# THE QUR'ANIC VERSES OF AHL AL-KITAB AND THE CHAALENGE OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

## THESIS



Presented to State Institute of Islamic Studies Sunan Ampel Surabaya
In Order To fulfill one of Requirements in Obtaining
the Title of Theology's Degree (S.Thi)

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DEPARTMENT OF TAFSIR HADITH USULUDDIN
FACULTY STATE INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES
SUNAN AMPEL
SURABAYA
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#### **ABSTRACT**

Nilna Mukarromah. The Qur'anic verses of Ahl al-Kitab and the Challenge of Religious Pluralism

The Qur'anic concept of Ahl al-Kitab (people of the Book) has theological significance for Moslems; it has had considerable impact within Islamic society, making it possible for Moslems to accept the existence of other religious, particularly Jews and Christians, who share the monotheistic belief as Moslems, or in the other term called by religious pluralism. There are many references of Ahl al-Kitab in the Qur'an which may be categories in the sympathetic verses and ambivalent verses. The sympathetic verses were showing that there was positive perception on the Ahl al Kitab.

In this study surah Al-Imran (3): 64,113,114,115 are chosen as an example of sympathetic verses. Five major works of selected classical and modern exegesis, from different school of thought, are used in the analysis of the verses. Their exegetical hopes can give the explanation on term of religious pluralism, is there the concept of religious pluralism in the Qur'an and how does it concept. As has been known, there was not Qur'anic terminology of the term nor in the *Sunnah* and also in the classical works. But it did mean Muslim or non-Muslim scholar did not keep their attention to discoursing this phenomenon.

The Qur'an itself recognizes the existence of good people among Ahl al-Kitab and invites people of diverse faiths to come to a "common word (kalimatin sawain) to establish mutual understanding through critical dialogue. This would, in turn, enable all people to live side by side and facing the challenge of religious pluralism to build a new civilization and greater harmony.

Key word: Ahl al-Kitab, exegetical

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## **CHAPTER I**

#### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background

Ahl al-Kitab (people of the book) possessing a scripture; the name is given by the Qur'an to the Jewish (Banu Israil) and Christian (Nasara) communities, processor respectively of the Tawrat (Torah) and Zabor (psalms) and the Injil (Gospel).<sup>1</sup>

Beside the term of Ahl al-Kitab, the Qur'an is also using the other term such *Utu Al-Kitab*, *Utu nashiban minal kitab*, *Al-Yahud*, *Al-Ladzina hadu*, *bani Israil*, *and An-Nashara*. The word of Ahl al-Kitab recurs in many verses of the Qur'an for about thirty one time, *Utu al Kitab* eighteen times, *Utu nasiban minal kitab* three times, *Al-Yahud* eight times, *Al-Ladzina Hadu* teen times, *An-Nashara* fourteen times, and *Bani/Banu Isra'il* fourteen times.<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'anic concept of Ahl al-Kitab (people of the Book) has theological significance for Moslems; it has had considerable impact within Islamic society, making it possible for Moslems to accept the existence of other religious, particularly Jews and Christians, who share the monotheistic belief as Moslems.<sup>3</sup>

The Islamic concept of Ahl al-Kitab can be understood as the guidance of the tradition continuity of Abrahamic religions that given the special name for the believer of non- Islam as a possessing the Holy Scripture. It doesn't meaning that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John Bowker *The Oxford Dictionery of the Modern Islamic World*, Vol 3, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> M. Quraish shihab, wawasan Al-Qur'an, Bandung, Mizan: 348

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Jarot Wahyudi, Ahl al-Kitab (Qur'anic invitation to Inter-Faith Co-operation), Yogyakarta, Nusa Aksara, 2006:1

all of religion is same (it is impossible) remembering the *existence* of religions were different in many principle thought. But, the Islamic attitude means giving the declaration, specifically the freedom of having a religion.

The concept of Ahl al-Kitab is also impacted for the development of culture and the Islamic civilization by accepting the cosmopolitanism and the tolerance of social arrangement. If we flashed back in the past, in the opening of Spaniel by Muslims army under hand of Thariq bin Ziyat generally which his name eternizing in the name of hill in the middle beach ocean that popular by Gibraltar (Jabal Thariq) at 711. The opening of Spaniel was ended the despotism of religious. After word, for about 500 years, Muslims create the cosmopolite social-politic arrangement, opened and tolerant. Max I. Dimont, a historian of Spaniel in "The indestructible Jews" said, among Moslems, Jews and Christian have a good co-operation without following their each own faith.<sup>4</sup>

There were many references Ahl al-Kitab in the Qur'an. The term occurs thirty one time, twice in surah *al Baqarah* (2):105,109; twelve time in surah *Ali Al-Imran* (3):64,65,69,70,71,72,75,98,99,110,113,199; four time in surah *An-Nisa'* (4):123,153,159,171; six times in surah *Al-Maidah* (5):16,21,62,68,71,80; once in surah *al Ankabut* (29):46; surah *al Ahzab* (33):26, surah *al Hadid* (57):29, and surah *al Hashr* (59):2,11, and twice in surah *al Bayyinah* (98):1,6. Of thirty one verses, may be grouped into two categories: the sympathetic verses which give the Ahl al-Kitab a status similar to that Moslems and the ambivalent verses which condemn the Ahl al-Kitab. In this study, surah *Al-Imran* (3): 64, 113, 114,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Paramida team, Nurcholis Majid, dkk "Ahl al-Kitab" in Fiqih Lintas Agama, Jakarta:Paramadina, 2004: 43

15 are chosen as example of sympathetic verses which reveled in Medina, while twenty-seven others are critical toward Ahl al-Kitab.<sup>5</sup>

The discourse of the Ahl al-Kitab now day has being related with the phenomenon of religious Pluralism. The concept of pluralism it self is an attitude of understanding and respecting the existence of the difference, one another to get the peacefully among the member of religious community. The sympathetic verses in surah *Al-Imran*, verse 64,113, 114, 115, are chosen as the proof that there was tolerance in the Qur'an to the Ahl al-Kitab. Such has been mention in the surah *Al-Imran* verse 64,113,114,115 below:

قُلْ يَتَأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَابِ تَعَالُواْ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةِ سَوَآءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُرْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ مَ شَيْءًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّواْ فَقُولُواْ أَشْهَدُواْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾ آشْهَدُواْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾

"O people of the scripture! Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner on to Him, and that none of us shall take other for lord beside Allah. And if they turn away then say: bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him)". (64)

They are not all alike. Of the people of the scripture there is a staunch community who recite the revelations of Allah in the night season, falling the prostrate (before Him)". (113)

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Jarot Wahyudi, Ahl al-Kitab (Qur'anic invitation to Inter-Faith Co-operation), Yogyakarta, Nusa Aksara, 2006:19

"They believe in Allah and the last day, and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency, and vie one with another in good works. They are of the righteous". (114).

"And whatever good they do, they will not be denied the meet thereof. Allah is Aware of those who ward off (evil)". (115)<sup>6</sup>

#### 1.2. Identification of the Problem

From the analysis of the background above, the problem that has to be identification in this study is relation between Qur'anic verses of Ahl al-Kitab, especially in *surah Al-Imran* verse 64,113,114,115 and the phenomenon of religious pluralism.

#### 1.3. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background above the problem to be discussed in this study are:

- 1. How does the Qur'an attitude to the Ahl al-Kitab?
- 2. Is surah Al-Imran verse 64,113,114 and 115 showing that there was concept of religious pluralism in the Qur'an?
- 3. How does the concept of religious pluralism in the Qur'an?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Muhammad Marmaduke Pickhtall, *The English translation of the Glorious Qur'an*, Al-Ameen Printers: 67,71

## 1.4. Definition of Key Terms

In order to make this study guided and compatibility, the researcher would like to confirm the concerning of the problem which will analyze such as list bellow:

1. Ahl al-Kitab : Ahl al-Kitab called by people of the book is the

possessing a scripture. The name is given by the

Qur'an to the Jewish (Banu Israil) and Christian

(Nasara) communities, processor respectively of the

Tawrat (Torah) and Zabor (psalms) and the Injil

(Gospel).<sup>7</sup>

2. Pluralism : An attitude of understanding and respecting the

existence of the difference, one another to get the

peacefully among the member of religious

community.

3. Al-Imran : "The family of Imran", the third surah in the

Qur'an, revealed at Medina, content two hundred

verses of the Qur'an

## 1.5. Objectives of Study

The general objectives of this study are to analyze the verses of Ahl al-Kitab between the sympathetic verses which give the Ahl al-Kitab a status similar to that Moslems and the ambivalent verses which condemn the Ahl al-Kitab and

<sup>8.</sup> John Bowker *The Oxford Dictionery of the Modern Islamic World*, Vol 3, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997.

the phenomenon of religious pluralism. And the detail objectives of this study such at list bellow:

- 1. To analyze the attitude of the Qur'an to the Ahl al-Kitab
- 2. To analyze the verses of Ahl al-Kitab especially surah *Al-Imran* verse 64, 113,114,115, does those verses showing that there were concept of religious pluralism in the Qur'an.
- 3. To knowing how does the concept of religious pluralism in the Qur'an.

### 1.6. Significance of Study

This study is important and useful because the discourse of the Ahl al-Kitab as never dies. What else, if it related with the phenomenon of religious pluralism. As we have known that religious pluralism has become debated problem in the intern Muslims it self. And also there were religious fanatics in the world that bringing to the dissension, harness, anarchism, even vandalism. This study hoped can refresh the discourse of the Ahl al-Kitab and giving the right understanding about religious pluralism.

Not at all, the researcher hopes that this study theoretically will enrich the knowledge the study of Ahl al-Kitab and the phenomenon of religious pluralism. While practically, researcher hopes by this study the society will have the right view of the Ahl al Kitab and religious pluralism, and the last; researcher hopes that this study will useful for student of Qur'anic studies as the review of literature that can help them in their study. At list this study useful to researcher as the student of *Tafsir and hadith* faculty

#### 1.7. Data Resource

The data resource in this study is taken from review of literature below:

- a. The primer data resource is Ahl al-Kitab (A Qur'anic invitation to inter-faith co-operation), The beauty of Islam (Dalam cinta dan pendidikan pluralisme) Wawasan Al-Qur'an, Pluralitas Agama and some Moslem exegetical works The first is Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil ay al-Qur'an of Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Jarir al Tabari, second Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-Adzim of Hafizd 'Imadi ad-Din Abi al-Fida' Ismail Ibn Kathir, third Tafsir Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an of Sayyid Quthb, fourth Tafsir Al-Manar of Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha, and the lat the last Tafsir al-Maraghi of Ahmad Mustafa Al Maraghi.
- b. The secondary data resource such the supporting book, like, Fiqih Lintas Agama, Islam Agama dan Peradaban and many more books discusses about the Ahl al-Kitab that related with this study.

#### 1.8. Steps of Analysis

The data needed in this review of literature is taken from it resource by the library research, by collecting books that having relation with the topic subject will be discussed, those books will collaborated with the primer data Resource.

The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative method. It is analyzed the problem, by collecting the information of the present event to describe certain situation or condition. The way to get information such by interview, questioner or opinioner studies, this analysis also called by self reporting, the other one by situation analysis and development study.

The kind of descriptive analysis such, case study, survey, development analysis, document analysis, trend analysis, and correlation study. The descriptive method in this study belongs to document analysis or called by content analysis by reviewing of literature or research of filed. It is done by discourse the literature such: books of science, document, thesis, exegetical, history, and many more. The focus of this method in this study is looking for common view on the Ahl al-Kitab and religious pluralism.<sup>8</sup>

#### 1.9. The Outline of Writing

The out line of this study will be explained to the four chapters bellow:

### Chapter I: Introduction.

- 1.1. Background
- 1.2. Identification of the Problem
- 1.3. Statement of the Problem
- 1.4. Definition of key term
- 1.5. objectives of Study
- 1.6. Significance of study
- 1.7. Data resource
- 1.8. Step of Analysis
- 1.9. The Outline of Writing

## Chapter II: Qur'anic Discourse of the Ahl al-Kitab

- 2.1. The Qur'an and Its Significance for Muslim life
- 2.2. Who Is the Ahl Al-Kita Belongs To

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Alamuddin Tuwu. *Pengantar Metodology Penelitian*. Jakarta: UI Press, 1993:71-78

- 2.3. The Ahl al-Kitab in the Qur'anic Revelation Period
- 2.4. The Qur'anic term on the Ahl Al-Kitab
- 2.5. The Characteristic and Attitude of the Ahl Al-Kitab in the Qur'an
- 2.6. Why there was Condemn to the Ahl al-Kitab
- 2.7. Exegetical Analysis of Ahl al-Kitab verses in the Qur'an

## Chapter III: Pluralism and it Significance for Humankind

- 3.1. The Definition of Religious Pluralism
- 3.2. The Islamic View of Religious Pluralism
- 3.3. Pluralism is Sunnatullah
- 3.4. Pluralism and Religious Tolerances Vision

## Chapter IV: Conclusion

# CHAPTER II THE QURANIC DISCOURSE OF THE AHL AL-KITAB

Any discussion with deals with Islamic thought must begin with the Qur'an, the basis of all Muslim thought. Unlike the Bible, the Qur'an is not a collection books, Separated by times and different authors. It is a single text delivered by Muhammad SAW during the last twenty years of his life, consisting mainly short passages of religious or ethical teaching, arguments against opponent, commentaries on current event and some rulings on social legal matters. That can be grouped to the themes of the Qur'an. Among the theme of Qur'an there was the Ahl al-Kitab, which showing the concept monotheism of religious.

The concept of the Ahl al-Kitab is an important Islamic principle which recurs in many verses in the Qur'an. This concept has had considerable impact within Islamic society, making it possible for Moslem to accept the existence of the other religion. Before discussing the Ahl al-Kitab first of all researcher would like to discuss the Qur'an and it significance for Moslem life therefore researcher would like to address the differences opinion among the Moslem Scholar about whom does the Ah al-Kitab belongs to.

## 2.1. The Qur'an and Its Significance for Muslim life

As Holy Scripture, Qur'an was very meaningful for Muslim, it significance as guideline for the salvation in life in this world and life of hereafter. Historically, Muslim has accepted the Qur'an as the word of God that became

audible through Muhammad, the pure vessel, in the clear Arabic. Literally, the Qur'an means "the reading," hence Muslim would constitute "the reader." This should not be taken to mean, however, that the Qur'an is easily accessible to everyone. On the contrary, its language, style, and arrangement are often problematic, both for general western reader, most of whom rely on translation, and for Muslim, Arab and non Arab alike. As such, Alford Welch argues that the Qur'an can only be fully appreciated in the original Arabic.

Muslim attitude toward the Qur'an reflect their attitude toward their faith. They read it with a sense of reverence and adoration befitting the transcendental mediation of divine expression, though without necessarily grasping its full significance. The reader of Arabic text is often carried away by its rhythmic harmony without attributing any intellectual meaning to it. On reading or hearing the Qur'an, the believer's find his or her faith strengthened. The Qur'an its self states that it is revelation which strengthens the believer's faith and bring joy to his heart. This in it itself is a valuable pillar for those who find their belief in God and in the hereafter to be a source solace, comfort, and support in their daily life. When Qur'anic teaching transcends individual experience, however, and affects social conduct, it becomes necessary to reflect on the objective meaning of the revelation.

The significance of the Qur'an for Muslims is clearly enunciated by the Qur'an itself which designates itself al-Kitab (the book). In this linguistic sense, the Qur'an, as Mohammed Arkoun phrases it, is a "pre text" in which everything can be established based on this very basic source. Other designations of the

Qur'an include huda (guidance), which function to direct believers to the right path (al-sirat al-mustaqim), furqon (distinguisher between right and wrong, good and bad, haq and batil, ma'ruf and munkar or the criterion to distinguish truth from falsehood and error); rahmah (blessing); shifa (healer); mau'izah (advice); al dhikr (the remember or warning), tibyan (clarity); and Tafsir (explanation). The term Huda (guidance), which implies the teachings of the Qur'an bear on all aspect of Muslim life, is particularly significant.

Qur'anic teaching, therefore, appears destined to develop not only as a religion but also as a culture and civilization. In keeping with this concern for social life, the Qur'an frequently stresses the need for temperance in the treatment of non Muslim. While the Qur'an assert that the Muslim community is the best community of God (khayra ummah), it also invokes tolerance, providing the Muslim with an ethical standard by which to regulate inter-faith relations. The Qur'an, particularly its Medinan, portions has much to say about community life, including how to live with the people of the book.

#### 2.2. Who Is the Ahl Al-Kita Belongs To

The Qur'anic in origin, the term of Ahl al-Kitab refers mainly to Jews, Christian, the possessing of scripture Torah and Gospel that revealed to the Moses and Jesus. And (less frequently) the Sabeans as possessors of previous reveled

<sup>9</sup> Jarot Wahyudi, Ahl al-Kitab (Qur'anic invitation to Inter-Faith Co-operation), Yogyakarta, Nusa Aksara, 2006: 13-18

books. It was sometimes applied also other communities. Zoroastrian were most prominent here although even polytheists were some times the categorized. 10

The Qur'an named them by the Ahl al-Kitab to difference them with the follower of paganism and the other unbeliever. While the differences association between Moslem and the Ahl al-Kitab Jews and Christian is about their believed to the prophetic of Mohammad SAW. Moslem believed to the prophetic of the other prophet, while the Ahl al-Kitab did not believe to the prophetic of Mohammad SAW. It caused by their Rabbi who changed the Torah and Gospel, in spite of in both of the scripture Mohammad is written as the last messenger. 11

According to Abdul Hamid Hakim (a Moslem scholar from *Padang Panjang*, west Sumatra) in his book *al-Mu'in al'-Mubin*, they who rejected the prophet Mohammad and his teaching belong to the three categories: (1) they which never have the scripture, (2) they which have such as the scripture, and (3) they which have the real scripture. Jews and Christian belong to the part who have the real scripture are. They were exactly and directly mentioned in the Qur'an as the Ahl al-Kitab.<sup>12</sup>

Jews and Christian have the special attitude from Moslem, because their religion was as old as Islam itself. In the other word, Moslem believed that Islam's self-definition is the repercussion and perfecting of these two religions. As Fazlur rahman's view in Major Theme of the Qur'an about the people of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> John L. Esposito. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*. Vol 3. New York: oxford university press, 1995:307

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> M. Ishom El Saha, saiful Hadi. Sketsa Al-Qur'an. vol1. Jakarta: PT Lista Farito the Asta Putra, 2005:30

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Paramadina team. Nurcholis Madjid dkk (9 person). Fiqih Lintas Agama. Jakarta: Paramadina, 2005:45

book and the diversity of religious, Fazlur Rahman said that Islam's attitude to Christianity as old as Islam itself, science Islam partly took shape by adopting certain important ideas from Judaism and Christianity and criticizing others. Indeed, Islam's self-definition is partly the result of its attitude to these two religions and their communities.<sup>13</sup>

However there were agreement that the Ahl al-Kitab refers to Jews and Christian, but there were the different opinions of Muslims scholar about the detail and the term of it. The analysis of those differences is mostly addressed by Moslem exegesis when they interpreted the *surah Al-Maidah* (The Table Spread) 5:5, that explain Moslem allowed to eat the slaughtered of animal and permission to marry the women from the Ahl al-Kitab.

There were three opinions about The Ahl al-Kitab. Al Madudi, an expert Islamic contemporary divine those differences opinion to the three categories. Imam Syafi'i understanding the term of Ahl al-Kitab as Jews and Christian as the generation of Israel does not belong to the other state believer of Jews and Christian, because the prophet Moses and Jesus just messaging to them not to the other state. Second Imam Abu Hanifah and the Major expert law said that everyone who believe in one of prophet, or the scripture that reveled by Alloh, he will belong to the Ahl al-Kitab, did not limited to the believer of Jews and Christian. Therefore if there a part who believes on the Zabor only (reveled to the prophet Daud) they also belong to the Ahl al-Kitab. Third, a little Moslem salaf argued that every possessor of scripture of samawi belong to the Ahl al-Kitab,

<sup>13</sup> Fazlur Rahman. Major Theme of The Qur'an. Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1989: 162-163

This opinion according to Madudi extended by Mujtahid such as Maiusi. (defender of the faith), it also belong to the believer of Buddha and Hind. <sup>14</sup>Than their women can be marriage by the man from Moslem.

Ibnu Katsir in his interpreted information that Abu Tsaur Ibrahim bin Khalid Al-Kalbi (860 M) as the follower of Imam Syafi'i, and also Ahmad ibn Hanbal, argued that Moslem can enjoyed eating the slaughtered animal of Majusi and also permission to marry their women.

Famous Moslem exegete, Rasvid Ridha explains the law of married and eating the slaughtered animal of the follower paganism woman such as Chinese. He detailing and valuing deeply the narrate that presented by sahabat and also tabi'in, the theories of ushul and language and also keep the attention of Moslem scholar before him concluded than man of Moslem are rejected to married with the Arabian infidel women base on the surah Al-Baqarah, this view supported by master of exegetes Ibnu Jarir Ath-Thabari, that Majusi, ash-Sabiin, The follower of paganism, were the Ahl al-Kitab.

In this case researcher disposed that the Ahl al-Kitab belongs to the believer of Jews religion and Christian religion, anywhere and everywhere, from any generation. It was based on the user of the Qur'an of it term that limited only to these two religions (Jews and Christian) and the Qur'anic verses of it, see Our'an surah Al-An'am [6]: 15615

Ahsin W, Al-Hafidz. Kamus Ilmu Al-Qur'an. Vol 1. Bandung: Amzah, 2005: 9
 Quraish Syihab. Wawasan Al-Qur'an. Bandung: Mizan: 369

## 2.3. The Ahl al-Kitab in the Qur'anic Revelation Period

Before opening page of Qur'anic verses on the Ahl al-Kitab we should looking to the history of Islamic missionary of Prophet Muhammad Saw. For about teen years prophet Muhammad implementing the prophecy missioners in Mecca and has to faced *Musyrikin* (unbeliever), the follower of paganism. In the Mecca itself the believer of Jews were very rare, even almost no one. The first and the main enemy at that time is the people of Mecca. In the Qur'an they called by *al-Musyrikun* (unbelievers). The oppression of *musyrik* (unbeliever) in Mecca to the Muslim, force Muslim to move at first time to Ethiopia. Over there they get the nice welcome by Negus, a Negus authority.

The Medina society contain of two big groups, they are Aus and Kharaj and also the people of Jews whom having good enough of economic authority. Aus and Kharaj be enemies one another and battling, no rare there was tension among them with people of Jews. The battle and the tension were tiring all of party. Unfortunately, no one among them who having an authority to united those fussing groups.

The people of Jews often clarify to the Aus and Kharaj, that there wills a prophets (from their group). And when he comes, automatically the Jews community will overcome their enemy. It was explained in the Qur'an see surah Al-Bagarah [2]: 89

The meaning of "approved were in their hand" is presence of a prophet; in this case, he was Prophet Muhammad Saw. The close friend of Prophet Muhammad (sahabat), Ibnu Abbas explained the meaning of "in spite of, they

usual requested before" is that people of Khaibar Jews fights with the Arab Gathfan, but they were overcame. In addition, the people of Jews prays "we request you (God) for Ummy Prophet that you have promised to delegate him to us in the end of the day, winning us upon them" than they could overcome their enemy.

The Qur'an also informed that the aversion of Ahl al-Kitab to believing caused of their spitefulness and their envious, see Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 109. Formally they expected that the prophet come from Bani Israil, but the reality He was came from their enemy.

From the explanation above, mostly there were no people of Jews and Christian in the Mecca. And it also the caused of *Musyrik* (unbeliever) over there sent the messenger to Medina to get the west question presented to the prophet Muhammad in the draft of proofing his prophecy. At that time the people of Jews at Medina suggested to asking about the soul, those event was the reason of the revelation on the commandment of God, see Qur'an, surah Al-Isra' [7]: 85.

The presence of Prophet Muhammad in Medina, got a nice well come from Aus and Kharaj people not only as a unite of them that have been fight and hoped for the peace, but also they believed that Muhammad was the messenger of God, which before it His presence have known by the people of Jews.

While most of the Christian people domiciled at Yamane, not at Medina, moreover they were there, they do not have political and economic authority. But they also called by the Ahl al-Kitab.

From the text above, found that the exegetes scholar when they found the term of Ahl al-Kitab in a verses, is always explain whom does the term refers to. It was naturally, because the Qur'an explicitly explains that the characteristic and attitude of the Ahl al-Kitab to the Islam and Moslem were not same; see Qur'an surah Al-Imran [3]: 113. And it was caused in the confused meaning on term of Ahl al-Kitab, Qur'an were not rare add the explanation the purpose of it term. For example, see the verses told about permitted to marriage with the women of Ahl al-Kitab, it was added by term wal muhsanat (the women who keep their honor), while when explain the permitted eating their slaughter, Qur'an told without any explanation or requirements.

### 2.4. The Qur'anic term On the Ahl Al-Kitab

One of miracle of the Qur'an is it carefulness on it redaction. Exactly, it was reveled directly from Alloh Swt. It should be underline, not only there were so many Moslem scholar that have been analyzed the language of the Qur'an to express or reject the opinion, but also this scripture using some of different term when pointed to Jews and Christian. Two communities that agreed minimally by all Moslem scholar as the Ahl al-Kitab.

Beside the term of Ahl al-Kitab, the Qur'an is also using the other term such *Utu Al-Kitab*, *Utu nashiban minal kitab*, *Al-Yahud*, *Al-Ladzina hadu*, *bani Israil*, *and An-Nashara*. The word of Ahl al-Kitab recurs in many verses of the Qur'an for about thirty one time, *Utu al Kitab* eighteen times, *Utu nasiban minal kitab* three times, *Al-Yahud* eight times, *Al-Ladzina Hadu* teen times, *An-Nashara* 

fourteen times, and *Bani/Banu Isra'il* fourteen times<sup>16</sup>. Let us elaborate on these terms in order to highlight their different connotation.

The various usage of the term of Ahl al-Kitab in different contexts show that certain verses refers to Jews only, refers to Jews and Christian together, or in some verses, to Christians only. Most of critical verses are addressed to the Jews who took a rival or opposing position against the prophet Mohammad, for example, surah *Bayyinah* [98]:1 and 6 which describe the expulsion of Jews from Medina because they associated them selves with unbeliever Meccan against Moslem. Other term used by the Qur'an to designate Jews and Christian are *Al-Yahud*, *Al-Ladzina Hadu*, *Bani Isra'il*, And *Nashara*.

The first impression, when the Qur'an used the term *Al-Yahud* (Jews) it is generally used in verses blaming Jews or stating negative characteristic of the Jews. However, when the Qur'an employs the term *Alladzina Hadu* ("those who adhere to the Jews faith) in it verses, "the reference to Jews is the same but the connotation is different". Here Qur'an seeks to produce a more positive impression on its audience. See for example surah *Al-Maidah* [5]: 82, which indicates the unfriendliness of the Jews to the Moslem or the willingness of Jews and Christian to the Moslem before Moslem follows them; surah *Al-Baqarah* [2]: 120, which described the Jews who will never be pleased with the Moslem unless the Moslem follow their religion; surah *Al-Maidah* [5]: 18, which explain the Jew's claim to be the beloved children of God; and surah *Al-Maidah* [5]: 64, about the Jew's statement that God is tightfisted\_literally, that God's hand is tight

<sup>16</sup> Quraish Shihab. Wawasan Al-Qur'an. Bandung: Mizan: 347-348

and many more. Compare these with verses which use the term *Al-Ladzina Hadu*, surah Al-Baqarah [2]:62\_ "for those who follow the Jewish [scripture]...shall be not fear, nor shall they grieve." Some time contain of this term may condemn, for example to them who changed the meaning of the words or changed and decreased it, see *Al-Nisa* [3]: 46, or that they keep the attention (the news of Moslem) to be expanded the lie, see *Al-Maidah* [5]: 41. 17

The way of the Qur'an present Jewish people in this significant; different style will produce different meanings. When the Qur'an uses the noun "Al-Yahud" it means to condemn; when it applies the verb "Alladzina Hadu", there were two connotations. The first connotation it is giving a positive description: to honor Jewish people, even to give a position with important theological implication as high as believer. <sup>18</sup> The second connotation it was condemn them.

The uses term of *Nashara* same as the using term of *Al-Ladina Hadu*, some time used in the positive connotations and the praised. For example, see Al-Maidah [5]: 82 explain the closer friend to the Moslem among them: and the other time in the condemn connotations, such in the surah *Al-Baqarah* [2]: 120 that talking about their willingness to the Moslem until Moslem wants to follow them. In the other opportunity the term contain natural attitude to them, not belong to condemn nor praised, such in the surah *Al-Hajj* [22]:17 that talking about the just of God decision to them to the other communities, in the day after. Than, we can say that when the Qur'an using the term *Al-Yahud*, it content of the verses is condemn of their bad attitude, and when using the term of *Nashara*, the content of

17 Quraish Shihab. Wawasan Al-Qur'an. Bandung: Mizan: 348

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>. Jarot Wahyudi. Ahl Al-Kitab: Quranic Intvitation to Inter Faith Co-operation. Yogyakarta: Pillar religia, 2006: 23-24

the verses not always belong to the condemn, same as the term of Al-Ladzina Hadu.

May it was the cause why Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 120 said Lan tardha 'ankal-Yahud wa la Nashara hatta tattabi'a millatahum, the using word of lan to the Yahud and la to the Nashara, according to the master of Qur'anic language, such as Az-Zarkasyi in his book Al-Burhan, the Word lan used to deny whatever in the future, and it deny stronger than the deny of word la to deny something, without proclaiming the time of deny. It can be limited in the past, now day, or in the future.

The Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 120, clearly explain person was Yahud (Jews) \_ remember not Al-Ladzina Hadu or Ahl al Kitab\_ they must unwilling to the Moslem until Moslem follow their religion or their tradition. In the meaning agree in their activities and their direction.

The famous Moslem exegetes Ar-Razi give the explanation about the purpose of the verse above that it was explained the characteristic of Jews in their absolutely in holding on their evil and their continuity in their infidelity state, that beside in their infidel state they like their *millat* to be followed. They willingness to the scripture brought by Prophet Mohammad, they hope to get such agreement from the prophet Mohammad for their condition. Than Alloh explain their absolute hostility in the prophet, and also the condition that brought them in the agreement to follow the Islam.

Syaikh Muhammad Thahir bin Asyur in his exegetical explains that the word hatta tattabi'a millatahum is kinayah (not according as the taxes) their

despair (the impossibility) to believe in Islam in that time, because they willingness to the prophet except the prophet wants to follow their religion or their tradition. It means that it was impossible for them to follow the Islamic religion and that was impossible for the prophet to follow their religion. It such as God revelation in Qur'an *Surah Al-A'raf* [7]: 40 and His revelation in Qur'an surah *Al-Kafirun* [109]:2-3.

In his explanation above, syaikh fadhil using the word "in that time" to explain that the decision just for this verse to the certain community of Al-Yahud and Nashara in that time not for all of them, because the fact showing that after the revelation of that verse there were among the Ahl al-Kitab whom follow the Islam. Such the God revelation in Qur'an surah Yasin [36]: 10

The meaning of surah Yasin in the Qur'an was certain unbeliever in the prophet period, not to all unbelievers in generally, because the reality showing that major unbeliever in the prophet period embraced Islam.

The meaning of surah *Al-Baqarah* [2]:120 above should be clarified, because there often miss of understanding about it meaning. And as have been known that Judaism is not religious proselytizing, even they exclusive disposed in the religion and the people reluctant disposed to embraced their religion. In the other side, based on the story, the cause of revelation of surah Al-Baqarah above is related with the removal of the direction of Mecca (*kiblat*), Moslem has to face in the *Ka'bah* when they praying, that responded by non-Moslem by sarcastic, because at that time the Jews Medina and the Christian Najran hope that prophet

has to face the praying to their direction. Those were the opinion of Ibnu Abas such has been explained by As-Sayuthi in his work Asbab Al-Nuzul.

The denied of the Qur'an to the An- Nashara, not as explicit as the denied to the Al-Yahud, it is mean not all of them may have certain attitude as Al-Yahud. It could in this time or in the past but no in the future. Than the usage word la to Nashara not as explicit as the usage the word lan to Yahud. 19

## 2.5. The Characteristic and Attitude of the Ahl Al-Kitab in the Our'an

There were many Our'anic verses of the Ahl Al-Kitab clarified the characteristic and attitude of Ahl al-Kitab toward Moslem and also explain their faith and kind of their sect. To gauge the position of the Ahl al-Kitab in the Our'an, firstly begin by defining of repeated term, Ahl al-Kitab.

This term occurs thirty one times in the Qur'an: twice in surah al Baqarah Ali Imron in surah (2):105,109; twelve time (3):64,65,69,70,71,72,75,98,99,110,113,199; four time in surah An-Nisa' (4):123,153,159,171; six times in surah Al-Maidah (5):16,21,62,68,71,80; once in surah al Ankabut (29):46; surah al Ahzab (33):26, surah al Hadid (57):29, and surah al Hashr (59):2,11, and twice in surah al Bayyinah (98):1,6.20

Surah An-Nisa [4]: 171 and Al-Maidah [5]: 77 showed that they have they were extreme in religion.

There also valued by the Qur'an were devoted the verses of Qur'an and deny the truth of prophecy of Muhammad, see Qur'an surah Al-Imran [3]: 70-71.

<sup>19</sup> Quraish Shihab. Wawasan Al-Qur'an. Bandung: Mizan: 347-351

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Jarot Wahyudi, Ahl al-Kitab (Qur'anic invitation to Inter-Faith Co-operation), Yogyakarta, Nusa Aksara, 2006:19

Our prophet invited by God to extend them, see Qur'an surah Al-Maidah [5]: 59. Even, directly God remembered Moslem not to choose them as the leader or being them as close friend Al-Maidah [5]:51.

In the Qur'an surah Al-Imran [3]: 118 Moslem remembered not to take non Moslem to be such a closed friend to share and saving the secret, by the reason Qur'an surah Al-Imran [3]: 118. For them prophet said toward non-Muslim:

"Do not begin greeting Jews people and nor to Christian people. If you found one of them on the street, you should push them to the edges. (Hr Muslim from Abu Hurairah).

In the book *Dalil Al-Falihin* explained that Moslem scholar have the differences opinion about the law of begin the greeting to unbeliever. Major of them forbid it, but many of them allowed it, such prophet's friend, Ibnu Abbas. Than their greeting should be replay. Moslem scholar agrees with this opinion. It has been mentioned in the Qur'an in surah *Al-Anfal* [8]: 61.

Surah al-Anfal [8]: 61 described negative character of the Ahl al-Kitab. But it should be underline not all of the Ahl al-Kitab in generally has, see Qur'an surah *Al-Maidah* [5]: 59. It supported by these two verses, Al-Baqarah [2]: 109 and surah *Al-Imran* [3]: 69

Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah [2]:15 described Ahl al-Kitab as being without faith. They were dissatisfied when Moslem received special compassion. Many from the Ahl al-Kitab wished that Moslem could return to infidelity after they had come to believe see Qur'an surah al-Baqarah [2]:109.

Our'an surah Al-Imran [3]: 64 tell that Qur'an reminds The Ahl al-Kitab not to deviate from pure monotheism and calls upon them to a "common term". A group hoped even to lead Moslems astray, see Qur'an surah al-Imran [3]:69. In fact, the Ahl al-Kitab well knew the truth but they did not want to acknowledge it such in Qur'an surah al-Imran [3]:70. This why the Qur'an accuses them as covering with falsehood [3]:71. They pretend to believe in order to deceive Moslems; or in other words having believed in the early part of the day, they deny what they believed by the end of the day, see Qur'an surah al-Imran [3]: 72. Historically, these descriptions are addressed to the Jewish people who in the, see Qur'an surah al-Imran [3]:75 are described as those who never keep their promise, although not all of them were alike. Qur'an surah Al-Imran [3]:75 continue to criticize the Ahl al-Kitab for their rejection of the sign of God. Moreover, the Qur'an raised a critical question of why the Ahl al-Kitab hinders Moslems from the path of God while they were witnesses to God's covenant; see Qur'an surah al-Imran [3]:99. Some Ahl al-Kitab are portrayed as pious, believing in God almighty, the last day, practicing their religious teaching consistently, enjoining right, forbidding wrong and performing God's work, see Qur'an surah al-Imran [3] 113-114, and 199. The Qur'an places them in the rank of righteous, such in the Qur'an surah al-Imran [3]: 115

Surah Al-Nisa' [4]: 123 deny the wishful presumption (amaniyyi) of the Ahl al-Kitab having God's reward, for they never accept the book as evidence of prophecy. They ask Moses something greater than that to show god visibly before their eyes, having worshipped the calf, which seemed more real to them, see Qur'an surah al-Nisa' [4]: 153.

After faulting the Jews, the Qur'an turns to criticizing the Christians who go to religious excess. Qur'an surah al-Nisa' [4]:171 remind Christians that Jesus Christ was no more than Apostle of god (Rosullulloh), His word (wa kalimatuh), and His spirit (wa ruhun minhu). Indeed, some the Ahl al-Kitab believes that Jesus was a prophet of God before death, see Qur'an surah al-Nisa' [4]:159. Qur'an Surah al-Maidah [5]:16 state that God has sent the prophet Mohammad to disclose the teaching of the book that the Ahl al-Kitab had concealed. Qur'an surah al-Maidah [5]: 21 respond that God sent Mohammad to explain the shari'ah to the Ahl al-Kitab after the break of succession in order that they may not claim that "there came unto us no bringer of glad tidings and no warmer (from evil).

Qur'an surah *Al-Maidah* [5]: 62 described Ahl al-Kitab as those who disapprove of Moslem since the Moslem believe in God and what was reveled to them. That is why they were accused of being disobedient (*fasiq*). However, the Qur'an surah *Al-Maidah* [5]:68 declare that if Ahl al-Kitab believed and become righteous, they would be forgiven and promised the heavenly reward. This verse should be understood in conjunction with the next verse, see Qur'an surah al-Maidah [5]: 69, which states that if they consistently hold to the Torah and the Gospel and what has been sent to them, they would be granted happiness and

include in the community of the righteous party (ummah muqtasidah). However, most of them followed the path of evil.

The importance of the Torah and the Gospel stand for the Ahl al-Kitab is again, restated by Qur'an surah al-A'raf [7]: 71. Besides, this surah also suggests that Ahl al-Kitab upon what has been revealed to them, the Qur'an. Qur'an surah [5]: 77 still warn the Ahl al-Kitab not to transgress the bounds of their religion. Although the Ahl al-Kitab was reproached, surah Al-Ankabut [29]: 46 suggest Moslems were at peace with every one except those who tried to abuse them. With reference to Jews of Bani Qurayzah, Qur'an surah Al-Ahzab [33]:26 tell of the prophet's struggle with the Ahl al-Kitab. The Jews had associated with believer to fight the Moslems at the battle of Ahzab ("Confederates").

Surah Al-Hadid [59]:29 which follow tell that the Ahl Al-Kitab who do not believe in the prophecy of Muhammad will receive nothing of God's gracious. With reference to the Jews of Bani Nadir, surah Al-Hashr [59]:2 describe the banishment of the Ahl al-Kitab to the Medina. The Munafiqun deceived of the Ahl al-Kitab for offering help if they were exiled from Medina [59]:11. The two final Judgment of the Ahl al-Kitab are explicitly mentioned in the surah Al-Bayyinah [98]: 1 and 2, showing that, while clear evidence came to them, they denied it. Accordingly, they were condemned to hell fire. They did want to accept prophecy of Muhammad, because they were not looking for clear evidence, but to follow their own desire.21

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Jarot Wahyudi. Ahl Al-Kitab: Quranic Intvitation to Inter Faith Co-operation. Yogyakarta: Pillar religia, 2006: 18-22

## 2.6. Why there was Condemn to the Ahl al-Kitab

Most of condemn toward Ahl al-Kitab refers to the Jews people, no to the people of Christian. It caused that at first time, there was the differences attitude both of two groups toward Muslim (see the usage term of *lan* and *la* in the foregoing explanation.

When Christian Roman loosed from Persia the worshiper or fire (614), Muslim feel sad, and Qur'an reveled to solace them by clarify that for about nine years Roman will be wine, and in that time Muslim will be glad, see The Qur'an surah Al-Rum [30]: 1-5

The attitude of Christian authority toward Muslim is enough good. It is looks from the appreciation and protection of the authority of Christian Ethiopia toward Muslim when Muslim moves over there. It was naturally that Qur'an clarified, see Qur'an surah Al-Maidah [5]:82

The main cause of differences attitude is the spitefulness of Jews people cause the presence of Prophet Muhammad which come not from their group, see Qur'an surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 109. The presence of Prophet Muhammad after that impacted the authority of Jews people in the society being narrow and even loosed their politic authority and their economic importance.

In other side, as Qur'anic clarification above, there was a closed part of Christian people toward Muslim, see Qur'an surah Al-Maidah [5]: 82. Most of rabbi successes applied the morality teaching resourced from the teaching of Prophet Isa a.s. While the Rabbi that applied the Zuhud (keep away from the world pleasant and focus in praying), successes giving the example to their milieu.

Those successes it also supported by no politic social authority from their groups in Mecca and Medina. So, there is no invite factor of rubbing or impact among Muslim with them.

It was contras with the presence of people of Jews, even their rabbi known by accepting the bribery, eating excessive interest, and their society were individualistic-materialistic.

From here, we can conclude that the main cause of rubbing is not the teaching of religion, but the personal ambition or group, the importance of economy, politic, however it should be covered that those importance is packed in the name of religion, moreover if religion missed understanding.

The Qur'anic verses that forbid Muslim to take leader whom holding on the Muslim's sake (auliya') from Jews and Christian and the other of them, should be understanding on those context, see Qur'an surah Al-Imran (3): 118

Ibnu Jarir in his exegesis explain that those verses related with the attitude of people Jews of Bani Quraizhah whom deny their appointment with Prophet Muhammad, such have been written by Rasyid Ridha in his exegeses: the forbiddance have just applied when they fight or plan to wicked toward Muslim.

Rasyid Ridha hardly criticizes the Moslems exegetes view such Al-Baidhawi and Az-Zamakhsyari whom making this verses as the forbiddance to be friends with the people of Jews and Christian. In his exegetes, Al-Baidhawi support his view by clarified the hadis

لا تتراءا نا راها

(Muslim and them) can not seeing the fire both of them.

The meaning of those *hadis* is Muslim did not proper to live closed with non-Muslim in the distance where one side set fire, than the other side can see it fire.

Those hadis actually said by Prophet Muhammad not in the common context such the understanding of Al-Baidhawi, but in the context of moving obligation when Prophet needed helped. In the meaning, Prophet Muhammad invites Muslim not to live in the place where there were Musyrik (unbeliever).

In the other part of his exegetes, Rasyid Ridha, relates the meaning of those forbiddance with the same forbiddance in the Qur'an, see Qur'an surah Al-Imran (3): 118. Those verse clarified the characteristic of non-Muslim, that they will never stop bring the danger toward Muslim and their hatred toward Muslim clearly shown by their mouth.

The forbiddance applied to the people whom having those characteristic, either, same religion, nation, and same Muslim descent.

Most of people did not realize those reason and prerequisites, so they argued that that forbiddance absolutely applied to people with having different faith, but it was naturally because when that verse revealed, unbeliever in that time fight Muslim in the early Islamic period, moreover according to it expert that verses reveled related with the people of Jews and Christian with those rules and regulation.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Quraish Shihab. Wawasan Al-Qur'an. Bandung: Mizan: 361-365

### 2.7. Exegetical Analysis of the Ahl al-Kitab Verses in the Qur'an

The foregoing sub chapter has been explained the Qur'anic verses of Ahl al-Kitab, it also explained the different attitude among them, it will be established how does the attitude toward Ahl al-Kitab. In this sub chapter will survey the depiction of Ahl al-Kitab verses by some notable Muslim exegetes. For this purpose, five Muslim exegetes from different backgrounds school of thought either classic or modern provide a range of perspectives on this issue.

The first is Jami' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an of Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Jarir al Tabari, which using Tahlily<sup>23</sup> method combined with bi al-Ma'tsur<sup>24</sup> and bi al-Ra'yi method, second Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-Adzim of Hafizd 'Imadi ad-Din Abi al-Fida' Ismail Ibn Kathir, which using bi-al-Ma'tsur method collaborated with bi al-Ra'yi<sup>25</sup> method. third Tafsir Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an of Sayyid Quthb, which using Tahlily<sup>26</sup> and bi al-Ra'yi<sup>27</sup> method, fourth Tafsir Al-Manar of Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha, which using Ilmi<sup>28</sup> method, and the last Tafsir al-Maraghi of Ahmad Mustafa Al-Maraghi, which using Tahlily method and bi al-Ra'yi method.

The first two exegetes belong to the classical period, while the last three interpreters come from modern period.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Tahlily method is interpreted surah and Qur'anic verses based on the structure of surah and verse as has been written in the *Mushaf*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Bi al-Ma'tsur is interpreting surah and Qur'anic verse based on the narrated either Qur'anic narrated, Hadis, or the opinion of Sahabat and tabi'in, this exegetes belongs to bi al-Ma'tsur <sup>25</sup> Bi al-Ra'yi using ijtihad toward narrated

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Using *Tahlily* method based on the ordering of surah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Using bi al-Ra'yi method based on the resource of exegetical.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ilmi method focused the interpretation in the Ilmiyah discoursing to explain the Qur'anic verses related with the world, or giving justice toward Ilmiyah term in the Qur'anic term.

Classical exegetes do not suggest any development of the concept of Ahl al-Kitab, while the modern exegetes include *all* religious communities in addition Jews, Christian, and Muslims.<sup>29</sup>Their views on Ahl al-Kitab will be analyzed on the basis of their interpretation of certain verses in the Qur'an. These verses and their interpretations are believed to provide a Qur'anic concept of Ahl al-Kitab, which can be developed into a scriptural foundation for inter religious dialogue. Although verses pertaining to the Ahl al-Kitab are numerous, three have been selected for the purposes of this study are:

"O people of the scripture! Come to an agreement between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner on to Him, and that none of us shall take other for lord beside Allah. And if they turn away then say: bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him)". Qur'an surah al-Imran: 64

They are not all alike. Of the people of the scripture there is a staunch community who recite the revelations of Allah in the night season, falling the prostrate (before Him)". Qur'an surah al-Imran: 113

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Jarot Wahyudi. Ahl Al-Kitab: *Qur'anic Invitation to Inter Faith Co-operation*. Yogyakarta: Pillar religia, 2006: iii

# يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْأَخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُسْرعُونَ فِي الْمُنكرِ وَيُسْرعُونَ فِي ٱلْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُوْلَتِهِكَ مِنَ ٱلصَّلِحِينَ اللهَ اللهِ اللهِ اللهِ اللهُ اللهُ

"They believe in Allah and the last day, and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency, and vie one with another in good works. They are of the righteous". Qur'an surah al-Imran: 114

"And whatever good they do, they will not be denied the meet thereof. Allah is Aware of those who ward off (evil)" 30. Qur'an surah al-Imran 115 In interpreting surah Al-Imran: 64, exegetes differ considerably with regard to several issues, not least of which is the identity of the Ahl al-Kitab addressed in the surah. While some understand the term Ahl al-Kitab to mean Jews, others believe that they are the Christian. Similarly, a third group believes that that this term denotes both religious communities, whom the Qur'an invites to embrace pure monotheism.

Al Tabari<sup>31</sup> begins his exegesis of this verse by paraphrasing it, and explaining that Ahl al-Kitab, in the context of this verse, means Ahl al Tawrat (the people of the Torah) and Ahl al Injil (people of the Gospel). According to al-Tabari, this verse does not specify either group as Ahl al-Kitab, but includes booth

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Muhammad Marmaduke pickhtall, *The English translation of the Glorious Qur'an*, Al-Ameen Printers: 67,71

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Abu Ja' far Muhammad Ibnu Jarir al Tabari was born in Amul, tabaristan, in northern Persia in 224/839 and died in Baghdad in 310/923. He devoted his life to scholarly activities, collecting Muslim tradition from the preceding generation. He wrote on diverse subjects including poetry, lexicography, grammar, ethics, mathematic, and medicine, although none of his works on these areas has survived. Al Tabari's fame rest primarily on his works in the field of history and Qur'an, Tarikh ar-Rasul and Maluk (the history of the Prophets and the king) and Jami' al Bayan 'an ta'wil ayh Al-Qu'ran (the comprehensive explanation of the interpretation of the Qur'anic verses).

al-kitabayn. He writes: "neither Ahl al-Tawrat better (awla) than Ahl al-Injil nor the Ahl al-Injil better than Ahl al Tawrat," he argues that both occupies the same position, and can be called to a kalimatun sawa'in, (a just word), meaning the worship of the one Supreme God Without associating Him with other.

Al Tabari cites many hadith in support of his opinion. For example, a hadith reported by Ibn Ishaq stating that: "The prophet called the Jews to just word," and another reported on the authority of al Qasim, declaring that: "News came to us that the prophet called the Jews of Medina to that (just word), but then they were disinclined." So the prophet cited the verse "qul ya ahlal kitabi ta'alaw ila kalimatun sawain baynana wa baynakum". Nevertheless, Al Tabari quotes other hadith in contradiction to these, and observes that this verse must have been revealed when a messenger had arrived from the Christian of Najran. He further reports on the authority of Ibnu Zayd that God had initially commanded the prophet to invite them to an easier task, but they still refused it. Commentating on Al Tabari's interpretation of this verse, Mahmoud Ayoub maintains that when the people of Najran refused the mubahalah, God commanded the prophet to call them to something easier, and invited them in the following terms: "o Ahl al-Kitab come to just word common between us and you. Al Tabari than synthesizes the two sets of Hadith and reaches the conclusion that God uses the term Ah al-Kitab refer to the follower both the Tawrat and the Injil.

In further supporting of his argument, Al Tabari interprets kalimatin sawain to mean "just word." In analyzing this phrase from a grammatical perspective, he points out that Abu al-'Aliyah defines the 'just word' as the

shahadah, or testimony that there is no God but Alloh. As for the phrase "we do not take one another as lord" (wala yattakhida ba'duna ba'dan arbaban), it refers according to him to the obedience that the Ahl al-Kitab accorded their leaders, who led them to commit acts of rebellion against God. In support of this interpretation, Al-Tabari cites surah al-Tawbah (9):31, they took their priests and their anchorites to be their lords in derogation of God, and (they take as their lord) Christ the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but one God..." interestingly, in the last paragraph of his commentary n this verse, Al-Tabari speaks of the religious tolerance that this verse inspire. Indeed, he declares that if the Ahl al-Kitab does not want to answer the prophet's call to the "just word", it is enough for them to acknowledge Muslims as people who have submitted to the will of God (Muslimun). 32

Ibn Kathir<sup>33</sup> the major Qur'anic exegetes after al Tabari interpreted the command commonly include to all of the Ahl al-Kitab and to the people who has same sect with them. The phrase contain of justice word, average, and without any dispute, not associated God with idol, *cross*, *wasan*, tagut, fire, or something else, but worship none But God. It was invitation done by all of messenger such mentioned in surah Al-Anbiya' (21): 25, we not sent any messenger before you,

32

<sup>32</sup> Abi Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Jarir At-Tabari. *Tafsir at-Tabari Musamma jami' al-Bayan fi Ta'wil Al-Qur'an*. Vol III. Beirut Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub Al 'Ilmiyah, 299-302

Imam Al Jalil al-Hafiz 'imad al Din Abul al-Fida Ismai'il bin Amr bin Kathir bin Dlau' bin Kathir bin Zar'ah al-Fiqih al-Syafi'i was born in Mijdal village, Basra in 700 h/1300 M. The predicate al-Bushrawy often mentioned behind his name and also al-dimasyqi. He died in 774 H/1374 M. At seven (other opinion 3) years of his old his father was dies, he start study of theology and continue under advocating of scholar in his period. He takes charge of theology especially hadith, fiqh, history, and Tafsir. His famous works Tarikh al Bidayah wa al Nihyah (historical book, 14 volume), Jami' al Masanid, al Kawakib al-Durary, al'ta'mil (the list of scholar's hadith name in firs century) and in Tafsir was Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Adzim. Those works successes made him known by al-muhadith, al-faqih, and al-muarrikh.

expect revolted to them that "there were none God expect Alloh, therefore you have to worship unto Him, and Qur'an surah An-Nahl (16): 36, explained God actually sent messenger on each of *umat* to invited them to worship non but God and take away from *Tagut*.

lbnu Juraij clarified that, the meaning of Qur'an surah al-Imran (3):64 are not part of us follows the other one in violation of God's law. While according to Ikrimah, the meaning of these verse is part of us grovel the other one. And if they run away they have witness you that you are Muslim who have surrendered (unto Him). Ibn Kathir mentioned the story of Abu Sufyan reported by Az-Zuhri in Sahih Bukhari, when he meets the emperor Heraklius bringing message of prophet Muhammad, one of the contain of those message is surah3:64, the invitation to the Islam and Monotheism, and those verse related with the delegation of Najran.<sup>34</sup>

From the two representative exegetes of the classical period, one can deduce that the Ahl al-Kitab referred to in Qur'an surah al-Imran (3):64 were the Jews and Christian, who shared the same right to be invited to follow the just word. The term Ahl al-Kitab was expressed as a firm concept, with a standard definition and usage.

In the modern period, this concept has undergone major change and developments. The term using in inter religious dialogue. Muhammad Abduh<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Abi al-Fida' isma'il Ibn Kathir. *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al 'Adzim*. Vol I. Riyadh: Dar 'Alim Al Kutub, 1997M/ 1418 BM: 455-456.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Abduh was born some time before 1850 (1849) in the Egyptian coliutryside. In 1862, he studied in Tanta and when in 1865 he become interested in mysticism; his uncle Syaikh Darwish introduced Him to the Shadili orde. In 1866, he continued his studies at Al Azhar University and completed them in 1877.

and Rasyid Ridha<sup>36</sup> interpret this verse comprehensively. However, he is more interested in discussing the concept of monotheism (tawhid) than the term Ahl al-Kitab itself. Hence, he focuses on two kinds of monotheism: wahdaniyat al uluhiyah and wahdaniyat al rububiyah, and states Moses and Jesus, like Muhammad had exhorted people to worship God alone, which according to him, is original message of all prophets. However, this ideal injunction was later misinterpreted by the Jews who preferred their leaders' commands to those of God, and by the Christians who believed that their leaders could forgive their sins. 'Abduh considers both these concept as deviations that need to be corrected; hence the Our'an calls both Jews and Christian to a common word.

With regard to the phrase "fain tawallaw faqulu shhadu bi'anna Muslimun" of "if they turn away from this call, then they should bear witness that we are people who submit ourselves to God," 'Abduh believes that this verse suggests that those who worship God should not accept the opinion of anyone who is not protected from committing evil(ma'sum). Consequently, he maintains that in religious affairs, people should obey the rule of God as brought by the prophet, who is infallible (ma'sum); especially in dealing with what is allowed and allowed (halal and haram) and performance of the 'ibadah. Nevertheless, when dealing with such mundane affairs as the running of the government, the legal system and other worldly problem, people are allowed to obey their leaders.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Ridha was born on 27 Jumada al ula, 1282 A.H. in the village of Qalamun [Lebanon, now] South of Tripoli, Syria. He learned the Qur'an from Muslim Scholars in his village and the attend an Islamic school, al Madrasah al Rushidiyyah, in Tripoli where he studied Arabic, Islamic law, logic, Mathematics, and philosophy from his professor, Hasan al Jisr al Azhari, he founding father of the maderasah.

In addition, he criticizes those Muslim who blindly adopt the opinion of the leaders of the particular school of thought, thus rejecting God's book.

He considers this verse to be foundation of religion since it was used by the prophet in the tile propagation of Islam (da'wah Islamiyah). The prophet had translated this verse in to action when sent several letters to Heracilus, Muqawqis and other invite them to follow Islam. Therefore, by considering the historical background of this verse and content, Abduh called this verse ayat al da'wah (the propagation verse). 37

Sayyid Quthb<sup>38</sup> applies the Ahl al-Kitab to whom having the Holy Scripture, Gospel of Christian and Torah of Jews. He interpreted Qur'an surah al-Imran (3):64 as the invitation of Prophet Muhammad to the Ahl al-Kitab. The invitation did not mean to show the superiority of Prophet Muhammad and Muslims toward Ahl al-Kitab such mentioned in the Qur'an on phrase *Kalimatun sawa* "common word". All of human being was equal, no superiority among them, as not worshiped the other one. The invitation will not rejected expect by stubborn people and like to do damaged, whom did want to coming back to the right path.

It was the invitations to worship to the God only without associating anything else either human or stone with Him, and did not make one another as

<sup>37</sup> Muhammad 'Abduh. Muhammad Rasyid Ridha. *Tafsir Al-Manar*. Vol III. Beirut-Lebanon: Darul Fikri, 324-328.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Sayyid Ibnu Quthb Ibn Ibrahim was born in Moshah village, Asyut, Egypt in 1906 and died in the beginning of *fajar* at gallows in 29 th of august 1966 in Egypt. He was life in the Islamic family. He god the title of al-hafidz when has 10 years of his old. At 13 years old he sent to Halwan edges of Cairo by his parent, and gets the chance to study in Darul Ulum. After completing his study he joins wit "*Ikhwanul Mukminin*" movement" founded by Hasan al Bana, in Jul 1945 he presented as director of *Ikhwanul Mukminin*. His famous works are: *al Taswir al fanny fi al Qur'an*, *Musyahidat al Qiyamah fi alQur'an*, *al Adalah Al Ijtimaiyah* in 1948 and his great work *Tafsir fi Dilal al Qur'an*.

lord expect Alloh, either prophet or messenger, because they were the servant of God. Actually they were chosen to preach God's teaching, not to associate Him in uluhiyyah and rububiyyah.

And if they turn away then say: bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him)". 39

If they did not want to worship none but God and associate Him with something else, that both of it was the symbol to establish the attitude of the servant toward uluhiyyah, than say, bear witness we are Muslim (who have surrendered unto Him).

The antonym between Muslim and whom making human as *Rabb* (lord), explained explicitly who were the really Muslim. Sayyid Quthb clarify that Muslim worshiped to God only, servant only unto him, and did not associating the other with Him. It was special character to different Islam with all religion, and too different the *manhaj* (way) of their life with the manhaj of human life world. If it special character realized in the human life, therefore they called by Muslim.

Islam actually was the absolutely freedom of serving toward fellow servant and just the Islamic arrangement (nizham) that able to guaranty for those freedom. Sayyid Quthb continuing his interpretation by relating his interpretation with the problem of social politic and society, he criticizes the nizham-nizham ardhiyah 'system life of human made in'. A part of him made the other part as lord. It was happened in the democracy system such in dictator system. Actually the firs Rububiyyah right is the right to made human as His servant, making

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Muhammad Marmaduke pickhtall, surah al-Imran in *The English translation of the Glorious Our'an*, Al-Ameen Printers: 67,71

nizham, manhaj, and syariat. In his interpretation Sayyid Quthb of this verse more focused in the essence of Islam and the essence of monotheism.<sup>40</sup>

The last exegetes in this study were Ahmad Mustafa Al Maraghi<sup>41</sup> with his exegetical 'Tafsir Al-Maraghi'. He applies the Ahl Al-Kitab to the Abrahamic religion. Ahl al-Kitab ordered to agree with to justice word, that have been agreed by prophets and the scripture reveled to them, such have bee ordered in the Torah, Gospel and Qur'an.

Al-Maraghi interpreted these surah contain two basic of monotheism, monotheism on the divinity and monotheism written in God's revelation. This object has been agreed by all of religion. Prophet Ibrahim comes with the teaching of monotheism; Prophet Musa teaches monotheism in the Torah, prophet Isa teaches monotheism in the Gospel, and prophet Muhammad in the Qur'an.

Al-Maraghi clarified between Ahl al-Kitab and Muslim have to recognize they have been created by one God, and He also sent the messenger to preaching the God's revelation. Prophet Isa never invite to worship him and his mother, even he worship Alloh. The people of Jews in the past were the Ahl of Tawhid (follower of monotheism), but the mean cause of dissension because they follow their head state and their law. Therefore their law equate with the God's law.

<sup>40</sup> Sayyid Quthb. Tafsir Fi zilalil Qur'an. Vol II. Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2001:78-82.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Muhammad Ibn Musthafa Ibnu Muhammad Ibn Mun'im al Maraghi, he was born in al Maragh city, Egypt in 1298H/1881 M and died in 1371 h/1952 M in Cairo. He studied in Darul Ulum and being staff teacher. He ever be a student of famous scholar, Muhammad Abduh. In 1908-1919 he believed as *Qadhy* in Sudan, in 1928 become rector of 'AlAzhar' University. His famous works are: *Kitab al Hisyah al Islamy, Kitab al Wajiz fi Ushul al Fiqh, Kitab al Ulum al Balaghoh* and the most famous one *Tafsir al Maraghi* 

After word, if they run away after the invitation you have to say that you were Muslim.<sup>42</sup>

Hence, from the exegetical of exegetes above, one may observe that in the modern period, the Qur'anic concept of Ahl al-Kitab is more universal, and extends beyond historical boundaries and literal meanings. Moreover, it bears a contextual and futuristic sense of its ability to meet the challenges of multireligious, pluralistic world.

The Qur'an clearly extols the good among the Ahl al-Kitab in three verses, in Qur'an surah Al-Imran (3): 113, 114, and 115, which exegetes have interpreted in variety of way. Al Tabari for example, treats these verses automatically. First of all, he explains the phrase laysu sawa'an to indicate two groups among Al alkitab, namely the faithful and those who reject faith. He believes that they are not equal but are very different in term of righteousness and corruption, goodness and evil. Moreover, laysu sawa'an refers to the two groups mentioned in Qur'an surah al-Imran (3): 10 ... minhumul mu'minuna wa aktharahumul fasiqun. Al Tabari treatment of this verse is correct because the verse uses parallel concept to talk about the two groups among the Ahl al-Kitab. The first group is the wicked group later discussed in Qur'an surah al-Imran (3):111and 112.

The second group is the good group, described in the Qur'an surah al-Imran (3):113,114, and 115 which explicitly praise those Ahl al-Kitab who defend the right, observe the signs of God all night long, prostrate them selves in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Ahmad Mustafa Al-Maraghi. *Tafsir al-Maraghi*.vol I. Beirut-Libanon: Daru Al-fikri, 178-180.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Jarot Wahyudi. Ahl Al-Kitab: *Quranic Intvitation to Inter Faith Co-operation*. Yogyakarta: Pillar religia, 2006: 54-55

adorations, believe in God ant the last day, enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and hasten in emulation of all God works. Accordingly, the Qur'an places them in the rank of the righteous (ula'ika mina s-solihin), and in the subsequent verse we read: "of the good that they do, nothing will be rejected of them; for God knotweed well those that do right" (wama yaf'alu min khayrin falan yukfaruhu wa llahu 'alimun bil muttaqin). This is to show that the Qur'an respect sincere faith and true uprightness in whatever from they occur.

Al Tabari elaborates that phrase *ummatun qa'imatun* refers to those Jews who have converted to Islam, and whose practice and faith in Islam is upright. This argument is based on tradition reported by Ibnu Abbas explaining the verses meaning in terms of the character of three Jews, 'Abd Allah Ibn Sallam, Thalabah ibn Sa'yah, Asad ibn 'Ubayd, who became Muslims and subsequently believed in, trusted and liked Islam. He also mentioned another tradition declaring the member of *ummah qaimah* to be the follower of Muhammad only. This latter tradition thus suggests that this verse describes the followers of Muhammad as those who stand upright, in contrast to Ahl al-Kitab. Al Tabari, however, prefers the first opinion.

Al Tabari emphasizes that ummah qaimah refers to those people who are consistently trying to remain on the right path (jama'ah thabittah 'ala al haq). He also takes the phrase laysu sawa'an (yet they are not all alike) to be an independent general statement describing the two group within the Ahl al-Kitab, and the rest of the verse as another statement referring to a particular group of people. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that the word *qaimah* meaning *adilah* was

debatable. Whereas some traditional had understood the term *qaimah* as a reference to those who firmly hold to the book of God and follow its contents, others have states that *qaimah* means those who are loyal or obey (*qanitah*, *muthiah*). Responding to this debate, al Tabari insists that the true interpretation of the term qaimah in the context of the verse is: among the Ahl al-Kitab are a group who hold firmly on the God's scripture in steadfast adherence to it, and to firm commitment to its admonitions as well as what the prophet had described (*min Ahl al-Kitab jama'ah mu'tasimah bikitabillah mutamasikkah bihi, thabittah 'ala amal bima fihi wama sanna lahum Rasulullah*).<sup>44</sup>

Ibn Kathir the next exegetes coming after al Tabari, interpreted Ahl al-Kitab not equal with the umat of Muhammad, such ha been narrated by as-Saidi. This opinion supported by tradition reported by Imam Ahmad Ibnu Hanbal in his musnad, telling that prophet Muhammad finishing his Isya' prayer, than he goes out side to the mosque, suddenly he show the peoples waiting him to praying.

Nevertheless the famous opinion of major Tafsir scholar circle is the opinion of Muhammad Ibn Ishaq and the other, narrated by Al-Aufi, from Ibn Abbas. This verse reveled related with rahibs as believer people from the Ahl al-Kitab, such, Abdullah ibn Salam, Asad Ibn Ubaid, and Sa'labah Ibnu Syu'bah. In other word there is no equal between Ahl al-Kitab who condemned with the Ahl al-Kitab who believe in Islam.

Therefore there are two types of Ahl al-Kitab, believer whom doing the God's Command, obey His Syariat, and follow His messenger. They pray in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Abi Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Jarir At-Thabari. *Tafsir at-Tabari Musamma jami' al-Bayan fi ta'wili Al-Quran*. Vol III. Biyrut Libanon: Dar al-Kutub Al 'Ilmiyah, 397-400

night and reading the Holy Scripture, they such has been mentioned in the last of surah Al-Imran (3): 119 and whatever there is no hindrance for the goodness that they have been done. And the second one is unbelievers whom will get the reward of the hell fire in the life of hereafter.<sup>45</sup>

The classical period defined the good people among Ahl al-Kitab as those Jews who had converted to Islam. Nonetheless, modern exegetes continue to debate this issue.

Muhammad Abduh divides Ahl al-Kitab in two categories: those who believer (a very small number) and those who are Fasiq or vicious (the majority of the Ahl al-Kitab). To support his opinion, he cites a traditional on the authority of Qatadah mentioning that not all (Ahl al-Kitab) are lost; indeed, in the eyes of God, there remain some good people among the Ahl al-Kitab. Moreover, when commentating on the phrase ummah qaimah, he quotes al-Razi's opinion that there are two types of Ahl al-Kitab: Abd Allah ibn Sallam and his companions, and all people from other religions that God gave the Book. Thus, based on this opinion, Muslim can be included in the term Ahl al-Kitab.

Consequently, Abduh criticizes the majority of Qur'an exegetes who hesitate to describe Ahl al-Kitab as believers in God and people who do good deeds, even though such as description is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an. Subsequently, Abduh explains that this Qur'anic injunction indicates that God has only a single religion, revealed to all the prophets and that those who accept it with submissiveness, practice it with sincere devotion, command people to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Abi al-Fida' isma'il Ibn Kathir. *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al 'Adzim*. Vol I. Riyadh: Dar 'Alim Al Kutub, 1997M/ 1418 BM: 486-487.

perform good deeds and forbid them from practicing evil are the truly virtuous people.46

Sayyid Quthb support the mentioned opinions above. He also argues that the phrase min Ahl al-Kitab denotes the Ahl al-Kitab mentioned in this verse who are not single group enjoying the same position. Rather, some were good, acted rightly according to the principle of monotheism, while other was not. According to Sayyid Quthb the true meaning of the debate phrase 'ummah qaimah' is to incorporate the whole, which are those consistent in the command of God, those who are just, and who possess the straight path, and he mentions that the book and upright action refers to those who are consistent in faith and loyalty.

The last opinion of these verses comes from al Maraghi; he argues the Qur'an surah al-Imran (3): 113, 114, and 115 were described the characteristic of believer people of Ahl al-Kitab, but majority of them ware unbeliever. The phrase umat in this verse refers to the people of Jews who embrace Islam such Abdullah ibnu Salam, Sa'labah Ibnu Sa'ad, and Usaid Ibnu 'Ubaid.

Ibnu Jarir interpreted the phrase 'ummah gaimah' in his exegetical as ummah who got the guidance and obey God Command. This verse contains the sympathetic attitude toward Ahl al-Kitab, respecting the justice of God. 47

We have learned from these Qur'anic verses and the responses of the Muslim exegetes to Ahl al-Kitab, particularly in their interpretations of Qur'an surah al-Imran (3): 64, 113, 114, and 115. Islamic view toward Ahl al-Kitab actually was very positive and very constructive (but also Kritis). It shows by it

<sup>47</sup> Ahmad Mustafa Al-Maraghi. *Tafsir al-Maraghi*.vol IV. Beirut-Libanon: Daru Al-fikri, 34-37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Jarot Wahyudi, Ahl Al-Kitab: Quranic Intvitation to Inter Faith Co-operation. Yogyakarta: Pillar religia, 2006: 58

teaching, Islam giving the chance to the Muslims doing the social interaction and inter-corporation with the Ahl al-Kitab.

Qur'an also invited to accepted and respected the Ahl al-Kitab in the social interaction, but those attitude should be shown in intellectual debate and theologies, moreover there was doctrine striking differences, Muslim invited to do the discussion and intellectual debate with them as well as possible, such have been mentioned in surah Al-Ankabut (29):46. The significance is to get 'common word' of inter religious to get the peaceful life world in this universe. 48

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Kompas Publisher. Nurcholis Madjid, dkk. Pluralitas Agama: Kerukunan dalam Keragaman. Jakarta: kompas,2001:24-25

#### CHAPTER III

## RELIGIOUS PLURALISM: The Modern Condition of Ahl al-Kitab AND IT SIGNIFICANCE FOR HUMMAN LIFE

Much has been said concerning the phenomenon of pluralism. As new theme and new reality, it poses an interesting challenge to the follower of all religion. The term "pluralism" signifies heterogeneity. It presupposes an environment where world politics, economy, and finance play essential part in determining peoples' regional, national, and international destiny. In practice, a global network has come allows economic to speak of a world society and sociologists of a world civilization. Both suggest a field of interaction in which very every sphere of activity involved, either directly or indirectly. Yet a world civilization can include a multiplicity of cultures and religions.

Lately the discourse of religious pluralism and the problem of it became more and more heated and appear in to surface. The books, mass media, congress, symposium, and the dialog inter-faith had been more often in many level, local, inter-local or, international. This discourse will more and more heated in the next time and will never out of date. Because this topic always actual and interest to every one who loved the peace in the word.

Religious pluralism have challenged the follower of all religion which not very different which the challenges before. Religious pluralism, the intern conflict of inter-religion, was the real phenomenon.

It was very important to give the explanation about the right meaning of religious pluralism. However the terminology of religious pluralism was being popular term and showing a good reception universally, but the definition of it term is still contain the hazy meaning. There was no more, even rare, who tray to definite it term. Firs of this chapter, researcher wants to discuss the definition of religious pluralism.

### 3.1. The Definition of Religious Pluralism

As etymologies, the term of religious pluralism comes from two words, pluralism and religion. In the Arabic language called *al-ta'adudiyah al diniyah*. The term comes from English language, than to definite it terms accurately it should using it own dictionary. Pluralism means "plural" or more than one. In the English dictionary plural has three meaning. First means, concerning of the church: the term given to whom holding on one more the function structure of the concerning of the church. Second, holding on two functions at the same time, either concerning of the church or none concerning of the church.

Second, from philosophy pluralism means the thinking system, an agreement with the one more existence. Third, from socio politics means an agreement system with coexistence of many kind groups, such race, ethic, and party which always carry on the aspect of very characteristic differences among those groups.

Those three meaning could be simplified in one meaning, that the coexistence of many groups or conviction in the same time always carrying with the differences and characteristic each other.<sup>49</sup>

While in the oxford English dictionary mentioned, that pluralism could be understood as (1): a theory that against the authority of monoliths country and support the decentralization and autonomy of organization to represent of individual involvement in the society. It also the conviction, that an authority should be shared among the politic party. (2): The tolerances on the existence of variation of ethnic or cultural groups in the society or country and also the variety of convection or attitude in the body, institutional, and many more.

The first definition contains the meaning of pluralism in the politic. The second one means pluralism in social or primordial.

In the Webster's new word (1988:1040) explained that pluralism means: [1] the quality or condition of being plural or existing in the more than one part of form. [2] The holding by one person or more then one office or church benefice at the same time. [3]: (a) the existence within a nation or society of group distinctive in ethnic origin, cultural pattern, religion, or the like. (b) A policy of favoring the preservation of such a groups within a given nation or society.

Those definitions mean that pluralism not enough just condition or fact of plural. Pluralism is attitudes of recognize, respected, protected, and even develops or enrich the condition of plural. Richard J Mouw and Sander Griffon in their book Pluralism and Horizons (1993:13) argued that pluralism and ism about a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Anis Malik Thoha. Tren Pluralisme Agama: Tinjauan Kritis. Jakarta: Perspektif, 2005: 11-12

plurality there was believed that there was something important in many differences.

In the oxford advanced learners dictionary (2000) also mentioned that pluralism can be understood as the existence of many differences groups in the society, for example the differences races of different political or religious beliefs: cultural or political pluralism. Those definition according to Masykuri Abdillah 2001, contain the meaning of social pluralism or primordial. To release and support that concept it should need tolerance, because the religious harmony will not being created long lasting without the attitude of pluralistic.

The definition of religion in the discourse of west have become the debated and polemic which were never end, in many kind of aspect such philosophy of religious, theology, sociology, anthropology, and also in the comparison of religious (religionswissensehaft) it self. It was difficult and even impossible to get the definition of religion which can be accepted and agreed by all of member.

The term is notoriously indefinable. To define the religion should using three approaches from the "function", "institution", and "substantive" of the social history, be inclined to define the religion as one of histories institution. One point of view of institutionalized that easy to be differenced with the other in the same type. For example, naturally, it was very easy to different between Buddha with Islam, by only seeing both of the historical background, the differences social system, conviction, ritual, and ethics of the teaching of each other.

While in the sociology and anthropology, it is inclined to define religion from the social function of a system of life that bins human in the groups and social communities. This opinion supported by Durkheim, Robert N. Bellah, Thomas Lukman and Diffrond Greetz. While Theologian, phenomenology, and history of religion understanding religion from substantion aspect which very fundamental and sacred. This opinion was believed by Rudolf Otto and Maria Eliade.

Those three approaches completing one another, especially if religious pluralism defines based on the objective reality of field. The scientist later extended of it definition expanded include to all of believed and ideology, either of theistic or non theistic such as John Hick classifications, or the kind of alternative religion that based on the terminology According to Paul Tillich is ideology that resemble religion or ideology substitute religion (quasi religion), or according to term Nihian Smart is a philosophy of life or world views.

From the definition of religion above the most exact is include to all of kind of religion, believed, sect, and some kind of modern ideology such communism, humanism, secularism, nationalism and many more. And when "pluralism" combined with "religion" as the predicate can be underline that religious pluralism is condition of life to gather (coexistence) of inter-religion (in the board meaning) of differences religion in the communities with always defended the specific characteristic of the teaching of it own religion. 50

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Anis Malik Thoha. Tren Pluralisme Agama: Tinjauan Kritis. Jakarta: Perspektif, 2005:12-14

The concept of religious pluralism such explained by Raimondo Panikar, standing between pluralities as were not related with the unity of monolithic. Pluralism does not plurality or reduction of plurality to unity. It is a fact that there is a plurality of religions. It is also a fact that religion has not been reduced to any short of unity. Pluralism means some thing more than sheer acknowledgment of plurality and the mere wish full thinking of unity.

Plurality does not consider unity indispensable ideal, even if all allowance made for variations within that unity. Pluralism accepts the irreconcilable aspect of religions without being blind to the common aspect. Pluralism is not eschatological exception that the end all shell be one.

Pluralism affirms neither that the truth is one nor that is it many. If truth were one, we could not accept the positive tolerance of pluralistic attitude and would have to consider pluralism a connivance with error. If truth were many, we would fall into a plain contradiction. Pluralism does not stand for plurality of truth in this case. Pluralism adopts a non dualistic, atavistic, attitude that defends the pluralism of truth because reality it self is pluralistic. That is, incommensurable with either unity of plurality.<sup>51</sup>

From those long definition of the concept of religious pluralism could be concluding, first: pluralism not just enough pointed to the reality of the existence of plurality, but the active involvement to the reality of it plurality. Religious pluralism and cultures pluralism can be found every where in the certain society, in the office, where we work, in the school, even in the market, place where we

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Syamsul Ma'arif. *The beauty of Islam: Dalam Cinta dan Pendidikan Pluralisme*. Semarang: Need's Press, 2008: 16-17

are shopping. Some one has just called having the active involvement if they could interact positively in the pluralities milieu. In the other word, the meaning of religious pluralism is that each adherent of religion are demanded not only accepting the existence of the other religion, but also involved in the effort of understanding the differences and the similarity to get the harmony in the diversity.

Second: pluralism should different with cosmopolitism. Cosmopolitism pointed to the reality when the diversity of religion, race, nation life together in the same location. For example in New York, New York was cosmopolitism country, there were people of Jews, Christian, Moslem, Hind, and Buddha, even the atheist people as the world society exists in the country but the positive interaction among the society, especially in religion were very minim, even there were not.

Third: the concept of pluralism can not compare with relativism. A relativism people will assumption that everything related with the "truth" and "value" determined by point of view and also the out line of some one or society thinking. For example, the "believed or truth" believed by Euro that Colombus found USA same with the "believed or truth" whom the origin society of thus continent clarify that "Colombus snatch USA".

As the consecution from the understanding of religious relativism, the doctrine of religion whatever must be clarified as true. In the other word "all of religion are same", because the diversity, however different and ambivalence one

another should be accepted. For that relativist people will never know, even accept the universal truth that effectives everlasting.

It can not be deny in the understanding of pluralism there is the aspect of relativism, substance not to fall a claim of ownership singular (monopoly) of the truth, even less force those truth to the other party. A pluralist people will avoid the absolutism that stuck his superiority to the other party. Therefore, there were so many people did not want to use the term of religious pluralism scaring will trapped in the circle of religious relativism concept. This concept explained that what believed as good as bad, right or wrong is relative, deepen to the opinion each individual, situation, or social institution, and religion.

Forth: religious pluralism is different with syncretism, creating a new religion by combine the certain substance or part of component of the teaching of some religion to make a part of new religion.<sup>52</sup>

Commentating on the phenomenon of religious pluralism, Wilferd C. Smith states that "future historians will look back upon the twentieth century not primarily for it scientific achievement but as the century of coming-together of peoples, when all mankind for the first time become one community, and united in one world history. A religiously pluralistic world is also one where faith is more personal. Therefore, the acknowledgement of God has become a personal prerogative. No longer is it self-evident for Islam, no less that for other religious, that people will automatically follow their parents' beliefs. However, no one can justifiably claim to believe what he believes without reason, any more than one

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Alwi Sihab. *Islam Inklusif: Menuju Sikap Terbuka Dalam Agama*. Bandung: Mizan, 1979: 41-42

can love one's spouse without knowing why. Every civilization needs some degree of unity and consensus on norms and value.

Philosophy and religion transmit the norms and ideals which the members of any society need to understand one another. And the mutual understanding of different religious communities is of critical importance to a pluralistic society. Social harmony can be achieved though multidialogue.

### 3.2. Pluralism And Religious Tolerances Vision

One of prerequisites for making democratic modern society is by realizing society whom respecting the pluralistic of society and nation. The pluralistic society must be has the diversity of civilization and aspiration with having same position, without superiority among tribes, ethnic, or social groups and the other. They also have the same right to participating in the social politic. But some time the differences starting conflict among them, than as the way to solve the problem should apply the understanding of pluralism.

The pluralist vision found in each religion, though given less emphasis that self-understanding needs to be reactivated now more than ever. It is perhaps more clearly evident in Islam, with the designation of Jews and Christian as fellow Ahl al-Kitab.

Harold Coward suggests that level of "religious literacy" is essential to living together in pluralistic world. It furnishes the foundation on which people of faiths can approach each other with sincere tolerance.

The meaning of tolerance itself is the capacity or practice of allowing or accepting the nature, behavior, or other (the heritage illustrated dictionary of the English language 1977: 1351). In the Arabic literature tolerance called *tasamuh*, it is means character or attitude of respecting and allowing the other various. If this meaning implemented in the religious life, it should mean decelerated, respected, and allowing the other religion and believed of the other. <sup>53</sup>

however most of civilized society has agree with the social plurality, but in the reality, the problem of tolerance still often appears in the society, include to Euro west and USA. The major problems are related with race and religion, both of it sometime united as the case Israel-Palestine, Serbia-Bosnia, and many more. Before that, in Euro at 16 century were known by wars of religion between Christian, Jews, and Catholic. To lose the problem and intolerance in the long run, invited in France *The Edict of Nantes* at 1598, while in England invited *Toleration Act* at 1968.

There were two interpretations of tolerance concept, the negative interpretation of tolerance and the positive interpretation of tolerance. First clarify that tolerance is society just require let and do not pain one or other group. Second clarify that tolerance need more than it, it needed the helped and support toward the one's existence or other group. Positive interpretation just allowed in the situation where the object of tolerance not disgraceful morality and belongs to unrecoverable, as in the case of racial tolerance. <sup>54</sup>

Howard Coward introduces three basic aspects to respecting religious belief in a way that promotes such tolerance. First, is the necessary of a deep

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Syamsul Ma'arif. *The beauty of Islam: Dalam Cinta dan Pendidikan Pluralisme*. Semarang: Need's Press, 2008: 12-13

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Kompas Publisher, Nurcholis Madjid, dkk. Pluralitas Aggama: Agama Dalam Kerukunan. Edited by Nur Ahmad. Jakarta: Kompas, 2001: 12-13

personal commitment to a particular religion. This point emphasizes the "bottom line" of one's religion experience which covers full commitment. Therefore, being a Muslim for instance, one should be fully-commitment to the Islamic shari'ah and should know the universal message of this scripture. Consequently, there is no "half" or "may be" Muslim. By commentating oneself to a certain religion, one can find that one's religious teaching does recognize the existence the others. From personal commitment, then, one can expect increased tolerance.

The latter is critical to acceptance and moral compassion. Religious tolerance does not suggest that committed-believer should give up critical awareness; on the contrary, it should stimulate them to constructive critique or other in good manner. This is why people are warned to realize that modern pluralism is not something to fear but an opportunity to creative growth.

A careful study of each religion shows that the most creative periods were those marked by the challenge of pluralism. The creative tension generated by experience of true difference has often been the catalyst for new insight and religious development. It was in the midst of the Meccan admixture of Jews, Christian, Zoroastrian, Manicheans, and others that Islam trough its prophet Muhammad emerged.

In pluralist world, one inevitably has to encounter the beliefs of other. The wish for a single world religion is fanciful and the fear of the contrary unrealistic. The main reason why religious pluralism might be a challenge to the adherents of religion is the fear that this will endanger one's claim to finality and absoluteness. Many people are fears that affirmation of religious pluralism will lead to a vicious

relativism and, finally, to a self-defeating skepticism. They see it as a viewpoint that will undermine their religious commitment.

The reaction to religious pluralism may be classified into three major attitudes: first, there is the view that the members of the other religions are rivals to be rejected and converted; second, that other religions are parallel and that, therefore, one should honor them; and third, that one ought to recognize others with greater openness.<sup>55</sup>

The diverse attitudes toward other religions should be tolerance and should be seen as positively capable of producing the self-consciousness to understand and to learn from each other, in essence understanding other beliefs the way their adherents understand them.

#### 3.3. The Islamic View of Religious Pluralism

Before going to discuss the Islamic view of religious pluralism, we should remember the history of Islam in the early Islamic period. It is starting in the migration (hijrah) of prophet's community to Abyssinia provides us with vital evidence of practical nature of classical relation. It is to Abyssinia that the Muslim Community fled when faced with Quraysh's persecution. Ibnu Hisyam reports that the prophet and his early followers believed that Muslim would be safe, both from persecution and from the danger of apostasy, in country ruled by Christian.

According to Ibn Sa'd whose report on the *hijra* to Abyssinia is much shorter, the *muhajirun* affirmed that in the Christian country they were allowed to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Jarot Wahyudi. Ahl Al-Kitab: *Quranic Intvitation to Inter Faith Co-operation*. Yogyakarta: Pillar religia, 2006: 73-76

practice their faith and live free of harassment. Ibnu sa'd claims that upon the second wave of migration to Abyssinia, Quraysh sent the Negus a message requesting the return of the refugees to the Hijaz. In a moving speech, the leader of the *muhajirun* Ja'far b. Abi Talib pleaded his community's case by expounding on the prophet's religion before assembly of Abyssinian.

Another early Muslim-Christian relation might be illustrated by the incident of the Christian delegation from Najran having gone to the prophet's mosque for their prayers by the prophet.

Although later in life Muhammad debated with a Christian delegation from Najran about the doctrine of incarnation, this delegation was invited to pray in the prophet's mosque. It is remains one of Muhammad' God gracious, but enigmatic gestures. The event remains, nonetheless, an illustration example of early Muslim-Christian rapport. The Qur'an itself credits Christian with a solid theological foundation, particularly, where it addressed the place of Christianity among other monotheistic faith.

Muhammad understood that his prophetic mission was the continuation and fulfillment of Jews and Christian biblical tradition the form of tawhid. Therefore Muhammad had a great respect for those traditions, illustrated by the fact that Muslims prayed in the direction of Jerusalem when he was in Mecca. <sup>56</sup> The other event in the early Islamic period was Medina Charter (paigam Maidah), it is showing the Islamic tolerance to the other religion.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup>Jarot Wahyudi. Ahl Al-Kitab: Quranic Intvitation to Inter Faith Co-operation. Yogyakarta: Pillar religia, 2006: 82-85

After flashed back the early Islamic history, we start to discus the Islamic view of religious pluralism. The term of religious pluralism did not being popular term in the Muslims circles yet, expect for about two last years of twenty years ago. Exactly when there was the important development in the west international policy, where have just belonged to the phase called by "Muhammad Imarah" as "Marhalat al-Ijtiyah" (total destruction phase). It was description of west effort principle to stuff their modern ideology which believed universal such democracy, pluralism, human right, free market and export them to be outside consumptions for the shake on many kind of importance. Policy which packed under basic of "superiority" of race and western to disparaging or insulting toward all of thing non-west, especially Islam. Many kind of hurt charge such intolerant, antidemocracy, fundamentalist, sectarianism, and extra. Therefore, as the respond toward new polities development, the problem of "pluralism" begin pushing away and being concern in the in the intelligent Muslim and an intellectual Muslim circles, where in their turn, the Islamic contemporary thinking will very much demand with this term. The real proof of this phenomenon is so many discoursing about it, such in the works, literatures, magazine, seminar, special conference, and chapter's book and many more.

When we opened the classical Muslim scholar works from many sector even in the dogmatic (*ilmu kalam*), we will never find the term of pluralism "ta'adudiyah". We just find the term might in fiqih in the topic of polygamy "ta'addu al-zawaji". Verbally, there is not Qur'anic terminology in the Qur'an nor in the Sunnah and also in the classical works, the theory did not analyze in the

independent work, but it does not meaning that Islam or Muslim scholar did not interest to discourse the problem.

The concept of pluralism usually applied in the chapter or sub topic of fiqhiyah not in the Islamic theology. Because the issue of pluralism according to Muslim scholar's view more analyze the coexistence and social interaction among human being, the problem more applicative practice, ministrant, and historicity than the problem of theology.

From approach of methodology, there were basic differences between Islam and theory of religious pluralism. Islam looks that phenomenon as the essence of genuine ontology, while the theory of religious pluralism looks it term as the variation in level manifestation or external manifestation superficial not the essence or genuine.

In the turn, these differences established it solution. Islam offering the sociologies practice solution, more fiqhiyah in nature, while pluralism theories giving epistemologies theories solution.

The Islamic perspective on the phenomenon of religious pluralism has the basic theoretic in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The characteristic of Islamic perspective is "realistic" in nature (waqi'iyah), based on the reality, therefore the existence of the "other" was social in nature where not being problem in the Islam. The following discussion will mention monotheism as the basic theoretic of Islamic perspective on the phenomenon of religious pluralism.

#### Monotheism

The Islamic view to the other religion actually came from pure monotheism (tawhid) which applied in the word "la Illaha illalloh", as the basic essence of Islam and fundamental reality in the Islamic belief.

Monotheism was very simple and contain of all Islamic foundation, Islamic orientation, and ethics of Islamic attitude. In the Islamic discoursing, centralization of monotheism applied in four essence, they are: the essence of God, the essence of revelation, the essence of human, and the essence of society. Those four essences was related as ontology with the essence of other religion, therefore to established the position of religious pluralism in the Islamic world,

Monotheism and the essence of God: monotheism was applied in the word "la Illaha illalloh", it implicated two different essences, the essences of "divinity" (uluhiyah) and the essence of "servitude" (ubudiyah). The essence of divinity just belongs to God; while the essence of servitude belongs to all of expect God. Monotheism actually was the basic for all religion thought by all messenger, on the Islam.

Qur'an clarified this essence clearly, and accurse it with story of each messenger. God said in the Qur'an surah al-Anbiya': 25

The other surah which clarified this essence, see Qur'an surah al-A'raf: 59, 65, 75, 85; Taha: 13-14; al-Maidah: 72; and al-Nisa': 1.

Therefore, from that view, all of human being is same in front of God, and actually human have been created just to implement of God willing and obeying His law by being God's vicegerence (Khalifah) in this universe and absolutely create the servitude and adoration to the God. Following the Qur'anic logic and the view of monotheism on the essence of God could clarified that God blessing and God Judgment to all of human were same and that the only obey (taqwa) and good works (amal saleh) was being the only comparative superiority among human being, not value of native such, linage, wealth, position, race, tribe, ethnic, and many more.

Islam did not recognize the chosen people even to the Muslim it self, such the teaching of Judaism to the Jews, however they destroyed the world and however they destroyed the world and even they deny their appointment with God. In the Islam, all of human Muslim or non-Muslim have the similarity in the doing their duty to servitude God.

Monotheism and the essence of revelation: God revelation was blessing for all of human being, God revelation did not monopoly group or certain religion. In the other word, the phenomenon of revelation and prophecy are universal and prevail to all of human society. God sent His messenger to save human from the digression and guide human to his blessing and salvation, see Qur'an surah fatir:24, al-Nahl: 36, and al-Imran: 44.

God never mention the number of his prophet nor messenger, it means that the Islamic perspective of monotheism was open the chance of plurality and diversity as widen as possible, to accommodate all "risalah samawi" either

described in the Qur'an or not. Therefore all of human being, Muslim or non-Muslim have the same right of God revelation. Ibnu Taymiyah in his book Al Jawab Al-Shakhih li-Man Baddala Din al-Masih explains that the united of revelation included in the unity of substation and united of revolted religion, than "Al-Islam" al-'Am" (Islam is universal). See Qur'an surah al-Imran: 19

Therefore, Islam was the religion of all prophet and messenger. In the Qur'an mentioned that Islam was religion of prophet Nuh As, see Qur'an surah Yunus: 71-72. Islam is religion of Prophet Abraham and his generation (Ismail, Ya'qub, and Ishaq); see Qur'an surah al-Baqarah: 120. Islam was religion of prophet Yusuf, see Qur'an surah Yusuf: 101. Islam is religion of Prophet Musa and his society, see Qur'an surah Yunus: 84. Islam is religion of Prophet Sulaiman and his society, explained in the history of Bilqis, queen of Saba', see Qur'an surah al-Naml. Islam is also religion of prophet of Bani Israel, see Qur'an surah Al-Maidah: 44, 111, al-Imran: 52, al-Shuhara': 105,123, 141, 160, 176.

From the Qur'anic verses above, Qur'an attitudes not differenced between prophets and messenger one another. As one of guidance and pillar of monotheism, see Qur'an surah al-Baqarah: 105, 123, 141, 160, and 176. It was related with the verbal revelation of knowing God and His willing in the cosmos. While in the non-verbal revelation operated by power of instinct and natural observation. God create potential such intellectual curiosity, power to analyze, exploration, the ability to create science, and extra.

From those clarification was clearly that Muslim and non-Muslim have same position. The differences that differenced between Muslim and non-Muslim or among individual Muslim might be the nature of personal talent. But from the basic potency all of human were same. In the other word the differences here did not related with embrace Islam or not.

The universal similarity in the ability and human natural potency of knowing and expressing God willing, actually was God's creatures, because God willing beyond perception.

From discourse above can conclude that the Islamic perspective of monotheism widen the concept of God revelation being universal and comprehensive included to all of human being especially in the certain groups. Therefore the universality of God revelation has taken the important place to establish the Islamic attitude to the other religion. And actually, all of human being from the "primordial faith" (fitrah) and behavior match in the same religion of "primordial religion" or "Islam Universal"

Monotheism and the essence of human being: above has been explained that in the perspective of monotheism all of human being is same in front of God. Human created to be vicegerence (Khalifah) in this world and servitudes their selves to the God. God cerate human as well as to be (fi ahsan attaqwiim), and supplied them with all potency that might them do their duty as well as possible and also inserted to their selves what called by "Sense of Numinin" (sense of diversity).

From this perspective, Islam looks non-Muslim as perfect human whom having potency to get real level of humanity, knowing God and understanding his willing. By virtue of being human, actually there was "sense of numinis" in the human self to get the right religiosities which have been implanted by God in human self, since they have been borne or called by "religious primordial faith" (agama fitrah).

By concept of religious primordial faith, Islam placed the stronger universal basic of humanism. Therefore, it was clearly that the differences of human diversity can not dependence to the human nature or to the God, in the other word all of mechanism created by God that might all have human to survive or came back to their nature or even leaving it with always outside range of monotheism.

Therefore, Islam named "religious primordial faith" with the Islam it self, as have been mentioned in the Qur'an surah al-Rum: 30

It also called by "hanifism" (al-hanafiyah), as Prophet Muhammad said "the most loved religion of God is "hanafiya" (the right religion) and called the follower of hanafiya as "hunafa"-the plural word of hanif- (one who denies the infidelity). They ever accepted God revelation and strengthened their "natural tendency" based on their "pure religion".

It was clarified that the revolted religion of God by his prophet and messenger is "one", Islam. As have been mentioned in the Qur'an, see surah al-Imran: 19, 85.

From this reasoning, this religion called by "kalimatun sawa" (same word) among all of human, because they all at one upon of the day ever being member of religious community of prophet or messenger revolted by one God, than Muslim ordering them to the "same word" (kalimat sawa) any time they out or deviated from it religion, see Qur'an surah al-Imran: 64

قُلْ يَتَأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَنبِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةِ سَوَآءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ مَ شَيْءًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِن دُونِ ٱللهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا أَشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾ أَشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾

Monotheism and the essence of society: in the perspective of monotheism, society was the real sociology in theory, believed, or school of thought. It has been clarified by the historical discourse, sociology, anthropology, and modern polities toward religion. Moslem as component of individual society has to take part of society and has to interactive with the social reality to do their duty as the vicegerence (Khalifah).

Actually Islam hopes the Islamic society clear away to all of profitable strength of social; village, city, and country. It also clarified that the influence of differences religion toward right and obligation of non-Muslim does not very significance, just by paying tax. The member of religious communities or Islamic

society has widened it embracing to accommodate all of human. The differences of religion did not kept non-Muslim to join them in the "umat" as did not kept as not to liberated them from the duty to realize God willing to be done.

Because the differences of religion was personal choice taken by personal believed, did not permitted to anyone force other leaving his religion to embrace Islam. But liberated to believe their religion and their religious law as long as not disturb the public stabilities, such have been guaranteed in the Medina charter.

It showing that non-Muslim have had chance to benefit from Islamic autonomic society, and that Islam has placed the basic principle of tolerance and religious freedom. The concept of monotheism founded under opened society where it membership included to all of social component, full of tolerance and respecting another. It was clearly that monotheism was the main basic of Islamic discoursing on the phenomenon of religious diversity. <sup>57</sup>

## 3.4. Pluralism is Sunnatullah

Monotheism thought through prophet and messenger was a pure monotheism neither such Trinitarian monotheism of Christian nor monistic monotheism of Hind. The real and pure unity just belong to God, while the other existence from the smallest to the biggest creature, such compact, liquid, gas, human animal, vegetation, and extra exist in the principle of diversity, coupled, composite, and calculated. Islamic perspective limited the unity just in the substantial of God, while plurality and diversity as *sunnatullah*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Anis Malik Thoha. Tren Pluralisme Agama: Tinjauan Kritis. Jakarta: Perspektif, 2005:180-206

Pluralism was reality exist and can not be deny. It was the essence of differences and the diversity that came from specific characteristic created by God to his creature. And pluralistic which related with religion such this discussion recognized of the existence of different religion with all of specific characteristic.

This concept and understanding of pluralism was supported by "naql" (revelation text), mind and reality. First: surah Hud: 118-119 and al-Maidah: 48 clarified that differences and diversity of nations, law, and life philosophy have been required by God, even some Muslim exegetes said that the "differences" and "diversity" were the reason of creating".

Second: Qur'an reported that God sent messenger and prophet to human in all of the time, the differences and diversity of religion were main cause of it revelations.

Third: Qur'anic verses which ordered Prophet Muhammad to invite the Ahl al-Kitab (people of the book), Jews and Christian, the follower of paganism to following Islam, see Qur'an surah al-Imran (3): 64. It also mentioned in the sunnah, that prophet Muhammad sent some messenger brings his message to king and leader around Arabic Jazirah, where the contain of invitation is invite to belief in Islam. Those showing that there was substantial differences among religions.

Fourth: the Qur'anic verses in surah al-Kafirun, God ordered his prophet to washed hand (bara'ah) from the religion of unbeliever and Musyrik Quraish. The ordered was impossible if there were not differences between Islam and religion of unbeliever or kafir Quraish.

Fifth: Qur'anic verses which telling there was truth claims between Jews and Christian, that claim was nonsense, because the truth (haq) is only Islam. It is showing that there were essence and basic differences among three religions.

While in logic, it hard to described that plurality or diversity between two matter, expect each of both the matter has special characteristic differenced him self with the other. But we have to underline recognizing of the other religions that uniformity and apposite, in the Islamic view, not automatically recognize the legality and the truth such thought by pluralist communities, but exactly, accepting the ontology required of God in his different and diversities creating.

If we could placed the problem of religious pluralism in the context of god creating and god requiring, we must be could solve this problem with the right understanding and of course giving it solution.

We can conclude that the Islamic view of religious pluralism was very unique and characteristic, with the ability of inspiriting the basic and important differences among religions with each own characteristic, and also identifying some factor which bring human to his perfectionism of humanity and the last growing of everything with his name without reduction or simplification with new definitions.

Islam looks the diversity as personal choice and believed, where can not be forced, whatever, as has been clarified in the surah al-Baqarah: 256

Islam liberated human to embrace their personal believed and their religion.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Anis Malik Thoha. Tren Pluralisme Agama: Tinjauan Kritis. Jakarta: Perspektif,206-210

## **CHAPTER IV**

## CONCLUSION

The Ahl al-Kitab in the Qur'an has been discusses deeply and carefully in this study. The significance of the Qur'an it self is the guidance for human life to the right path. Qur'an identifies three categories of people, Muslim, Ahl al-Kitab, and unbeliever. In chapter two discussed the Ahl al-Kitab and different opinion about who is the Ahl al-Kitab belongs to. Jews and Christian are explicitly designated as the Ahl al-Kitab, while the later extended also places Sabeans, Magians, and the follower of other world religion.

The usage term of Ahl al-Kitab and it differences characteristic and attitude between Jews and Christian it also explained here. The first impression, when the Qur'an used the term Al- Yahud (Jews) it is generally used in verses blaming Jews or stating negative characteristic of the Jews. While when Qur'an uses term Al-Ladzina Hadu some time may condemn. When the Qur'an uses the noun "Al-Yahud" it means to condemn; when it applies the verb "Alladzina Hadu", there were two connotations. The first connotation it is giving a positive description: to honor Jewish people, second connotation it was condemn them. The usage term of Nashara same as the usage term of Al-Ladina Hadu, some time in the positive connotations and the praised.

The exegetes scholar when they found the term of Ahl al-Kitab in a verses, is always explain whom does the term refers to. It was natural because the Qur'an explicitly explains that the characteristic and attitude of the Ahl al-Kitab to the Islam and Moslem were not same; see Qur'an surah Al-Imran [3]: 113. Most of

condemn toward Ahl al-Kitab refers to the Jews people, no to the people of Christian, the attitude of Christian authority toward Muslim is enough good. The main cause of differences attitude is the spitefulness of Jews people cause the presence of Prophet Muhammad which come not from their group.

The Qur'an presents the Ahl al-Kitab in two ways: (a) confrontational or critical references and (b) irenic or complimentary ones. Four of irenic verses: surah Al-Imran (3): 64, 113, 114, and 115 are chosen as the irenic verses, with references to both classical and modern Muslim exegetes from different school of thoughts. Classical exegetes do not suggest any development of the Qur'anic concept of Ahl al-Kitab referred to in surah 3:64 whereas the modern commentators do. However, both classical and modern exegetes agree that the Ahl al-Kitab are invited to three basic of monotheistic principles that are supposed to be common to all: worshiping none but God, ascribing divinity to none besides Him, and taking no human being as lord besides Him.

According to Qur'an exegetes, surah 3:13 suggest positive recognition that "good people" exits among the Ahl al-Kitab. However, Muslim exegetes debate the phrase "min ahli-l kitabi" and "ummah qaimah" mentioned in surah 3:113. To some scholar, these verses refer to Jews converted to Islam. Other scholars believe that the phrase does not refer to converted Jews at all but to a small group of the Ahl al-Kitab who are consistent in their religious practice. They are described as those who believe in God and in the last day, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, compete in goodness and attain the high station of the righteous ('ula'ika mina s-solihin)\_ God will accept the good that they do.

Based on the Muslim exegetes' analysis of the verses above, my own opinion, the Qur'an has established the theological foundation of respecting the Ahl al-Kitab as other religion, since Muslims live side by side with the people of other faith.

The term of religious pluralism did not being popular in the Muslims circles yet, expect for about two last years of twenty years ago. Exactly when there was the important development in the west international policy, where have just belonged to the phase called by "Muhammad Imarah" as "Marhalat allitiyah" (total destruction phase).

When we opened the classical Muslim scholar works from many sector even in the dogmatic (ilmu kalam), we will never find the term of pluralism "ta'adudiyah". We just find the term might in fiqih in the topic of polygamy "ta'addu al-zawaji". Moreover there is not Qur'anic terminology in the Qur'an nor in the Sunnah and also in the classical works. But it did mean Muslim or non-Muslim scholar did not keep their attention to discoursing this phenomenon.

Islam takes monotheism as the basic theory of religious pluralism, and also placed it as Sunnatullah, pluralism can not be denied. It was the essence of differences and the diversity that came from specific characteristic created by God to his creature to recognize the existence of different religion with all of specific characteristic. But it should be underline recognizing of the other religions that uniformity and apposite, in the Islamic view, not automatically recognize the legality and the truth such thought by pluralist communities, but exactly, accepting the ontology required of God in his different and diversities creating.

If we could placed the problem of religious pluralism in the context of god creating and God requiring, we will be able to solve this problem with the right understanding and of course giving it solution. In the contemporary word, this concept was the challenges for religious world, religious pluralism as the modern condition of Ah al-Kitab should be seen as an attempt to contextualize the Qur'anic concept in modern life.

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