

health check facilities such as the limited number of kits for diagnosing positive Covid-19 patients, resulting in a lack of accuracy in the percentage of people infected with Covid-19. Then other problems arise from the lack of clear coordination in handling Covid-19 in Indonesia (Toresano, 2020: 231-232).

Along with the rapid spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia, the government began to make efforts by implementing various policies to reduce the spread of Covid-19. Starting from the recommendation to wash hands with soap, wear a mask, and keep a distance. The Ministry of Health also recommends the public to consume foods that have high protein and nutritional value so that the body's immunity becomes stronger (Darmin Tuwu, 2020: 267)

### Islamic Scholars and Scientists Views in Indonesia Toward Covid-19

In Indonesia, Islamic scholars and scientists are not always on the same corridor in viewing the Covid-19 issue. The fact is that there is still disagreement between Islamic scholars and scientists in viewing the Covid-19 pandemic issue, both personally and institutionally, giving rise to arguments that tend to confuse the public. (Siregar, 2020: 8)

Several cases have emerged related to the clergy's denial of the existence of this virus. In March 2020, the religious group Jama'ah Tablighi in Indonesia initiated the Asia Zone Ulama ijtima' event in Goa, South Sulawesi which was planned to be attended by 8,695 people from 48 countries. However, the government immediately took anticipatory action by canceling the event. In fact, 500 participants were declared infected with Covid-19 (Toresano, 2020: 233). In Aceh, during Ramadan 2020 mosques will continue to hold congregational prayers as usual despite the government's call for restrictions (Alkaf, 2020: 99). In Sumenep Madura, mosque congregations actually gathered for a torch relay even though with the intention of driving away Covid-19 (Taufik, 2021: SuaraJatim). It was later reported that a Koran teacher in Bantul was desperate to teach even though he had tested positive for Covid-19 on the pretext of not believing in Covid-19 so that 6 of his students were also infected (Pertana, 2021; Detiknews).

In addition to the examples of controversies above, there are also examples of understanding between clergy and scientists in Indonesia in viewing the Covid-19 issue. Likewise, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued related fatwas regarding the anticipation of Covid-19. In Article 2 of the MUI Fatwa No.

14 of 2020 explains that anyone who has contracted the new type of Covid-19 virus (n-Cov 2019) is required to carry out strict isolation and quarantine. (JISA, 2020: 103). In addition, with a different attitude from the Tablighi Jama'at above, the Nahdhatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU) which originally also planned to hold the Alim Ulama National Deliberation and the 2020 NU Grand Conference on March 18-19, 2020 instead canceled in order to anticipate the spread of Covid-19. Likewise, the Central Executive Board (PP) of Muhammadiyah postponed the holding of the 48th Muhammadiyah Congress on July 1-5 2020 in order to prevent the transmission of the Covid-19 pandemic (Toresano, 2020: 234).

# Virus in the Qur'an

One of the factors that a person does not believe in the existence of a virus during this pandemic period is not understanding the relationship between science and religion. Some of them even tend to argue that there are contradictions between faith and science. Even though the Qur'an itself in several verses also talks about science. Among them are the verses that talk about the creation of the universe such as QS. Al-Anbiya verse 30, the verse on embryology; QS. Al-Mu'minun verses 12-14. Even in the Qur'an there is also a verse that hints at the existence of the smallest creature on earth which is currently known as a virus.

In the Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah verse 26, which means "Verily Allah does not hesitate to make an example of a mosquito or something lower than that. As for those who believe, then they know (convinced) that the parable is true from their Lord, but those who disbelieve say: What is the purpose of Allah making this parable? With this parable Allah has misled many people, and with this parable (also) many people He has guided. And no one has misled Allah except the wicked. (Surat al-Baqarah: 26).

The cause of the revelation of this verse (asbāb al-nuzūl), as narrated by Al-Wahidi through the path of Abdul Ghani bin Sa'id Ats-Tsaqafi, from Musa bin Abdurrahman, from Ibn Juraij, from Atha', from Ibn Abbas he said, "When Allah exposed the deceit of their god (the polytheists), even Allah compared them to a spider's web, then the polytheists immediately retorted; Do you not see that Allah mentions flies and spiders in the Qur'an which was revealed to Muhammad? For what purpose did Allah mention the two animals? So the

answer to the question of the polytheists has been answered through the QS. Al-Hajj: 73". (Al-Suyuthi, 2016: 14).

In terms of writing Arabic transliteration, the word (بعوضة ما) follows the fa'ūlah pattern, which is derived from the word ba'ūdh which means mosquito or little flea. If we review the writing of the word (بعوضة), it can be seen that the word ends with the letter ta' marbuthah (نا) which automatically refers to the female mosquito, because the form of writing the word (بعوضة) is muannats (Imam Asy-Syaukani, 2008): 224). Meanwhile, Ibn Kathir in his commentary on the Qur'an Al-'Azim volume 1 explains that the letter (ما) in the word (بعوضة ما) indicates small and trivial, and the word (بعوضة المعاقبة) manshūb as badal, which means the letter (ما) This is nakirah which is characterized by ba'ūdhah. It is different with the opinion expressed by Ibn Jarir in defining the word (ما), he chose the letter (ما) as manshūlah. (Ibn Katsir, 2015: 500)

Quraish Shihab in Al-Misbah explains that the word (بعوضة)) has the meaning of emphasizing the importance of all of Allah's creations, even small animals that are considered useless and only capable of causing diseases such as mosquitoes are also mentioned in the Qur'an (Quraish Shihab, 2005: 313). Allah revealed this verse as a warning to the polytheists that Allah can create everything, including creatures smaller than mosquitoes (فما فوقه فوقه) such as microorganisms, one of which is a virus (Al-Razi, 1995: 361).

While As-Sa'di in al-Karīm al-Rahmān fī Tafsīr al-Kalām al-Manan interprets the sentence (بعوضة فعا فوقها) as a parable that includes wisdom and an explanation of the truth, while Allah does not hesitate to reveal the truth. In this verse there is an implied answer for people who deny the parable in trivial matters, such as the creation of small animals, even though through this verse Allah teaches humans to always be grateful (As-Sa'di, 2005: 39).

### Fighting Covid-19, Inspiration From The Qur'an

The Qur'an as a guide in all aspects of life, also provides empirical signals related to mitigation measures in efforts to overcome Covid-19. The mitigation efforts in question are as follows:

# 1. Maintain Body Hygiene

يَّأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوۤاْ إِذَا قُمَتُمۡ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَٱغۡسِلُواْ وُجُوهَكُمۡ وَأَيۡدِيَكُمۡ إِلَى ٱلْمَرَافِقِ وَٱمۡسَحُواْ بِرُءُوسِكُمۡ وَأَرۡجُلَكُمۡ إِلَى ٱلْكَعۡبَيۡنِۚ وَإِن كُنتُم جُنُبُا فَٱطَّهَّرُواْۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرۡضَىٰۤ أَوۡ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوۡ جَآءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡخَآئِطِ أَقِ لَٰمَسۡتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَلَمۡ تَجِدُواْ مَآءٗ فَتَيَمَّمُواْ صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَٱمۡسَحُواْ بِوُجُوهِكُمۡ وَأَيۡدِيكُم مِّنَهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَحْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُم مِّنۡ حَرَج وَلَٰكِن يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمۡ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعۡمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ مَّنَ كُرُونَ

Meaning: "O you who believe, when you want to pray, then wash your face and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your head and (wash) your feet up to the ankles, and if you are junub then take a bath, and if you are sick or on the way or returning from the toilet (latrine) or touching a woman, then you do not find water, so practice with good soil (clean); wipe your face and your hands with it. Allah does not want to make it difficult for you, but He wants to cleanse you and complete His favors for you, so that you may be grateful." QS. Al-Maidah verse 6)

Al-Bukhari narrated from the path of Amr bin Al-Harith, that when the Messenger of Allah awoke from his sleep at dawn, he walked to find water for ablution. However, he did not find water until the QS. Al-Maidah verse 6 which recommends doing tayammum (Al-Suyuthi, 2016: 216). Al-Sa'di in his commentary explains that the sentence (مَا الْمُعْلِمُونُ وَالْمُونُونُونُ ) is an order to wash the face and hands up to the elbows. According to some commentators, washing the face in question includes: is already includes gargling and putting water into the nose which is a sunnah (Al-Sa'di, 2005: 293). Ibn Kathir emphasized that the sentence (وَالْمُونُونُونُ اللّٰمِ الْمُوالِقُونُ ) is a commandment sentence that is sunnah for people to perform ablution by washing their arms to elbows (Ibn Katsir). , 2015: 815).

Indeed, this verse teaches humans, especially Muslims, to always pay attention to and maintain body cleanliness. One of the efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19 includes maintaining the cleanliness of the limbs by applying the habit of washing hands with soap. The activity of washing hands with soap and maintaining the cleanliness of other limbs is the same as the ablution procession, because actually ablution is a ritual in Islam that teaches humans to always maintain body cleanliness. (Ashraf, 2020: 154)

## 2. Consuming Nutritions

Meaning: "So eat what is lawful and good from the sustenance that Allah has given you; and be grateful for the favors of Allah if you worship Him alone" (Surah An-Nahl: 116).

Al-Syaukani in Fathul Qadhir explains that this verse contains a word (انگانا) which is commanding to eat food that is able to lead to gratitude for Allah's blessings, it is obligatory for Muslims to eat halal and good food (Imam As-Syaukani, 2011: 455). This is also in line with Aidh Al-Qarni's interpretation in his commentary Muyassar who recommends always getting closer to lawful sustenance and staying away from unlawful ones, and always being grateful for the blessings (Aidh Al-Qarni, 2007: 471).

Through this verse, Muslims are taught to always pay attention to and maintain their diet. Starting from the food to be eaten, it is required that it is halal and good, up to the level of eating and the time. In relation to the prevention of Covid-19, one of the efforts is to maintain a diet by eating nutritious foods to increase (boosting) immunity to avoid the attack of Covid-19 (Iranani, 2017: 59).

### 3. Do not Panic and do Zikr

Meaning, "Those who believe and their hearts find peace because of dhikrullah. Indeed, only in the remembrance of Allah does the heart find peace." (Surah Ar-Ra'd: 28)

Quraish Shihab (2002: 599) interprets the word dhikr in this verse originally to have the meaning of "mentioning with the tongue", but later developed so that it can be understood as "remembering". However, remembering something is often followed or preceded by mentioning it with the tongue. Mentioning Allah can be understood by meaning to mention His names or also remembering His power, His mercy, His majesty, His threats and torments.

Al-Shabuni (2017: 577) says that this verse teachs humans to always remembering Allah so that they always get peace of mind. The word tathmainna in the verse uses the form (sighah) fi'il mudhāri' which implies continuous (istimrār) so that the tranquility or tranquility achieved by means of dhikr applies continuously and for all time (dawām al-ithmi'nān).

During this pandemic, one of the treatments that must be maintained is calm and avoid being afraid or panicking excessively. Because, being too panicked in the face of this pandemic problem can actually disturb the mind which leads to a weakening of the immune system due to stress and excessive fear (Parono & Rosada, 2020: 115).

4. Screening new about covid-19

Meaning: "O you who believe, if a wicked person comes to you with news, then examine it carefully so that you do not inflict a disaster on a people without knowing the situation that causes you to regret what you did." (Qs. Al-Hujurat verse 6)

Imam Ahmad and others narrated a story from Harith bin Abu Dhirar Al-Khuza'i, he said that once The Prophet commanded him and his peoples to pay zakat. Normally when zakat was collected The Prophet would send someone to come and collect it, but there was no one came. It turned out that the messenger who had been sent made fake news saying that Al-Harith forbade him to take the zakat so that he came back and did not meet Al-Harith (Imam As-Suyuthi, 2016: 569). Quraish Shihab (2002: 601) in Al-Misbah explains that the word (بنبي) naba'in is used in the sense of important news. In contrast to the word (خبر) khabar which means news in general, whether important or not, while the word fatabayyanu emphasizes that news listeners must be smart in sorting out true and false (فَتَيْتُوْا) news, and see who brings the news whether it is trustworthy or not. Jalaluddin As-Suyuthi (2206: 361) in his commentary explains that the snippet of the word fatabayyanu (فَتَبَيُّوُنَّ ) has a meaning so check the truth of the news, whether it is true or lying. According to a qiraat read fatatsabbatu comes from the Ats-Tsabaat pronunciation, meaning research first the truth so that you do not inflict calamity on a people.

In this regard, Covid-19 has also become a social disease in the midst of society. Disputes and debates about it are unstoppable. This is exacerbated by the spread of fake news or hoaxes about Covid-19. So, learn from QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6 above, believers should be selective in receiving news and applying the concept of tabayyun in daily life. (Christiany Judita, 2020: 106). In addition, related to this can also guide QS. An-Nahl verse 43 which commands people to ask Ahlu al-dhikri if they do not know. Al-Sa'di interprets the word ahlu al-zikri in this verse in addition to initially being the people of the book according to the context of this verse descending, but also includes every ahlul 'ilmi, namely those who are experts in their fields (Al-Sa'di, 2005: 160) . So, if the question is about viruses, then ask a virologist.

#### Conclusion

Based on the previous explanation above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia, the latest data as of October 19, 2021, the positive number of Covid-19 in Indonesia has reached 4.23 million cases, which killed 143,000 Indonesians, while in West Java the positive cases of Covid-19 reached 573,438 cases with a total percentage of 18.0% of the total cases in Indonesia.

Some Islamic scholars and scientists have the same opinion about the Covid-19 case, but not a few of them are contradictory about this. Those who believe in the existence of Covid-19 provide solutions to the community to slow the spread of Covid-19, but some of them are still doubtful about the existence of this virus, thus ignoring government regulations.

The concept of the Qur'an in the Covid-19 response is contained in QS. Al-Baqarah Verse 26 which explains the parable of the virus, namely the mosquito (بعوضة) and Allah also did not hesitate to create an animal smaller than the mosquito itself, for example in the form of a virus, QS. Al-Maidah verse 6 provides a solution in dealing with Covid-19 by means of ablution, because ablution is one of the actions to clean parts of the body, QS. An-Nahl Verse 114 teaches us to always eat halal food and good (nutritious, protein and others), to increase immunity and immunity., QS. Al-Hujurat: 6 recommends that we sort out information related to Covid-19, and filter whether the news is true or false.

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