

THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN AL-QUR'AN

(Comparative Study of Fazlur Rahman and Toshihiko Izutsu)



FINAL PROJECT

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Fulfillment of the requirement of Undergraduate (S-1) Degree of
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SEMARANG

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Declaration

I declare that this final project is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for all content in this work. Other writer's opinions, works, or findings, which included in this final project are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Semarang, 25 May 2020

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Dear Sir,
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Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.

After correcting it to whatever extent necessary, we state that this final project belongs to a student as below:

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Acknowledgment

Praise to Allah SWT, the essence of the most entitled to receive all the praise. The God who has created the entire universe and its contents with all of His mercy. So as a weak creature who has completed this research is just a process of learning to become a better human being that is useful to others.

Salawat and salaam are always prayed to the chosen Prophet, Muhammad PBUH. The savior, that is all of the humans crave their intercession on the day of the end. The bearer of God's teachings, lead us from the darkness to the lightness.

The problem of divinity is the most basic thing that must be understood by all humans. As the creature of God, the human need to try to know more about the Creator for the perfection of the quality of worship and the scientific treasures of mankind. There is a command to purify our faith on God by reciting *lā ilāha illa Allah*. But for a Muslim who carried out the commandment to keep learning, then this sentence not only needs to say but also to understand and as well as studying the sentence itself, in this case is to study the concept of to God 's.

On the other hand, the researcher fully aware that this research is impossible to be completed without the cooperation, supports, helps, and prayers from various parties. For that infinity, thanks are given to:

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Motto

جَدِّدُوا إِيمَانَكُمْ أَكْثَرُوا مِنْ قَوْلِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

*“Renew your faith and multiply with the words *lā ilāha illa Allah.*”*

Transliteration¹

ا	Consonantal sound	a
ء	Consonantal sound	a
آ	Long vowel *	ā
ب	.....	b
ت	.....	t
ث	.....	<u>th</u>
ج	.....	j
ح	.....	h
خ	.....	<u>kh</u>
د	.....	d
ذ	.....	z
ر	.....	r
ز	.....	z
س	.....	s
ش	.....	sh
ص	.....	s
ض	.....	<u>dh</u>

ط	.....	t
ظ	.....	<u>z</u>
ع	.....	‘
غ	.....	g
ف	.....	f
ق	.....	q
ك	.....	k
ل	.....	l
م	.....	m
ن	.....	n
هـ	.....	h
و	consonant	w
و	long vowel*	ū
و	diphthong	au
ي	consonant	y
ي	long vowel*	ī
ي	diphthong	ai

¹ <https://quranyusufali.com/transliteration-of-arabic-words-and-names/> accessed on 27 May 2020.

Short vowels:

◌َ (fatha) a	◌ِ (kasra) i	◌ُ (dhamma) u
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1. For the *hamzā* (ء) it has used with no distinctive sign. An apostrophe for it and an inverted apostrophe for the 'ain (ع), or *vice versa*, is confusing to English readers. As a moved consonant, it is sufficiently shown in English by the long or short vowel which moves it, e.g., *ab*, *Raūf*. Where it is a hiatus preceded by a *fatha*, I have shown it by a second *a*: thus, *Iqraa*, the cave of *Hiraa*. In other cases it has not been possible to show it without using a distinctive sign. The name of the Holy Book is usually written *Qurān* ; but I prefer to write *Qur-ān*.
2. The final *h* preceded by the short *a* is scarcely pronounced, and I have left it out. Hence *Sūra*, *Fātiha*, *Hijra*, etc., where the Arabic spelling would require *Sūrah*, *Fātihah*, *Hijrah*, etc.
3. In internationalized words and names I have used the spelling ordinarily current in English; e.g., *Mecca*, *Medina*, *Maulvi*, *Urdu*, *Islam*, *Israel*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*. Here the boundary is thin and rather ill-defined, and possibly my practice and that of my proof-readers have not been absolutely uniform.

4. Some names, e.g., Ishmael, Hagar, etc., have acquired a contemptuous association in their European forms, while the persons they represent are sacred personages held in great honor in Islam. I have, therefore, avoided the European forms and used the Arabic forms, Ismā'īl, Hājar, etc.

*Where it is really *pronounced* long. Hence *khalaqnā-kum* but *khalaqnal-insān* ; *Abū Sufyān* but *Abul-Qāsim* ; *fin-nār* but *fī-hi*.

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Abstract

The problem of God is a matter that has often been discussed until now. Especially for a Muslim, faith in God is something that needs to be upgraded time by time, as a manifestation of a hadith of the prophet "*Renew your faith and multiply it with the words lā ilāha illa Allah.*" Renewing faith in God requires a representative understanding in answering this issue. The concept of God in the Qur'an offers two interesting and completely different perspectives, namely from Fazlur Rahman, a Muslim hermeneutic figure from Pakistan who was rejected in his own country, and Toshihiko Izutsu, a Japanese citizen who has a high level of linguistic discipline. With different backgrounds, disciplines, and different methods, will get an interesting point of view about the discussion about God. How Fazlur Rahman and Toshihiko Izutsu interpret the concept of God in the Qur'an, and the comparison of ideas among them will rise a complex conclusion.

The research method used in this study is the comparative method (*muqarran*), which describes the main points of discussion between Rahman and Toshihiko, then compares, and looks for similarities and differences between them. As a base for this research, the literature used is a very well-known book from each of the characters, namely the *Major Themes of the Qur'an* from Fazlur Rahman, and *God and man in The Qur'an* from Toshihiko Izutsu. Also epistemological theory are used in this project to prove the validity of Toshihiko and Rahman's statement.

From the results of this study, the author found several points that can be compared between the two figures, namely thoughts about the meaning of God, the existence of God, the nature of God, and the relationship between God and humans. Their thoughts can almost be said to be mutually supportive and complementary to each other, although with different methods in their discussion. But there is a very significant difference, namely regarding the existence of God. Rahman

said that God is not a being among others, in fact He is a unity of all beings. While Toshihiko said that God is in the middle of the world of being.

Keywords: God, interpretation, Tafseer, Toshihiko Izutsu, Fazlur Rahman, Epistemology

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In the Islamic world, interpretation of the Qur'an is one of many well-developed aspects. Evidenced by the emergence of classical to contemporary interpretation works, which also has a variety of methods, approaches, and patterns make Islamic treasures very rich. The Qur'an is not only a unique text but also the word of God which is a guide for Muslims. Even though the Qur'an had been a long time ago, the Qur'an still had universal values and remains infinitely following time and place. So, to meet the needs of the times, the Qur'an also needs to be interpreted according to the demands that exist in civilization. Moreover, the Qur'an is not only studied by Muslims but because of its uniqueness, the Qur'an is also glimpsed by western people who are mostly non-Muslims with various specific missions in learning it.

Al-Quran which means "perfect reading" is the name of God's choice that is appropriate because there has not been a single reading since humans knew literacy five thousand years ago that can rival the Qur'an Al-Karim, perfect reading again noble.¹ One of the themes of interpretation that has been a concern for a long time is the interpretation of God. While humans as His creature need to try to know more about the Creator for the perfection of the quality of worship and the scientific treasures of mankind. Moreover, many facts are found that the word Allah itself is derived from the word "ilaahun" which means "God". Also, the word Allah has been known in the books before the Qur'an. So, this triggers questions for Muslims and people who study Islam, what exactly does the word of

¹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an: Tafsir Maudhu'i atas Pelbagai persoalan Umat*, Mizan, Bandung, 1996, 3.

Allah mean? Is the word of Allah used as a universal word for God? And how is the concept of God itself in the Qur'an?

As a Muslim it is very necessary to know more closely about God. In the Qur'an it is mentioned:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"I have only created Jinn's and men, that They may serve Me." (QS. Adz-Dzariyat: 56)²

The command of Allah in the Qur'an is to worship Him, to be able to worship humans need to know in advance who they are worshiping, so that after knowing they will recognize and then believe in Him as a God. Because humans cannot believe without recognizing, and they cannot recognize without know. Then the command to know God is the main requirement for someone to become a Muslim who believes because the entrance to become a Muslim is by reciting two sentences *"Asyhadu an lā ilāha illa Allah wa anna Muhammadan Rasulullah"*. In English "I bear witness that (there is) no God except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah."

Let's look back at the study of the beliefs of mankind, what is found is that almost all human beings believe in a God who rules this universe. The ancient Greeks believed polytheism (the belief of many gods).³ They believe that Star, Venus, Mars, and Sun are Gods. Hindus in the past also had many gods, that belief is reflected in the story of *"Mahabharata"*.⁴ Among the many beliefs about the Creator behind the existence of heaven, earth, and their contents, many concepts are offered, it appears because the problems of God are metaphysics

² Quranyusufali.com, accessed on 16 February 2020, 18.47 WIB.

³ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an: Tafsir Maudhu'i atas Pelbagai persoalan Umat,...* 3.

⁴ ibid

problem. Where metaphysics deals with objects that are beyond observation and experience.⁵

Understanding of God is really necessary to be developed and renewed over time as a form of our faith in Allah SWT. Rasulullah PBUH said:

جَدِّدُوا إِيمَانَكُمْ أَكْثَرُوا مِنْ قَوْلِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ⁶

*“Renew your faith and multiply with the words *lā ilāha illa Allah*.”*

In this Hadith, there are orders to always renew our faith which is always gets darker and dirtier by our attitudes and behavior every time. So, by reading *Lā ilāha illa Allah* will purify our faith. But for a Muslim who carried out the commandment to keep learning, then this sentence not only needs to say but also to understand and as well as studying the sentence itself, in this case is to study the concept of to God 's.

Then in this research, there are two figures of contemporary interpreters who are quite intense studying this theme, namely Toshihiko Izutsu and also Fazlur Rahman. The contemporary interpretation was chosen because on the traditions of the classical interpretation, the principle that the Qur'an *Salih li kulli zamān wa makān* be understood by force in any context into the text of the Qur'an. As a result, the understanding that appears tends to be textualist and literalist. So, in contemporary interpretations, the principle is understood to be more contextual. So that the results of the interpretation are not only the question of the meaning of the word but rather the discovery of the ideal moral of each verse of the Qur'an

⁵Hairul Anwar, “*Konsep Tuhan di Dalam Al-Quran*”, in *Jurnal al-Burhan* Vol. 15 No. 1 (Surabaya: Pesantren Trimulia, 2015), 30.

⁶Muhammad Anwar Syah Al-kamisryi al-hindi: “*Faidhul bari ala Shahih Bukhari*”, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, Beirut, 2005, 149.

which is the result of the collaboration of the use of the word meaning analysis, social analysis, and historical analysis.⁷

The reason for choosing Fazlur Rahman and Toshihiko Izutsu is because both of them have a really differences background, in terms of they live, educations, religions, birthplace and abode, methods, and also a different paradigm for interpreting the Qur'an. So, these differences in the background affect their understanding of the content and intent of the Qur'an.

Both of them have different and interesting features and methods for interpreting the Qur'an. Izutsu is famous for semantic methods, and Fazlur Rahman famous for hermeneutic methods. Both of these figures are quite interesting to study because they both have one study that specifically examines God. So, the comparison of them will produce a more complex conclusion because it uses two perspectives with different backgrounds and methodologies.

The Toshihiko Semantic Method uses the concept of *Weltanschauung* (world view) of the people who use the language. With two steps of analysis, the first is to look for basic and relational meanings, then the next step is to explain the *weltanschauung* of the Qur'an by questioning the use of words, relationships with other words, and the function of words. And Toshihiko tends to agree with the pluralistic theory which states that a nation's view of something differs from one place to another and differs time by time.

Meanwhile, according to Fazlur Rahman, the Qur'an is a holy book that is not limited to space and time (*shālih fi kulli zaman wa makan*) and has proven its privileges and its position is very important in Islamic civilization. In interpreting the Qur'an, Fazlur Rahman uses the theory of double movement, which had two

⁷ Eni Zulaiha, “*Tafsir Kontemporer: Metodologi, Paradigma dan Standar Validitasnya*”, Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama dan Sosial Budaya 2 (Bandung: Fakultas Ushuluddin UIN Sunan Gunungjati 2017), 82.

steps of interpretation. First, in interpreting the Qur'an, it is needed to study the historical situation, and the macro situation within the boundaries of society, religion, customs, institutions, and even about life as a whole in the Arabian Peninsula. Secondly, finding a moral ideal after a socio-historical study, then the moral ideal finds its existence and becomes a living text in Islamic institutions.

In the introduction to the book *Major Themes of The Qur'an*, Fazlur Rahman also appreciating Toshihiko's work from his initial book entitled *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the newspaper*. Fazlur Rahman argues, although these works mainly examine ethics and religious attitudes, a good discussion of the world view of the Qur'an, in general, has been presented.⁸ Although I sometimes disagree with Professor Izutsu for his analysis of certain key themes such as *taqwa*, I recommend it as very useful work.⁹

In the discussion of these two contemporary figures regarding the title of this research, there is one thing that is most striking, namely regarding the relationship between God and humans. Where in their explanation, they both highlight the uniqueness of the relationship between God and humans. So, if it has to meet similarities and differences between the two, then at the end of the study it will be obtained conclusions are quite representative in answering the issue of divinity.

According to Fazlur Rahman, the relationship between God and humans has three main ideas namely the dependence of beings, the compassion of God, and the master-servant relationship. Whereas Toshihiko stated that the relation between God and man is an ontological, communicative, master-servant, and ethical relation. From the relational concept, there are some similarities both in language and discussion.

⁸ Fazlurrahman, "*Tema-tema Pokok Al-qur'an*", (Bandung: Mizan, 2017), XXI.

⁹ Ibid

B. Research Question

Based on the research title above, the CONCEPT OF GOD IN AL-QUR'AN (Comparative Study of Fazlur Rahman and Toshihiko Izutsu), the authors divide the problem formulation as follows:

1. How is Fazlur Rahman's and Toshihiko Izutsu's interpretation of the concept of God in the Qur'an?
2. What are the similarities and differences in their thoughts about the concept of God in the Qur'an?

C. Aim and Significance of Research

Based on the problem formulation above, it can be explained the aim of this research is as follows:

1. To find out the thoughts of Fazlur Rahman and Toshihiko Izutsu regarding the concept of the God of the Qur'an.
2. To find out the similarities and differences between Fazlur Rahman's thoughts and Toshihiko Izutsu to get a comprehensive conclusion.

The Significance of the Research are:

1. Add insight and enrich intellectual property, especially for writers and readers in general.
2. Adding literature for University, Faculty, and Departments.
3. To complete one of the requirements for obtaining a bachelor's degree in the field of Qur'anic and interpretation (IAT) at the faculty of Ushuluddīn and Humanities UIN Walisongo Semarang.

D. Previous Research

Literature Review is another term for studying literature (literature review). This activity is presenting knowledge, propositions, concepts, or provisions that have been raised by previous researchers relating to the subject matter to be discussed.¹⁰

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the author found several works of literature related to the issues discussed, including:

The first is the *Concept of God in the Qur'an*,¹¹ the work of Hairul Anwar in the Journal of al-Burhan Vol. 15 No. 1 of 2015 published by the Trimulia Islamic Boarding School Surabaya. The Journal has the same object of discussion as the research that will be written in this final project. In that discussion is not based on one or two interpreters, but in the data analysis, Hairul Anwar takes many quotes from Quraish Shihab. What is discussed therein is about the oneness of God, the form of God, to the terms of the name of God.

Second is the *Theological Thought of Fazlur Rahman*,¹² by Muhammad Ramadhan in Theology Journal, Volume 25, Number 2, July-December 2014 published by Islamic State University (UIN) Walisongo. This study discusses the form of God, revelation, and prophethood, Human Will and Acts, Eschatology to Satan, and evil.

The position of this research is as a complement to previous studies that have discussed the concept of God and also the theological thought of Fazlur Rahman.

¹⁰ Dr. H. A. Hasan Asy'ari Ulama'i, M.Ag et.al, "*Pedoman Penulisan Skripsi Fakultas Ushluddin*", Fakultas Ushluddin IAIN Walisongo, Semarang, 2013, 22.

¹¹ <https://ptiq.ac.id/pdf/15-1-02.pdf>, accessed on 9 September 2019.

¹² <http://www.journal.walisongo.ac.id/index.php/teologia/article/download/386/352>, accessed on 9 September 2019.

E. Research methods

Research methods used in compiling this thesis is as follows:

a. Type of research

This research uses library research, which means, this research is based on bibliographical research that relating to the research topic, so that all reference sources used are valid written materials.

b. Data sources

In preparing scientific papers, the use of clear references is a must. Especially if the research is related to the literature using books as the source of data, so in the preparation of this final project there are primary and secondary data sources.

1) Primary Data sources

The primary data source used is a book by Toshihiko Izutsu entitled *God and man in the Qur'an: Semantics of the Quranic Weltanschauung*. And a book by Fazlur Rahman with the title *Major Themes of the Qur'an*.

2) Secondary Data Sources

Secondary data sources are books that have the relevance of writing this final project. Moreover, the books that complement and support the main data sources will help in analyzing the titles above.

c. Data Analysis Method

1) Content Analysis Method

The analysis used in this study is the content analysis method, which analyzes any collected data to conclude. In this case, to find out the epistemology in the thought of Fazlur Rahman and Toshihiko Izutsu concepts about God.

2) Comparative Analysis Method

The analysis method were used in this research is the comparative analysis method or *muqarran*. *Muqarran* comes from the word *qarana – yuqārinu - qarnan* which means to compare.¹³ *Muqarran's* interpretation is an interpretation that uses a comparison method. There is no difference of opinion from experts of *tafsir* on the definition of this method. There are three types of *muqarran* interpretations: 1) comparing the verses of the Qur'an that have similarities to the editor, 2) comparing the verses of the Qur'an with the *Hadith* that's linguistic contradictory, and 3) comparing the views of some commentators in interpreting the Qur'an.

F. Writing Order

Chapter one, contains an introduction that presents the background, problem formulation, research objectives, literature review, as well as research methodology and systematic writing.

Chapter two, contains the theory are used by Toshihiko Izutsu and Fazlur Rahman. Include the theory of epistemology, which are the theory are used to analyze the validity of their thought.

¹³ Nasruddin Baidan, *Wawasan Baru Ilmu Tafsir*, Pustaka Pelajar: Yogyakarta, 2011, 381.

Chapter three describes the concept of God in the Qur'an, both of Toshihiko Izutsu and also Fazlur Rahman. This description includes Toshihiko and Fazlur Rahman's data, and educational background influencing their thinking.

Chapter four contains a comparative analysis of the two figures. Inside there are similarities and differences in concepts between the two. Of course, there are analyzing their validity in an epistemological way.

Chapter five, concluding, which includes conclusions from all the efforts that the author has made in this study along with suggestions and conclusions.

CHAPTER II

HERMENEUTIC, SEMANTIC, AND EPISTEMOLOGY

1. Double Movement Hermeneutic

a. Definition of Double Movement Hermeneutic

Before discussing double movement, it seems necessary for the reader to know a bit of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics needs to be known as a study of the interpretation or understanding of a past text so that it can be existentially meaningful at the moment. Hermeneutics is derived from the Greek noun *hermeneia*, the verb is *hermeneuien*, which means interpreting. While definitively, according to Palmer, that hermeneutics is defined by the process of changing something or situation from ignorance to be known or the process of bringing a thing or situation from intelligibility to understanding. Another definition according to Carl E. Braaten that hermeneutics is the science of reflecting on how a word or event in a past time and culture may be understood and existentially meaningful in our present situation.¹

The presence of the double movement method started from Rahman's disappointment of classical scholars are more inclined to exploit the historical Islamic heritage in addressing the issue of renewal and also motivated by the reality that the commentators (*mufassir*) of classical and medieval have treated the Qur'an in the verse by verse appropriate the chronology is in the Manuscripts because sometimes they make cross-references when interpreting a verse. Unfortunately, this is not done systematically, so that their interpretive work does not produce a cohesive

¹ Ulya, *HERMENEUTIKA DOUBLE MOVEMENT FAZLUR RAHMAN: Menuju Penetapan Hukum Bervisi Etis*, Jurnal Ulul Albab 2013, 6.

and significant worldview (*weltanschauung*) for life as a whole. Efforts to interpret the verses of the Qur'an with other verses (*al-Qur'an yufassir ba'dhuhu ba'dha*) have indeed been realized in their work, but what has not been seen is an attempt to integrate the meaning of the Qur'an systematically to realize it in a unified worldview. Because of that, then try to formulate the method of interpretation known as the double movement method.²

Rahman offers a logical, critical, and comprehensive method, namely double movement hermeneutics. This method provides a systematic and contextualist understanding, to produce an interpretation that is not atomistic, literalist, and textualist, but rather an interpretation that can answer contemporary problems. What is meant by a double movement is: starting from the present situation to the time the Qur'an was revealed and returning to the present. The issue is why you must know when the Qur'an was revealed? While the past with the present does not have in common. To answer this problem, Rahman said: Qur'an is The God's response through the memory and thoughts of the Prophet, to the moral-social situation of the Arab community at the time of the Prophet. That is, the significance of understanding Arab *social settings* during the Qur'an was revealed due to the dialectical process between the Qur'an and reality, both in the form of *tahmil* (accepting and continuing), *tahrim* (prohibiting its existence), and *taghiyyur* (accepting and reconstructing tradition).³

b. Double Movement Steps

² Ahmad Syukri, *Metodologi Tafsir Al-Qur'an Kontemporer Dalam Pemikiran Fazlur Rahman*, Jurnal Kontekstualita Vol. 20 No.1 Juni 2005, 58.

³ Rifki Ahda Sumantri, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Fazlur Rahman*,.... 7.

1. First movement

From the contemporary circumstances leading to the era of the Qur'an was revealed, in the sense that it is necessary to understand the meaning and significance of a statement by reviewing the historical situation or problem in which the statement is present Qur'an as the answer. In other words, understanding the Qur'an as a totality besides being specific teachings is a response to specific situations. Then, the responses of this specific generalized and expressed as a statement that has a common moral goal that can be "filtered" from the verses specifically related to socio-historical background and the ratio logic often expressed. During this process, attention must be paid to the direction of the teachings of the Qur'an as a totality so that each particular meaning or meaning is understood, every law that is stated, and each formulated goal will relate to others. In short, in this first movement, the study begins with specifics in the Qur'an, then explores and systematizes general principles, values, and long-term goals.⁴

2. Second movement

At the time that Qur'an was revealed (after discovering general principles) back to the present. In the sense that these general teachings (principles) must be established in a concrete socio-historical context today. For this reason, it is necessary to carefully study the current situation and analyze its elements so that the situation can be assessed and changed to the extent needed and new priorities are established to implement the values of the Qur'an as well. This second movement will also serve as a correction

⁴ Ibid.

of the result in understanding and interpretation is done on the first movement. Because, if the results of that understanding cannot be applied in the present, it means that there has been a failure in assessing the current situation properly or failure in understanding the Qur'an. Because it is impossible that as far as a specific order (Arab society) in the past could not be realized in the current context. This is done by considering the difference "in terms of the specifics that exist in the situation now" which include both changing the rules in the past so in tune with the demands of the present situation (to the extent not violate the principles of common in the past), or to change the situation now as long as necessary to comply with these general principles.

2. Semantic

a. Definition of Semantic

Semantics is one branch of linguistics that is seen as the top of language studies. Semantics, derived from the Greek *sema* (noun) which means a sign or symbol or *semaino* in a verbal form which means to mark or symbolize. In another source, the word semantics is derived from the Greek which means *to signify*. As a technical term, semantics has the notion of a study of meaning. The meaning is the linkage that exists between elements of the language itself (especially at the words). And the meaning of a word can expands, narrow, and experience a shift in meaning, depending on one's horizons and point of view.⁵

⁵ Wahyu Kurniawan, *MAKNA KHALÎFAH DALAM AL-QUR`AN: Tinjauan Semantik Al-Qur`an Toshihiko Izutsu,....* 36.

Izutsu himself explained semantic that will be used in his study. Semantic that Izutsu means is an analytic study of the key-terms of a language to arrive eventually at a conceptual graph of the *weltanschauung* or world-view of the people who use the language as a tool not only of speaking and thinking but, more important still, conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surrounds them. Semantic, thus understood, it is kind of *weltanschauung*, a study of the nature and structure of the world-view of a nation at this or that significant period of its history, conducted by means of methodological analysis of the major cultural concept the nation has produced for itself and crystallized into the key-word of its language.⁶

Term ‘semantic’ itself as semantic has a lot of meanings, it could mean certain aspects in the object study of language itself, such as when someone says a semantic vocabulary, similar theory in the study of language. The most widely embraced in linguistics is semantic, in the understanding of analytical studies toward the key-terms of language with a view to arriving eventually at a conceptual in the community who use that language itself. This view is not only a tool of speaking and thinking but, more important still, of conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surrounds them.⁷

Izutsu argues that no one has a unified neat and orderly form of semantic science, which is owned by some people is many theories about diverse meanings. Everyone who talks about semantics tends to consider themselves the most entitled to define and understand these words as they like. So, what is meant by semantic Toshihiko Izutsu is an analytical study

⁶ Muhammad In’amuttaqi, *Mahabbah in the Qur’an (Approach of Toshihiko Semantics)*, Thesis (Semarang: UIN Walisongo Semarang 2016), 19.

⁷ Muhammad In’amuttaqi, *Mahabbah in the Qur’an (Approach of Toshihiko Semantics)*,.... 20.

of the key terms of a language with a view that finally reaches the conceptual understanding or world view of the people who use the language not only as a means of speaking and thinking but more importantly is the conceptualizer and interpretation of the world that surrounds it. Semantics in this sense is the study of the nature and structure of the world view (*world view*) of a nation at present or in the most significant historical period with a methodological analysis of the main concepts that have been produced by the language. Semantics is one part of three levels of language that includes phonology, grammar (morphology and syntax), and semantics.⁸

b. Principles of Semantic Methodology

To understand how semantically utilized by Izutsu, at least one can refer to some of his work entitled *Ethico Religious Concepts in the Qur`an*, especially in the second chapter of the Rules of Analysis and Application and *God and Man in the Qur`an: Semantics of the Qur`anic Weltanschauung* especially in chapter 1 of Semantics and al-Qur`an and lastly *The Concept of Belief in Islamic Theology: A Semantic Analysis of imān and Islām* in conclusion.

Of the three works mentioned above, it will find four important things that need to be understood before applying the semantics of the text of al-Qur`an that understand the integration of individual concepts, vocabulary, basic meaning, and relational meaning, and *weltanschauung*. Then, the steps of Toshihiko analysis are as follows:

1. Integration of Individual Concepts

⁸ Wahyu Kurniawan, *MAKNA KHALĪFAH DALAM AL-QUR`AN: Tinjauan Semantik Al-Qur`an Toshihiko Izutsu,....* 37.

At first sight, the task would appear to be quite a simple one. All thing that has to do, one might think, will be to pick up out of the whole vocabulary of the Qur'an all the important words standing for important concepts like *Allah*, *Islam*, *nabi* (prophet), *Iman* (belief), *kafir* (infidel), etc., and examine what they mean in the Qur'anic context. However, it is not as simple as reality, for these words or concepts are not simply there in the Qur'an, each standing in isolation from others, but they are closely interdependent and derive their concrete meanings precisely from the entire system of relations. In other words, they form among themselves various groups, large and small, which, again, are connected to each other in various ways, so that they constitute ultimately an organized totality, an extremely complex and complicated network of conceptual associations. And what is really important for our particular purpose is this kind of conceptual system which is at work in the Qur'an rather than individual concepts as such taken separately and considered in themselves apart from the general structure, or Gestalt, as we might call it, into which they have been integrated. In analyzing the individual key concepts that are found in the Qur'an we should never lose sight of the multiple relations which each of them bears to others in the whole system.⁹

2. Researching the basic meaning and relational meaning

The basic meaning is a word that contains its own contextual meaning attached to the word even though the word is taken outside the context of the Qur'an. For example, the word *kitab* (book), means basically the same thing whether it is found in the Qur'an or outside in

⁹ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur'an*,.... 4.

the Qur'an. This word, as long as it is actually felt by the speech community to be one word, keeps its fundamental meaning. In this case, a very general and non-specified meaning 'book' wherever it is found, whether it happens to be used as a key term in a given system of concepts or more generally outside of that particular system. The contents of this semantic element remain in the word wherever it is placed and however it is used, this is what is called the 'basic meaning'.¹⁰

In the Qur'an, the word book has extraordinary significance as a sign of a religious concept surrounded by the light of holiness. The word stands in a very close relationship to Divine revelation, or quite diverse concepts that refer to revelation. This means that the word book with a simple basic meaning namely "the book", when introduced in a special position as in the Qur'an, will bring up a close relationship with important words in the Qur'an such as *Allah*, *wahyu*, *tanzil*, *nabi*, *ahl* and so on, this is what is called the 'relational meaning'. According to language, the relational meaning is a connotation given and added to an existing meaning by putting the word in a special position in a special field.

3. Epistemology

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy studying the limits of knowledge and the origin of knowledge as well as the criteria for truth. Epistemology comes from the Greek language "*episteme*", which means knowledge and "*logos*" which means science. In this field there are three main issues: (a) what are the sources of knowledge? Where does true knowledge come from and how do we know it? (b) What is the nature of knowledge? Is there a world that is completely outside our minds? If there is, can we find out? (this is a problem

¹⁰ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 12.

that leads to the *phenomenon* and *noumena* problem). (c) Is our knowledge valid? How can we distinguish right from wrong? (this point is what leads to the verification problem). These three main problems are the formal objects of epistemology, as well as the formal objects of the philosophy of science, as a perspective in seeing their material objects, namely science.¹¹ In other languages, epistemology is a branch of philosophy that discusses the origin, structure, methods, and truth of knowledge. Besides, it can also be said that epistemology is a branch of philosophy that specifically discusses "theories about knowledge".¹²

According to Abbas Hamami, the word "truth" can be used as a concrete or abstract noun. If the subject wants to tell the truth it means it is a true proposition. Proposition means the meaning contained in a statement or statement. The existence of that truth is always associated with human knowledge (subjects who know) about objects. So, the truth is in how far the subject knows the object. Whereas knowledge comes from many sources. The sources then simultaneously function as a measure of truth. The following are theories of truth.¹³

a. Correspondence theory

This theory, sometimes called the consensus theory of truth, is a theory that holds a statement are true if they correspond to facts or statements in the reality or the object to which the statement is addressed. The condition is can be true if there is a correspondence between the meaning intended by an opinion or statement with the

¹¹ Mohammad Muslih, *FILSAFAT ILMU: Kajian atas Asumsi Dasar, Paradigma, dan Kerangka Teori Ilmu Pengetahuan* (Yogyakarta: LESFI 2016), 13.

¹² Ahmad Atabik, *TEORI KEBENARAN PERSPEKTIF FILSAFAT ILMU: Sebuah Kerangka Untuk memahami Konstruksi Pengetahuan Agama*, *Jurnal Fikrah* Vol. 2, No. 1 (Kudus: STAIN Kudus 2014), 255.

¹³ *Ibid.*

facts. A proposition is true if there is an appropriate fact and states it as it is.¹⁴

The problem then arises is when the reality is objective or subjective? There are two views on this problem, epistemological realism, and epistemological idealism. Epistemological realism holds that there is an independent reality, which is independent of thought, and we cannot change it if we experience it or understand it. That is why epistemological realism is sometimes called objectivism. While epistemological idealism holds that every action ends in an idea, which is a subjective event. The two forms of view of reality above are very different. Epistemological idealism emphasizes that truth is what exists in the world of ideas. Therefore, seeing red, sweetness, pain, joy, hope, and so on are the form of ideas. Therefore, epistemological idealism as defined above is the same as subjectivity.¹⁵

The conclusion of the theory of correspondence is the existence of two realities that are before humans, statements, and reality. According to this theory, truth is conformity between statements about something and the reality of something itself. For example, Semarang, the capital of Central Java. This statement is called true if in fact, Semarang is the capital of Central Java province. The truth lies in statements and reality.

The significance of this theory is especially if it is applied to the world of science with the aim of achieving a truth that can be accepted by everyone. A scientist will always try to examine the truth

¹⁴ Ahmad Atabik, *TEORI KEBENARAN PERSPEKTIF FILSAFAT ILMU*,.... 258.

¹⁵ Ahmad Atabik, *TEORI KEBENARAN PERSPEKTIF FILSAFAT ILMU*,.... 259.

attached to something in earnest so that what he saw really happened. For example, mountains can walk. To prove the truth of this statement must be examined with other scholarships, namely the science of mountains (geology), it turns out that the mountain has legs (earth plates) that can move to cause earthquakes and tsunamis. Thus, a question is not only believed to be true, but it must be doubted first to be investigated, to obtain an ultimate truth.¹⁶

b. Coherence theory

This theory argues that the truth is the compatibility between a statement with other statements that are already known, accepted, and recognized as true. A proposition is true if the proposition is related (coherent) with other true propositions or the statement is coherent or consistent with previous statements that are considered true. Thus, a decision is considered true if it gets a testimony (justification) by other decisions that have been previously known, accepted, and admitted to being true. Because of their nature, this theory recognizes levels of truth. Here the degree of coherence is a measure of the degree of truth. For example, all humans need water, Ahmad is a human, so, Ahmad needs water.

When compared with the theory of correspondence, the theory of coherence, in fact, is less widely accepted than the first theory earlier. This theory has many weaknesses and began to be abandoned. For example, astrology has a very coherent system, but we don't consider astrology to be true. Truth is not only formed by the relationship between facts or reality, but also the relationship between the statements themselves. In other words, a statement is

¹⁶ Ahmad Atabik, *TEORI KEBENARAN PERSPEKTIF FILSAFAT ILMU*,... 260.

true if it is consistent with the statements we first received and we know the truth.

c. Pragmatic theory

Pragmatism originates from Greek "*pragmai*", meaning what is done, what is done, what is done, what is done, what is called a philosophy developed by William James in the United States. Pragmatic truth theory is a theory that holds that the meaning of an idea is limited by references to scientific, personal, or social consequences. Whether or not a proposition or theory depends on the merit of the proposition or theory for humans for their lives. The truth of a statement must be functional in practical life.

Considering the theory of pragmatism with previous theories of truth, pragmatism is indeed true to emphasize the practical character of truth, knowledge, and human cognitive capacity. But that does not mean this theory is the best theory of the whole theory. Pragmatism criteria are also used by scientists in determining scientific truth from a time perspective. Historically, scientific statements that are now considered to be true at one time may no longer be the case. Faced with a problem like this, scientists are pragmatic as long as the statement is functional and has a use, then the statement is considered to be true, should the statement no longer be so, due to the development of science itself which produces a new statement, then the statement is abandoned, and so on.

CHAPTER III

BIOGRAPHY AND CONCEPT OF GOD ACCORDING TO FAZLUR RAHMAN AND TOSHIHIKO IZUTSU

A. Biography of Fazlur Rahman

The birthplace of Fazlur Rahman is a place that has a lot of great thinkers, such as Shah Waliullah al-dahlawi, Sayyid Khan, Amir Ali, and Muhammad Iqbal. This situation will be inherited by Fazlur Rahman as a free, critical, and neo-modernist thinker. Social conditions when Rahman was born tainted by a public debate between the three competing personalities, namely the modernists, the traditionalists, and the fundamentalists, who each claim to truth against each other's opinions. This debate arose when Pakistan was declared a separate country from India and became a sovereign and independent nation on August 14, 1947.

One of the ideas that are highly debated by the three contending groups is how to form a post-independence Pakistan from India. Modernist groups led by Muhammad Iqbal formulated the concept of Islamic statehood in terms of modern ideological terms. Traditionalist groups offer state concepts based on traditional Islamic political theories (Caliph and *Imamah*). Meanwhile, the fundamentalist leader Abu A'la al-Mawdudi proposes the concept of statehood "Kingdom of God ". This debate continued until it brings out a constitution with its amendments. In this social phenomenon, Rahman later speaks up his neo-modernist ideas.

Fazlur Rahman was born in Pakistan on Sunday, September 21, 1919, in an area called Hazara, located in Northwestern Pakistan, and died in Chicago, Illinois, on July 26, 1988. Born into a religious family, he was educated to practice daily worship days regularly. At the age of 10 years, he had memorized

the Qur'an.¹ Rahman was born and raised from a society that is very concerned with education. His father, Maulana Shahab al-Din was a traditional scholar who had Hanafi's *Mazhab* (path), a *mazhab sunni* that was more rationalist than the other (Shafi'i, Maliki, and Hanbali). Although Shahab al-din was a traditionalist, he was unlike most of the scholars in that time who opposed and considered modern education can poison the faith and morals. According to him, Islam must face the reality of modern life, not only as a challenge but also an opportunity. This father's conviction is what will be patented on Fazlur Rahman later. This can be seen from Rahman's attitude of not wanting to be trapped in narrow traditionalist thoughts and isolated by the traditions of the schools (*mazhab*).² While his mother was very instrumental in instilling the values of truth, compassion, and honesty, especially the value of love that has been flooded on Fazlur Rahman as a child.³

Rahman began his education from his family, namely the traditional educational discourse guided directly by his father, who is an alumnus of *Dar al-Ulum* and studied with well-known figures such as Maulana Mahmud Hasan. Thus, even though Rahman did not study at *Dar al-Ulum*, he has mastered the *Darse-Nizami* curriculum. This completes his background in understanding traditional Islam, with particular attention to *fiqh*, dialectical theology (*kalam*), *hadith*, interpretation (*tafsir*), logic (*mantiq*), and philosophy.⁴ When he was 14 years old, Rahman began to experience modern education in Lahore in 1933, along with continuing education with his

¹ Sibawaihi, *Eskatologi Al-Gazali dan Fazlur Rahman: Studi Komparatif Epistemologi Klasik-Kontemporer*, Islamika, Yogyakarta, 2004, 49.

² Dr. Phil. Sahiron Syamsuddin, MA, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an dan Hadith* (Yogyakarta: eLSAQ Press, 2010), 60-62.

³ Rifki Ahda Sumantri, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Fazlur Rahman Metode Tafsir Double Movement*, Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah Dakwah & Komunikasi Vol 7 No.1 Januari-Juni (Purwakarta: Jurusan Dakwah STAIN Purwakarta, 2013).

⁴ Sibawaihi, *Eskatologi Al-Gazali dan Fazlur Rahman: Studi Komparatif Epistemologi Klasik-Kontemporer*, 49.

father. Higher education was pursued at the Punjab University majoring in Arabic literature and finished with a BA title in 1940. A master's degree for the eastern department was also obtained at the same University in 1942.⁵

Seeing at the slow and low quality of education in India at the time, Rahman decided to continue studying in England. Rahman's decision to see the social community at that time was quite brave, because the community's assumption at that time, people who learned in the west had been influenced by the western system that was contrary to Islam. If it works, then it will be difficult to be accepted in the community. It is not even rare to experience bullying. It turned out that the community's opinion did not prevent Rahman from continuing his studies in a country that was claimed to be “infidel” by traditionalist and fundamentalist groups. In 1946 he entered Oxford University and holds a Ph.D. in literature and completed it in 1950. During his studies, Rahman had the opportunity to study various languages, such as English, Latin, Greek, French, German, and Turkish as well as Urdu, Arabic, and Persian.⁶

After obtaining the title of *Doctor of Philosophy* (Ph.D.) from Cambridge University in 1950,⁷ Rahman did not immediately come back to his newly independent country. Rahman was still worried about the phenomenon of the people in his country at that time, which was rather difficult to accept educated Islamic scholars in the West. Because of this problem, he chose to teach in Europe for several years, began with teaching Persian language and Islamic philosophy at Durham University, England, in 1950-1958. While teaching at the university, he completed his original work, *Prophecy in Islam: Philosophy and Orthodoxy*, but only later it was published in London by George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. in 1958, when he taught at McGill University,

⁵ Dr. Phil sahiron Syamsuddin, MA, *Hermeneutika Al-qur'an dan Hadith*, 62.

⁶ Sibawaihi, *Hermeneutika Al-qur'an Fazlur Rahman*, Jalasutra, Yogyakarta, 2007, 18.

⁷ Fazlurrahman, *Tema-tema Pokok Al-qur'an*, (Bandung: Mizan, 2017), X.

Canada. Then, with various considerations, he left England to become an Associate Professor in the field of Islamic studies at the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University in Montreal, Canada.⁸

After three years in Canada, Rahman began the most ambitious project of his life, which became the starting point in his career. Pakistan, under General Ayyub Khan, began to renew its efforts in shaping politics and state identity by transforming politics and law as a means of building national enthusiasm. Rahman was very enthusiastic about this problem, so he was willing to leave his prestigious academic career in Canada for the challenges that prevented Pakistan. At the beginning of the formation of the Central Institute of Islamic Research, he was originally a guest professor and became a director for a period (1961-1968). In addition to being a director at this institution, Rahman also worked at the Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology, so this important position allowed him to closely observe the ongoing administration and power of the government. Even Ebrahim Moosa said the position provided the most valuable experience in Rahman's life history. At the same time, Rahman also initiated the publication of the Journal of Islamic Studies, which is still regularly published today and has become an international religious scientific journal.⁹

However, the appointment of Rahman as the leader of the institution lacked the blessing of traditional Scholars. Because according to them, the position of director of the institution should be a privilege for traditionally educated scholars. Meanwhile, Rahman is considered a part of the modernist group and has been heavily contaminated with Western thoughts. With these conditions, it is understandable that in Rahman's leadership, this institution has

⁸ Sibawaihi, *Eskatologi Al-Gazali dan Fazlur Rahman: Studi Komparatif Epistemologi Klasik-Kontemporer*, 51.

⁹ *Ibid*, 51-52.

always been opposed by traditionalists and fundamentalists (neo-revivalists). The climax of this challenge erupted when the first two chapters of his first work, *Islam*, were translated into Urdu and published in the *Fikr-u-Nazr* Journal. These tensions continue to become nasty by political tensions between traditional clerics and the government under the leadership of Ayyub Khan, who can be classified as a modernist group. It was at this time that Rahman felt compelled to "leave" from Pakistan.¹⁰

This phenomenon forced Rahman to leave his native land for a second time. He felt his country was not ready to provide a free and responsible academic environment.¹¹ Thus, in 1970 Rahman left for Chicago and was immediately crowned as a professor of Islamic thought at the University of Chicago. In fact, in 1968 Rahman was first accepted as a lecturer at the University of California, United States. The University of Chicago has indeed become the place where Rahman produced many of his works. This place was also his last stop until he died on July 26, 1988.¹²

While teaching at the University of Chicago, in the position of "Muslim modernists", Rahman has contributed much to the generation of scientists Muslims to give self-confidence, either through publications, consulting, preaching, and a cadre of young scientists who come from various countries to study under his care. In addition to teaching at the University of Chicago, Rahman is also often asked by leading Western study centers to give lectures or participate in international seminars related to Islam. For example, the University of Connecticut's Jewish study center at Storrs had asked Rahman in the spring of 1981 to give a lecture on Islamic attitudes toward

¹⁰ Ibid, 53.

¹¹ Dr. Phil. Sahiron Syamsuddin. *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an & Hadith*, 64.

¹² Sibawaihi, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Fazlur Rahman*, 21.

Judaism. Rahman also became the first Muslim to become staff at the University of Chicago Divinity School.¹³

Broadly, the dynamics of Rahman's religious thought can be distinguished in three main periods: *first*, the initial period (50th decade), which has not produced many normative works. During this period, he generally only produced works of a historical nature. *Second*, the period of Pakistan (60th decade), when he was just beginning to pursue normative Islamic studies and involved in the flow of Islamic thought even though it has not been supported on a systematic methodological basis. His thinking is more an effort to give a definition of "Islam" for Pakistan. *Third*, the Chicago period (1970-1988), when he settled in Chicago. His involvement in normative Islamic studies supported by the methodology of systematic interpretation was only seen in this period. This is where popular works appear.¹⁴

As for the work that he produced in book form, it namely: *Avicenna's psychology* (1952), *Prophecy in Islam Philosophy and Orthodoxy* (1958), *Islamic Methodology in History* (1965), *Islam* (1966), *The Philosophy of Mulla Sandra* (1975), *Major Themes of The Qur'an* (1980), *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of Intellectual Tradition* (1982), *Health and Medicine in Islam Tradition; Change and Identity* (1987), *Revival and Reform in Islam* (2000). In the sciences journal form, his work has spread in many journals, from local (Pakistan) to international journals, and contained in many books. The journals which have contained his writing is *Islamic Studies*, *The Muslim World*, and *Studia Islamica*. Among the foremost scrapbooks on his work, namely: *Technology and Law in Islam* are edited by G.E von Grunebaum; *The Encyclopedia of Religion* edited by Richard C. Martin, *Islam Past Influence and*

¹³ Sibawaihi, *Eskatologi Al-Gazali & Fazlur Rahman*, 53-54.

¹⁴ Sibawaihi, *Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Fazlur Rahman*, 21.

Present Challenge edited by Alford T. Welch dan P. Chacia; and the other else.¹⁵

B. The Concept of God According to Fazlur Rahman

Al-Qur'an is evidence of the word (*kalam*) of God that is a guide for humans. Of course, in that evidence, there are many things related to the owner of the word. In discussing the theme of God, the idea of *tauhid* (monotheism) is a foundation for all interpretations of the Qur'an, because all of the ideas in the Qur'an that discussing God must stand on that foundation. And this way seems to be the best way to develop synthetic concepts about God. But beyond that foundation, Qur'an must be speaking for itself to explain its purpose, whereas interpretation is used only if it is necessary to link various ideas.¹⁶

In the Qur'an, God has many names such as *Allah*, *Rabb*, and *al-Rahman*. The word *Allah* is the proper name for God, it has been mentioned in the Qur'an more than 2500 times. While *Rabb* and *al-Rahman* is a name that not only signifies qualities, it has nevertheless come to acquire substance. For the Qur'an, the existence of God is functional. He is The Creator and maintainer of the universe and mankind, He gives instructions to humans and will judge them, both individually and collectively, with merciful justice.¹⁷

The phrase "merciful justice" is often represented by modern writers as "justice that tempered by mercy." Which means, all justice given by God, has been softened by God's mercy. The mercy of God becomes an essential nature, that inherent within God. However, the mention of the attributes of God in the Qur'an as The Creator, The Sustenance, The Giver of Guidance, The Fairness,

¹⁵ Dr.phil. Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Hermeneutika Al-qur'an & Hadith*, 64-65.

¹⁶ Fazlurrahman, *Tema-tema Pokok Al-qur'an*, (Bandung: Mizan, 2017), XVI.

¹⁷ Fazlurrahman, *Tema-tema Pokok Al-qur'an*,,,,,, 1.

and The Mercy fully, has spread implied as a living entity in the Qur'an's concept of God.

The strong impression that is immediately felt when reading Qur'an is the majesty of God and His equally infinite mercy. For this reason, many Western scholars describe God in the Qur'an as a concentrate of pure power, even as brute power, indeed, as a capricious tyrant. Either this is due to ignorance or prejudice. The Qur'an certainly presents God in a variety of contexts. If all statements about Him are not internalized to become a complete mental picture, without the distortion of subjective and fanciful thoughts, it is very difficult and even impossible to be fair to the Qur'anic concept of God.¹⁸

First, the question arises, why should there be a God? Why does the universe, its contents, and its work processes do not proceed on their own, without involving a higher being, which only complicates reality and overwhelms the human mind and soul?¹⁹ Rahman opens the discussion about God with a question, are asking about the existence of God. This is very reasonable, considering that Rahman lives in a place where the majority of the population is different from what is believed by Rahman so that God's existence is the first question in this discussion. The Qur'an calls this as "belief and awareness of the unseen" as mentioned in *al-Baqarah*: 3, *al-Māidah*: 94, *al-Anbiya'*: 49, *Fathir*: 18, *Yaasin*: 11, *Qaf*: 33, *al-Hadid*: 25, and also *al-Mulk*: 12. This "unseen" is, in certain cases, transformed into "real" through Revelation for some people like the Prophet (for example: *at-Takwīr* : 24; *al-Qalam* : 47; *aṭ-Ṭūr* : 41; *an-Najm* : 35; *Yūsuf* : 102 ; *Hūd* : 49). However, the existence of God can be felt by anyone who is willing to reflect so that it not only ceases to be an "irrational" or "unreasonable" belief but becomes *the*

¹⁸ Fazlurrahman, Tema-tema Pokok Al-qur'an,,,,, 2.

¹⁹ Ibid.

*Master-Truth.*²⁰ And this is the mission of the Qur'an as a guide for humans, in this case, to recognize and know the existence of their God and to turn something "irrational" become a truth.

In order to achieve that mission, who are studying Qur'an must listen to the words of the Qur'an:

مَنْ حَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ

““Who feared (God) Most Gracious unseen, And brought a heart Turned in devotion (to Him).” (Qaf:33).²¹

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرٍ لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

“Verily in this Is a Message For any that has A heart and understanding Or who gives ear and Earnestly witnesses (the truth).” (Qāf:37).²²

Such verses are everywhere in the Qur'an:

..... أُولَئِكَ يُنَادُونَ مِنْ مَكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ

“They are (as it were) Being called from a place Far distant!” (Fussilat:44).²³

Yet, God is not so far that His signals cannot be heard.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

²⁰ Fazlurrahman, *Tema-tema Pokok Al-qur'an*,..., 2-3.

²¹ <https://quranyusufali.com/50/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

²² Loc.cit

²³ <https://quranyusufali.com/41/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

"It was We Who Created man, and We know What dark suggestions his soul Makes to him : for We Are nearer to him Than (his) jugular vein."
(Qāf:16)²⁴

God is so near and yet so far! The problem is not how to make a man come to the belief by giving lengthy and intricate "theological" proofs of God's existence, but how to shake him into belief by drawing his attention to certain obvious facts and turning these facts into "reminders" of God. Hence the Qur'ān time and again calls itself (and also the Prophet) "a reminder" or "The Reminder".²⁵

The main points in this ceaseless, tremendous thrust for "reminding" man are:

1. That everything except God is contingent upon God, including the entirety of nature (which has a "metaphysical" and a "moral" aspect).
2. That God, with all His might and glory, is essentially the all-merciful God.
3. Both aspects necessitate proper relations between God and humans, as the relationship between master and servant. As a consequence, it is also a proper relationship between human beings.

By natural necessity, as it were, these normative relationships entail the law of judgment upon a man both as individual and in his collective or social existence. Once we have grasped these three points, here will be understood about the absolute centrality of God in the entire, system of existence, to a very large extent because the aim of the Qur'ān is the man and his behavior, not God.²⁶

²⁴ <https://quranyusufali.com/50/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

²⁵ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, University of Chicago Press, 2009, 2.

²⁶ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, University of Chicago Press, 2009, 2.

In the three main points above as a reminder to humans, Rahman elaborating on the nature of God and also the relationship between humans and God. The first point has been mentioned that all beings depend on God. Dependency cannot exist without a place to depend. People can be focused on something that depends without thinking about a place to depend on. Rahman gives the equivalent of dependency like a child who is too engaged in his toys, so he does not know anything outside of the toy. However, according to the Qur'an, if someone thinks about the whence (and the whither) of nature, he will surely find God. This is not proof of God's existence. Because, according to the concept of the Qur'an, if you cannot find God, then you cannot prove it.

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَائِرٌ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

" And unto God leads straight The Way, but there are ways That turn aside : if God Had willed, He could have Guided all of you."(an-Nahl:9).²⁷

For reasons that will follow, "find" is not an empty word, it entails a total reevaluation of the primal order of reality and throws everything into a new perspective with new meanings. And the first consequence of this discovery is that God cannot be regarded as an existent among other existents. Because, the word "find" is usually used to find something among the other things, but not with God almighty and He is not among others. In the metaphysical realm, there can't be democratic and equal sharing of being between the Original, the Creator, the Self Necessary, with the borrowed, the created, the contingent, such a "sharing" rather exists within the second category itself. The Qur'anic condemnation of *shirk* (assigning partners to God) has its roots firmly in this metaphysical realm and then, as we shall see, issues forth in the moral field.²⁸

²⁷ <https://quranyusufali.com/16/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

²⁸ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, University of Chicago Press, 2009, 2-3.

God is that dimension that makes other dimensions possible; He gives meaning and life to everything. He is all-enveloping, literally infinite, and He *alone* is infinite. All else carries in the very texture of its being the hallmark of its finitude and creatureliness:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ () وَيَبْقَى وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ()

" *All that is on earth Will perish, But will abide (for ever) The Face of thy Lord,—Full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour.*"(ar-Rahmān:26-27).²⁹

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ

جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا

" *Say : " If the ocean were Ink (wherewith to write out) The words of my Lord, Sooner would the ocean be Exhausted than would the words Of my Lord, even if we Added another ocean Like it, for its aid.*"(al-Kahf:109).³⁰

In the very nature of the case, there can be only one God, for whenever one tries to conceive of more than once, only one will be found to emerge as the First, and God has said:

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا إِلَهَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَإِذَا تَوَلَّى فَرَغَ مِنْهُ

"*Do not take two gods (for) He is only One.*"(an-Nahl:51).³¹

²⁹ <https://quranyusufali.com/55/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

³⁰ <https://quranyusufali.com/18/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

³¹ <https://quranyusufali.com/16/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ

"There is no god but He."(Āli ‘Imrān:18).³²

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ مَعَهُ آهَةٌ كَمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذَا لَا يَتَّبَعُوا إِلَىٰ ذِي الْعَرْشِ سَبِيلًا

"Say (O Muhammad!) if there were other gods besides Him, as these people assert, they would all (necessarily) seek their way to the (one) Lord of the Throne."(al-Isrā':42)³³

According to the Qur'an, the universe is a solid structure without gaps, flawless, and without misplaced. Nature runs by its law, which is inherently by God, and because of that, the universe is autonomous, which means, it moves on its own with its system.³⁴ But nature is not autocratic, because in itself it has no guarantee of itself and cannot explain itself.³⁵

Because the universe is so strong and works based on the law inherent in itself, the existence of "natural causality" cannot be denied. But that does not mean that after God created nature (which works autonomously with its laws) then God rested. It does not also mean that God competes with the universe and also the will of humans. It also does not mean that God acts "as a compliment" to natural and human actions. Without God's actions, the activities of the universe and humans will become unruled, unpurposeful, and useless. Everything in the universe and also humans are directly related to God as they are related to each other.

It requires further interpretation of the statement mentioned above, that God is not an item among other items of the universe or just an existent among

³² <https://quranyusufali.com/3/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

³³ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, University of Chicago Press, 2009, 3.

³⁴ Kbbi.web.id, diakses pada 10 Feb 2020, 10.13 WIB.

³⁵ Fazlur Rahman, *op.cit.* 2.

other existents. He is "with" everything; He constitutes the integrity of everything.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

"Do not be like those who forgot God and (eventually) God caused them to forget themselves."(al-Hashr:19)³⁶

As everything is directly related to God, so is everything, *through* and *in* relation to other things, related to God as well. God, then, is the true meaning of reality, a meaning manifested, clarified, and brought home by the universe, helped even further by man. That everything in the universe is "signs" (verses) of God. His actions, which are meaningful and purposeful, are further developed by humans.

That is how the Qur'ān comes to emphasize and re-emphasize the power and majesty of God. But while this metaphysical truth is the real reason, there is a historical dimension to this emphasis as well and that is the polytheism of the pagan Arabs, who invoked and worshipped many deities besides God. To overcome this, the Qur'ān would say:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمْ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعُ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا

شَفَاعَةٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ () اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ

³⁶ Fazlur Rahman, *op.cit.* 3.

وَمَا خَلَقَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا
يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ ()

O you who believe! Spend of the wealth We have given you by way of sustenance, before the Day comes when there shall be no bargains, nor friendships, nor yet any intercession, and it is the disbelievers who are unjust. Allah alone (is God), there is no God but Him, the Alive, the Sustainer, neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and on the earth, who can, then, intercede with Him except whom He permits? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, while they encompass none of His knowledge, except what He permits. His Throne envelops the heavens and the earth and their preservation fatigues Him not, He is the High, the Great. (al-Baqarah:254-255)³⁷

Again:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ () هُوَ اللَّهُ
الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ
اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ () هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ()

He is God, other than Whom, there is none; He is the knower of the unseen and the seen, the Merciful, the Compassionate. He is the God other than Whom there is none, the Sovereign, the Holy, the One with peace and integrity, the Keeper of the Faith, the Protector, the Mighty, the One Whose Will is Power,

³⁷ Ibid.

the Most Supreme! Glory be to Him beyond what they (the pagans) associate with Him. He is the God, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner, to Whom belong beautiful names; whatever is in the heavens and the earth sings His glories, He is the Mighty One, the Wise One. (al-Hashr:22-24)³⁸

And once again in other verse:

أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ
بَهْجَةٍ مَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُنْبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ بَلَاءٌ لَهُمْ فَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ () أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ
قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ بَلَاءٌ
أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ () أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ
الْأَرْضِ أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَا تَدَّكَّرُونَ () أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَنْ يُرْسِلِ
الرِّيَّاحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ () أَمَّنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ
وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ قُلُوبٌ هَانُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ()

And who other than Him created the heavens and the earth and sent down for you water from the sky, whereby We cause to grow lush orchards, for it is not up to you to cause their trees to grow! Is there, then, a god beside God? Yet these are the people who ascribe partners to Him!

And who other than Him made the earth a firm abode (for you), and set rivers traversing through it, and put firm mountains therein and sealed off one sea from the other? Is there, then, a god beside God? Indeed, most of them do not know!

³⁸ Fazlur Rahman, *op.cit.* 4.

And who other than Him responds to the distressed one when he calls Him and He relieves him of the distress and Who has made you (mankind) His viceregents on earth? Is there, then, a god beside God? Little do you reflect!

And who other than Him guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea? And who sends forth winds heralding His mercy (rain)? Is there, then, a god beside God? Far exalted be He above what they associate with Him!

And who other than Him brings forth His creation and then re-creates it? And who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth. Is there, then, a god beside God? Say (O Muhammad!): Bring your proof if you are right (in associating others with God) (an-Naml:60-64)³⁹

While these passages emphasize God's lordship and power, they equally underline His infinite mercy. As these five verses make clear, God's lordship is expressed through His creation, His sustenance and provision of that creation, particularly and centrally of man, and finally, through re-creation in new forms. His creation of nature and man and nature for man is the most primordial mercy of God. His power, creation, and mercy are, therefore, not only fully co-extensive but fully interpenetrating and fully identical.⁴⁰

... قُلْ لِلَّهِ كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ...

"He has imposed the law of mercy upon Himself." (al-An'ām:12)⁴¹

... وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ...

"My mercy comprehends all." (al-A'rāf:156)⁴²

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

His very infinitude implies not a one-sided transcendence but equally His being "with" His creation. Note that He is nearer to man than is man's jugular vein (50. Qāf:16). Whenever a person commits a lapse (sin) and then sincerely regrets it and seeks God's pardon, God quickly returns to him. Indeed, among His often-mentioned attributes besides the "Merciful" (*al-Rahman*) and the "Compassionate" (*al-Rahim*) are the "Returner" (*al-Thawwab*) (al-Baqarah:37, 54, 128, 160; al-Mā'idah:39, 71; al-Tawbah:117, 118; Ṭā Hā:122, etc.) and the "Forgiver" (*al-Ghafur*) (Ghāfir:3; al-Baqarah:173,182, 192, 199, 218, 225, 226, 235; and about 116 other occurrences), which are almost invariably followed by "Compassionate", for those who genuinely repent, God transmutes their very lapses into goodness (al-Furqān:70).⁴³

God is, in fact, that Light whereby everything finds its proper being and its conduct:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ
الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا
يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ...

“God is the light of the heavens and the earth: the likeness of His Light is that of a niche wherein is set a lamp; the lamp is (encased) in a glass; this glass is (so brilliant) as though it were a pearly star. (The lamp) is lit by (the oil of) a blessed olive tree which is neither Eastern nor Western, and whose oil is apt to catch the light even though fire hardly touches it. (God is) Light upon Light and He guides to His Light whom He wills. . . .” (an-Nūr:35)⁴⁴

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Fazlur Rahman, *op.cit.* 5.

The anti-God forces, on the other hand, are:

أَوْ كَظُلُمَاتٍ فِي بَحْرٍ مُّجِيٍّ يَعْشَاهُ مَوْجٌ مِنْ فَوْقِهِ مَوْجٌ مِنْ فَوْقِهِ سَحَابٌ ظُلُمَاتٌ

بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ إِذَا أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُ لَمْ يَكِدْ يَرَاهَا وَمَنْ لَمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ

“Like multiple darknesses in a stormy sea which is covered by one wave upon another and these are themselves covered by (dark) clouds-layer upon layer of darkness. If one were to stretch out his own hands, he is apt not to see them; he whom God has denied His Light can get no light.” (an-Nūr:40)⁴⁵

While God's power and His greatness are, as it were, a tautology, for His power and greatness is the primary meaning of His all-comprehensiveness, the point of their being so often emphasized in the Qur'ān is to show up the dangerous and silliness of humans who come either to equate and identify finite beings with the Infinite One or to posit intermediary gods or powers between Him and His creation when He is directly and even intimately related with His creation.⁴⁶

But even more important is the fact that God exercises His greatness, power, and all-comprehensive presence primarily through the entire range of the manifestations of mercy, through being and creation, sustenance of that creation, guiding that creation to its destiny, and, finally, through a "return" to the creatures who, after willful alienation, sincerely wish to be reconciled to the source of their being, life, and guidance.

First, God does not create as a frivolity, pastime, or sport, without a serious purpose. It is incompatible with the power of the Powerful and the

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Fazlur Rahman, op.cit., 5.

mercy of the Merciful that He should produce toys for amusement or as a sheer whim, a blind Fate can do this but God cannot:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ

وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا ...

"Those (are believers) who remember God standing and sitting and lying down and reflect upon the creation of the heaven and the earth (and say): Our Lord! You have not created all this in vain." (Āli 'Imrān:191)⁴⁷

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ...

"We have not created the heaven and the earth and whatever is between them in vain." (Sād:27)⁴⁸

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَاعِبِينَ () لَوْ أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نَتَّخِذَ لَهُمْ لَاتَّخِذْنَاهُ

مِنْ لَدُنَّا إِنْ كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ()

"We have not created the heaven and the earth and whatever is between them in sport. If We wished to take a sport, we could have done it by Ourselves (not through Our creation), if We were to do that at all." (al-Anbiyā':16-17)⁴⁹

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

"Do you then think that We have created you purposelessly and that you will not be returned to Us? The True Sovereign is too exalted above that." (al-Mu'minūn:115)⁵⁰

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى

"Does man think that he will be left wondering (at his own whim)?" (al-Qiyāmah:36).⁵¹

Thus, not only does the Qur'ān part company with atheists and those who believe that the universe is a product of chance and a playing matter, but also with all those who believe that God produced the universe as a sport, including those Sufis who hold literally that God said (in *Hadith qudsi*), "I was a hidden treasure, but I wished to be known, therefore I created the creation." As the words of the Qur'ān have it, "If We wished to take a sport, we could have done it by Ourselves," and displaying oneself to oneself, if meant literally, is nothing but a sport. Also, if the world is a sport, all talk of guidance and misguidance and judgment in the Qur'anic sense (not in the sense of the rules of the sport!) is not only beside the point but a massive delusion.⁵²

The whole matter turns on a faith that is not blind but is rooted in the consideration whether this entire universe, organized and functioning the way it is, could be pure chance or whether it points to a purposeful creator. The Qur'anic dicta must also destroy belief in the cyclic universes, for no matter how attractive the idea of a cyclic universe may be to too many, particularly Greek thinkers and some modern astronomers, cyclic motion is incompatible with any purposefulness. It belongs more to the world of merry-go-rounds.⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Fazlur Rahman, op.cit., 6.

⁵³ Ibid.

While the purpose of man is to "serve" God, also to develop his higher potentialities in accordance with the "command" (*amr*) of God, through choice, and to use nature (which is automatically *Muslim* "obedient to God"), he must be provided with adequate means of sustenance and of "finding the right way." Hence God, Who in His outgoing mercy brought nature and man into being, in His unbroken sustained mercy has endowed man with the necessary cognition and volition to create knowledge and use it to realize his just and fair ends.

It is at this point that man's crucial test comes: will he use his knowledge and power for good or evil, for "success or loss," or for "reforming the earth or corrupting it" (as the Qur'ān constantly puts it)? This is an extremely delicate task. The question of questions for man is whether he can control history towards good ends or whether he will succumb to its vagaries?

For this reason, God's mercy reaches its logical zenith in "sending Messengers", "revealing Books," and showing a man "the Way". This "guidance" (*hidāya*) is also kneaded into man's primordial nature insofar as the distinction between good and evil is "ingrained in his heart" (ash-Shams:8) and insofar as men have made a covenant with God in pre-eternity to recognize Him as their sovereign (al-A'rāf:172). Man, often little heeds these and hence, particularly at times of moral crisis, God sends His messages, for it is the moral aspect of man's behavior which is most slippery and difficult to control and yet most crucial for his survival and success. Hence judgment is an imperative upon this whole process of mercy from creation through preservation to guidance, since it is through guidance that man is expected to develop that inner torch (called *taqwa* by the Qur'ān) whereby he can discern between right and wrong. He is to use the torch primarily against his own self-deception in assessing and judging his actions.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Fazlur Rahman, op.cit, 6.

This entire chain, creation – preservation – guidance - judgment, all as manifestations of mercy, is so utterly reasonable that the Qur’ān states surprise and dismay that it is questioned at all. The two points primarily questioned are the beginning and the end: God's role as The Creator and His role as Judge.

Even some of those who believe in God (in some sense of "believe") think that judgment also calling to account, is too harsh an idea for a merciful God. But such religious ideologies as having put their whole emphasis on God's love and self-sacrifice for the sake of His children have done little service to the moral maturity of a man. It is correct that children cannot be really judged, they can only be punished after a fashion. But it is surely unreasonable to hold that man is still a child even though his *taqwa*-torch is expected to spark and sparkle? There is a world of difference between a child and a mature delinquent, else, when is a man supposed to come of age?

That was a picture of a doting father and a spoilt child is hit directly by the Qur’anic verses that prohibit child-play and frivolity on God's part, as well as those verses that criticize Jews and Christians for laying proprietary claims upon God.

But the most vicious for the Qur’ān are those who formally or substantively deny God's existence: materialistic atheists and "those who assign partners to God." This last phrase is the real high-stress point. Given faith in God, the rest follows in a logical nexus. But, if faith in God is not there, then all the rest, preservation of and order in nature (i.e., Providence), guidance, and judgment on "the end of affairs" (*‘āqibat al-umūr*; i.e., eschatology), either become simply dubious or at least become so many discrete issues, each to be discussed separately and accepted or rejected, that the entire chain falls to pieces. This is why God is the cementing piece of the whole chain, giving it meaning.

It is in this context that our earlier outline of the Qur'ān's argument from nature and its orderly working assumes its full significance: the Qur'ān does not "prove" God but "points to" Him from the existing universe. Even if there were no ordered universe, but only a single being, it would still point beyond itself because it is a mere contingent; but there is not a mere single contingent, there is a whole ordered and perfectly working universe. To many, this order, where all parts are interdependent, is less in need of a God than is a single contingent being, for in an ordered whole all parts play a role in supporting it and each other, without the need for an exterior being. Yet, although the parts of any organism are mutually supportive, the organism as a whole does not explain its own genesis.⁵⁵

Some contemporary thinkers have suggested that the very concept of "order" in the Universe is meaningless: "order" presupposes a function or a norm with reference to which order is spoken of, and hence any concept of order is related to the subjectivity of our own minds. Rahman gives the analogy, my office is ordered if books, files, desk, etc., are in places where they facilitate my work rather than hinder it. Therefore, the application of the term to the universe is unwarranted.

This argument, which seeks to counter the first, unjustifiably assimilates an objective order to a subjective expectation born of certain human practices. Regularity, correspondence, and proportionate variations in natural phenomena were termed "order" by natural scientists without any necessary reference to expectations born of human practices, which is why this objective order is "discovered." Hence many atheistic and agnostic scientists could recognize a natural order without recognizing God.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Fazlurrahman, *Tema-tema Pokok Al-qur'an*.,,., 16.

⁵⁶ Fazlur Rahman, *op.cit*, 7.

Now comes the most crucial point in the thought of the Qur'ān. Is it more rational to believe that this natural order, so vast and so complex, is also a purposive order, or is it more rational to believe that it is pure chance? Can a chance order be cohesive and lasting order? Does not change itself, in fact, presuppose a framework of more fundamental purposiveness?⁵⁷

Faith in God, though indeed a faith, for the Qur'ān rests on stronger grounds, in fact, is stronger, than many pieces of empirical but contingent evidence (only work for some individualism). For, it is much less reasonable, indeed, it is *irrational*, to say that all this gigantic and lasting natural order is pure chance. Hence the recurring Qur'anic invitations and exhortations, "*Do you not reflect?*" "*Do you not think?*" "*Do you not take heed?*" And let us repeat that this "reflecting," "pondering," or "heeding" has nothing to do with devising formal proofs for God's existence or "inferring" God's existence, but with "discovering" God and developing a certain perception by "lifting the veil" from the mind.⁵⁸

A person who is endowed with such perception becomes correctly attuned to reality, for the very basis of supporting him; "*he fears nothing but God,*" he is not afraid of losing anything except God's support. His personality becomes so fortified that it is immune from any assailant. God is his only helper, the sole refuge, all other imagined havens are hopeless:

"Those who have taken friends besides God, their likeness is that of the spider which takes for itself a house, but the weakest of all is the spider's house, if only they knew!" (al- 'Ankabūt:41)⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Fazlur Rahman, *op.cit*, 7.

⁵⁹ Fazlur Rahman, *op.cit*, 8.

The short but emphatic sura *al-Ikhlāṣ*, which has been rightly regarded by the Islamic tradition as presenting the essence of the whole Qur'ān, calls God "*aṣ-Ṣamad*," which means an immovable and indestructible rock, without cracks or pores, which serves as the sure refuge from floods. To base oneself on anything short of this rock, this basis of all being is "to be a loser" (as the Qur'ān puts it recurrently), for it means that one has chosen to live in a spider's web. The deeds of men based on other than the rock "have no weight," no matter how high they might regard them. These deeds are without reference to the ultimate basis of life and the source of all value; they are, therefore, "like motes scattered around" (al-Furqān:23). Only God gives that value and unity and wholeness to life which makes thoughts and deeds worthwhile and meaningful; any partialization of reality, parochialism, fragmentation of truth, is *shirk* ("assigning partners to God") and "God will not forgive *shirk*, but may forgive any sin lighter than that" (an-Nisā':48).

God, then, becomes the friend of and cooperates with a person who has "discovered" Him. Yet, God's friendship may not be presumed at any point by either an individual or any community, even though the Qur'ān speaks of God's promises to individuals and communities. One must exercise *taqwa*, meaning that if one has the proper perception, then one must be constantly "on one's guard" (which is the literal meaning of *taqwa*). One cannot take God for granted since no individual or community in the world can at any time appropriate Truth; in fact, the very claim, whether made by an individual or a community for itself or by a community on behalf of its real or putative founder, amounts to a confession of lack of *taqwa*. Muhammad (PBUH), the bearer of the Qur'anic Revelation, is told in the Qur'ān that God can cut off Revelation from him and "seal your heart" (17.al-Isrā':86; 42.ash-Shūrā:24). While speaking of the Christian belief in the divinity of Jesus, the Qur'ān says.

... قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ وَمَنْ فِي

الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ...

"Who is to prevent God if He wished to destroy Jesus son of Mary and his mother and whoever lives on the earth for to God belongs the rule of the heavens and the earth" (al-Mā'idah:17).⁶⁰

We now come back to the doctrine of the power of God. This power issues forth in the merciful creativity of God, in terms of "measuring" things, producing them "according to a certain order or measure," not haphazardly or blindly. But it should be noted here that in Arabic the term for both power and measuring out is *qadar* and the Qur'ān uses *qadar* in both senses. In pre-Islamic Arabia, this term, more often in its plural form *aqdār*, was used to mean "Fate," a blind force that "measured out" or predetermined matters that were beyond man's control, in particular his birth, the sources of his sustenance, and his death. It was a pessimistic belief, but it was not a belief in Fate's predetermination of *all* human acts.⁶¹

The Qur'ān took over this term but changed the concept of a blind and inexorable Fate into that of an all-powerful, purposeful, and merciful God. This all-powerful God, through His merciful creativity, "measures out" everything, bestowing upon everything the range of its potentialities, its laws of behavior, in sum, its character. This measuring, on the one hand, ensures the orderliness of nature and on the other expresses the most fundamental, unbridgeable difference between the nature of God and the nature of man: the Creator's measuring implies an infinitude wherein no measured creature—no matter how great its powers and potentialities (as in the case of a man), may literally share.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

It is precisely this belief in such sharing that is categorically denied by the Qur'anic doctrine of *shirk* or "participation in Godhead."⁶²

Let us make the concept of this measuring more precise: God, not anyone else, has created the laws by which nature works. This does not mean that man cannot discover those laws and apply them for the good of man, for this is what a farmer or a scientist does. The Qur'ān invites man to discover the laws of nature and exploit it for human benefit. God has made certain laws whereby a sperm fertilizes a female egg and, after due process, a baby matures in the mother's womb; and the Qur'ān comments:

فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ الْقَادِرُونَ

"So, We determined (these laws) and how fine measurers We are". (al-Mursalāt:23)⁶³

This in itself does not mean that man cannot discover the laws of the process whereby sperm and an egg meet and then, at a certain temperature and with certain materials and other conditions, produce a perfected baby; and then apply those laws to produce a baby in a tube, for example. Many people think that this is "vying with" God and trying to interfere in His work and share His divinity, but the real worry is not that man is trying to displace nature or imitate God, for man is encouraged to do so by the Qur'ān. The fear, on the contrary, is that man may "vie with" the devil to produce distortions of nature and thus violate moral law.⁶⁴

If the Qur'ān expresses power and measuring through the same term, *qadar*, it uses another term, *amr* ("command"), in close association with

⁶² Fazlur Rahman, *op.cit.*, 9.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

"measuring" and, so far as nature is concerned, to mean the same thing: the laws of nature express the Command of God. But nature does not and cannot disobey God's commands and cannot violate natural laws. Hence the entirety of nature is called *Muslim* by the Qur'ān, for it surrenders itself to and obeys the command of God:

أَفَعَيْرِ دِينَ اللَّهِ يَبْعُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا ...

"Do they, then, seek obedience (or religion) other than that to God, while it is to Him that everyone (and everything) in the heavens and the earth submits?" (Āli 'Imrān:83)⁶⁵

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ ...

"The seven heavens and the earth and whatever is therein sing the glories of God" (al-Isrā':44; also al-Hadīd:1; al-Hashr:1; as-Saff:1; ar-Ra'd:15; an-Nahl:49; al-Hajj: 18; ar-Rahmān:6; al-A'rāf:206; al-Anbiyā':19)⁶⁶

From the concept of *qadir*, the powerful and the measurer, there necessarily follows that of *āmir*, the Commander. Just as everything is under His "measurement" (*maqdūr*), so is everything under His Command (*ma'mūr*). The fundamental difference between man and nature is that whereas natural command disallows disobedience, commands to man presuppose a choice and free volition on his part. Hence what is a natural command in nature becomes a moral command in man. This gives man a unique position in the order of creation, at the same time it charges him with a unique responsibility which he can discharge only through *taqwa*. Hence man is called upon to serve God alone and abandon all false gods, including his own desires and the wishful

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

whisperings of his soul, for all these bars him from an objective perception of the whole reality, narrow his vision, and fragment his being. The following categorical declarations are typical of the very frequent Qur'anic statements on the subject:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ () لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ () وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ () وَلَا

أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدْتُمْ () وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ () لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ()

Say, O disbelievers! I serve not what you serve and you are not about to serve what I serve. Neither am I going to serve what you have been serving, nor are you willing to serve what I serve. For you your obedience (or religion), for me, mine! (al-Kāfirūn:1-6)⁶⁷

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ () تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ

مِنْ فَوْقِهِنَّ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ ...

To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth, He is the High, the Great. The heavens above them are apt to be rent asunder (because of the worship of others than God), while angels glorify the praises of their Lord. (ash-Shūrā:3-4)⁶⁸

قُلْ أَعْيَرَ اللَّهُ أَخِيذٌ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعَمُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ

أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ () قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي

عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ()

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Fazlur Rahman, op.cit. 10.

Say: Shall I take a protector-friend other than God, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, He Who feeds and is not fed? Say: I have been commanded to be the first to surrender (to God) . . . Say: I fear, should I disobey my Lord, the punishment of a mighty day. (al-An‘ām:14, 15)⁶⁹

تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشَقُّ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا () أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَنِ

وَلَدًا () وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَنِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ()

The heavens are apt to split asunder and the earth is about to be cleft and the mountains about to go to pieces that they (the Christians, like the Meccan pagans) have called a son for the Merciful, while it does not behoove the Merciful to take a son. (Maryam:90-92)⁷⁰

قُلْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَنْ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ قُلِ اللَّهُ يَهْدِي لِلْحَقِّ أَفَمَنْ يَهْدِي إِلَى

الْحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُتَّبَعَ أَمْ لَا يَهْدِي إِلَّا أَنْ يُهْدَىٰ فَمَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ

Say: God guides to the truth; is He who guides to the truth more deserving of being followed or he who cannot find the way unless he is guided to it—what is wrong with you? How do you judge? (Yūnus:35)⁷¹

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلاً

Did you see the one who has taken his own desire to be his god? Can you be a guardian over him? (al-Furqān:43)⁷²

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٍ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا
 ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ وَإِنْ يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ
 وَالْمَطْلُوبُ () مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ()

O people! A parable is being cited, listen well to it. Those (gods) whom you call upon besides God can never create a fly, even if all of them came together to do so. And if a fly were to take away something from them, they can never get it back from it! Both the seeker and the sought are equally helpless. They have not estimated God rightly (in assigning partners to Him), God is powerful, mighty. (al-Hajj:73-74)⁷³

This, then, is the general picture of God that emerges from the Qur'ān. What shall we say about the frequent statements of so many Westerners, in some cases even made in the name of the scholarship, that the God of the Qur'ān is a loveless, remote, capricious, and even tyrannical power which arbitrarily causes some people to go astray and others to come to guidance, creates some people for hell and others for paradise, without any rhyme or reason? Even the blind Fate of the pre-Islamic Arabs was not quite like this, let alone the creative, sustaining, merciful, and purposeful God of the Qur'ān. Further, the picture is utterly incompatible with the most fundamental outline of the doctrine of God described above. If the Western allegations are correct, they must square with this outline; otherwise, our outline, based on numerous verses of the Qur'ān, must be rejected as false.⁷⁴

There is no doubt that the Qur'ān does make frequent statements to the effect that God leads aright whom He will and leads astray whom He will, or

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Fazlur Rahman, op.cit, 10.

that God has "sealed up" some people's hearts to truth, etc. (al-Baqarah:7, 142, 213, 272; Ibrāheem:4; an-Nahl:93; an-Nūr:35; al-Qaşāş:56; ar-Rūm:29; Fāṭir:8), although far *more often it says that*

وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ

"God does not lead aright the unjust ones",⁷⁵

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

"God does not guide aright the transgressors",⁷⁶

(al-Baqarah:26, 258, 264; Āli 'Imrān:86; 5.al-Mā'idah:16, 51, 67, 108; 6.al- in'ām:88, 144; al-Tawbah:19, 24, 37, 80, 109; Yūsuf:52; ar-Ra'd:27; an-Nahl:37, 107; al-Qasas:50; az-Zumar:3; Ghāfir:28; ash-Shūrā:13; al-Aḥqāf:10; as-Saff:5:

فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ

"when they went crooked, God bent their hearts crooked" (aş-Şaff:7; al-Jumu'ah:5; al-Munāfiqūn:6).⁷⁷

This means that man does something to deserve guidance or misguidance. Nature and God are not two different factors; God is more of a dimension or meaning than an item among items. Similarly, with regard to man's actions and his destiny *vis-à-vis* God, God and man are not rivals therein, as the later Mu'tazila and Ash'aria theologians thought so that the formerly made man the sole agent and denied God's role totally in order to make men "completely responsible," while the latter denied any power to the man to safeguard the

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

"omnipotence of God." The Qur'ān is true to the realities of moral life, for it affirms both sides of the tension.⁷⁸

If this kind of analysis shows anything, it is that the Qur'ān must be so studied that its concrete unity will emerge in its fullness, and that to select certain verses from the Qur'ān to project a partial and subjective point of view may satisfy the subjective observer but it necessarily does violence to the Qur'ān itself and results in extremely dangerous abstractions.⁷⁹

It is notorious how frequently Muslims themselves, let alone Westerners, have mutilated the Qur'ān by projecting their own points of view or that of their "schools" of thought; except that with so many Westerners both unconscious prejudice and deliberate distortion have played roles, as well as the study of verses of the Qur'ān in abstract isolation. The Qur'ān, as the Word of God, is as concrete as the Command or the Law of God, indeed, as God Himself, and represents the depth and breadth of life itself; it will refuse to be straight-jacketed by intellectual and cultural bias.⁸⁰

Yet, we must keep clear of pantheism and relativism, the most attractive and powerful of all spiritual drugs. When we say that God is not an item among items, we certainly do not mean to suggest that God *is* everything or *is* in everything, even though His presence is all-pervasive. When we say that God is concrete and that He cannot be narrowed by interpretations or approaches that are intellectual and cultural abstractions, we certainly do not imply that if all these approaches are mechanically combined, the aggregate could represent the truth.

⁷⁸ Fazlur Rahman, op.cit, 11.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

On the point that God is not in things and that creation is other than God, the whole of the Qur'ān upholds this, but verses like "if We wished to take a sport, We could have done it by Ourselves" (al-Anbiyā':17) make it absolutely clear that the creation is not some kind of an intra-God drama, although it is witnessed by God as His creation and it witnesses God as its Creator.

As for the point that all paths actually are taken by man do not, put together, represent the truth about God, this is evidenced by an-Naḥl:9: "the only straight path goes to God, while others are deviant." This path is the full recognition of God as God, the path that is of sole interest and importance to man. All others are sectarian and divisive of mankind:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِبَعًا لَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ
يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ () مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَلِهَا وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى
إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ () قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا مِثْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ () قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
() لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ()

“Those people who have cut up their religion into sects, you have nothing to do with them (O Muhammad!): their affair is up to God and He shall let them know what they have been doing. He who does one good thing shall get back ten times of it in reward, while he who does one wrong, will not be requited except equal to it, and they shall not be wronged. Say (O Muhammad!): My Lord has guided me to the straight path, an upright faith, the religion of Abraham the Hanif (one who recognized the unity of religion rather than followed sects), and he was not one who assigned partners to God. Say: My prayer and my piety, my life and my death are for God, the Lord of the World.

*There is no partner with Him. This is what I have been commanded and I am the first of those who surrender to God (I am the first of the Muslims)”. (al-An‘ām:159-163).*⁸¹

C. Biography Toshihiko Izutsu

Toshihiko Izutsu was born in Tokyo on May 4, 1914, and passed away in Kamakura on January 7, 1993. Toshihiko came from a family who adheres to the teachings of Zen Buddhism, even his father was a Zen teacher. Therefore, he has also get used to practicing the teachings since childhood. As a Zen teacher, his father taught Zen teachings by writing the word "*Kokoro*" (mind) on a piece of paper. The writing was given to him to stare at a certain time every day. Then at one time, his father ordered to erase the writing and asked him to see the writing back in his mind, by focusing attention on the writing continuously. Then, his father ordered him to erase the words in his mind, and stare at the living thoughts behind the written words. The experience of contemplation in practicing Zen which has been carried out since young seems to have influenced the way of thinking and his search for the depth of philosophical thought and mysticism.⁸²

He went through the process of education from elementary school to college in his own country, Japan. He took his tertiary education at the Faculty of Economics, Keio University, Tokyo. However, before he finished studying there, he moved to the Department of English Literature because he wanted to be guided by Prof. Junzaburo Nishiwaki, and completed his education there in 1954.⁸³

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Fathurrahman, *Al-Qur`an dan Tafsirnya dalam Perspektif Toshihiko Izutsu*, Tesis, Jakarta, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2010, 52.

⁸³ Wahyu Kurniawan, *Makna Khalifah Dalam Al-Qur`An: Tinjauan Semantik Al-Qur`an Toshihiko Izutsu*, Skripsi, Salatiga, IAIN Salatiga, 2017, 32.

Finished studying there, Toshihiko decided to devote himself to the institute as a lecturer. In addition to serving, there he also developed his career as an intellectual until in 1950 he earned a degree as a professor. Then at the request of Wilfred Cantwell, who was a director at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, Izutsu was invited to be a guest professor at the university, from 1962 to 1968. Returning from there he became a professor from 1969 to 1975.⁸⁴

His journey in the intellectual world continued with an invitation from Sayed Hossein Nasr to teach at the Imperial Academy of Philosophy in 1975 and ended in 1979 until then he returned to his homeland and became emeritus professor at Keio University until his death.⁸⁵ Besides, Izutsu was also active in several scientific institutions, such as Nihon Gakushin (The Japan Academy) in 1983, the International Institute of Philosophy in Paris in 1971, and the Academy of Arabic Language in Cairo, Egypt in 1960. He also was a guest at Rockefeller from 1959 to 1961 at America and Eranos Lecturer on Oriental Philosophy in Switzerland between 1967 and 1982.⁸⁶

Toshihiko Izutsu is a genius scholar. He mastered many world languages. This capability enables him to investigate world cultures and explain specifically the substance of various religious and philosophical systems through his native language. His field of inquiry is vast, covering ancient Greek philosophy, medieval Western philosophy, Islamic mysticism (Arabic and Persian), Jewish philosophy, Indian philosophy, Confucian thought, Chinese Taoism, and Zen philosophy. His knowledge

⁸⁴ Fathurrahman, *Al-Qur`an dan Tafsirnya* ..., 51.

⁸⁵ Wahyu Kurniawan, *Makna Khalifah Dalam Al-Qur`An* ..., 32.

⁸⁶ Wahyu Kurniawan, *op.cit.*, 33.

allowed us to see the issue from a variety perspective so that it can produce a holistic view of one problem.⁸⁷

Toshihiko's perspective on Islam is a thought formed by Zen Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism, and Shintoism. All three are elements of classical Japanese culture. Then with that thought, he was met with the world of the revelation of the Qur'an and Islamic thought. This is the difference between Toshihiko and Orientalist scholars formed by Jewish and Christian culture. According to Sayed Hossein Nasr, Toshihiko Izutsu's work in the field of Islamic studies shows how important a worldview is used as a basis for scholars to study other intellectual worlds and how shallow the accusations made by so many Western scholars according to their understanding, whether realized or not, that is an anti-metaphysical, secular and rationalism of the Enlightenment age.⁸⁸

Ahmad Syahidah, when writing the introduction in Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani (et. Al), *Consciousness and Reality; Studies in Memory of Toshihiko Izutsu*, (Boston: Brill, 2000), expressed his admiration while saying that by combining Buddhist sensitivity, traditional Japanese discipline, and extraordinary talents in learning language and philosophical intelligence which includes analytic and synthetic abilities, it can cross cultural borders and intellectual boundaries, Toshihiko Izutsu can easily enter a universe of different meanings with great insight. He was not only an expert in the main languages of three civilizations: The Far East, West, and Islam but also his intellectual heritage. He wrote very competently not only about Lao-Tse but also about Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sandra as well as Western philosophers.⁸⁹

In the course of his life, Izutsu also read the works written by the mystic West. This experience led him to an understanding that was very contrary to

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Fathurrahman, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya*, 53.

⁸⁹ Fathurrahman, op.cit, 54.

his previous beliefs. If his youth he was preoccupied with Eastern spiritualism, then turned to Western spiritualism and devoted his attention to the study of Greek philosophy. From the experience of thinking about Greek philosophy such as Socrates, Aristotle, and Plotinus, which is a kind of mysticism, found the source of philosophical thought and at the same time as the depth of philosophy.⁹⁰

As a prolific and world-recognized scholar, Toshihiko Izutsu has produced no less than 120 papers, both in the form of books and articles. Of the many writings of Toshihiko Izutsu, two works deserve special attention regarding the study of the Qur'an. The first is *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*. According to Toshihiko Izutsu, the concept of thought about ethics in the Qur'an can be classified into three groups: *First*, a discussion that shows and describes God's attributes; *Second*, the discussion explaining various aspects of human fundamental attitudes towards God; and *Third*, the discussion that shows the principles and rules of behavior that belong to and live in an Islamic society. Of the three Qur'anic concepts about ethics, Toshihiko Izutsu focuses on discussing only the second concept. This does not mean that he abandoned the other two concepts altogether, because according to him the three groups of concepts did not stand apart, but had very close relations. That is because the world view of the Qur'an is basically theocentric.⁹¹

The second book dealing with the interpretation of the Qur'an is *God and Man in the Qur'an: Semantics of the Qur'an Weltanschauung*.¹³¹ From the title of this book, clearly Toshihiko Izutsu focuses the discussion on the Qur'anic concept of relations between God and humans. The relationship

⁹⁰ Wahyu Kurniawan, *Makna Khalifah Dalam Al-Qur`An ...*, 35.

⁹¹ Fathurrahman, *Al-Qur`an dan Tafsirnya ...*, 54-55.

between God and humans based on the Qur'an, according to him, has four forms, namely: ontological, communicative, master-servant, and ethics.⁹²

D. The Concept of God According to Toshihiko Izutsu

Allah, according to the Qur'an, is not only the supreme but also the Only Being worthy to be called 'being' in the full sense of the word, a reality which nothing in the whole world can be opposed. Ontologically, the Qur'anic world is most evidently theocentric, that God stands in the very center of the world of being, and all other things, human or non-human, are His creatures, and such infinitely inferior to Him in the hierarchy of being. There can be, in this sense, nothing that would stand opposed to Him. And this is precisely what was Qur'an meant, semantically, Allah is the highest focus-word in the vocabulary of the Qur'an, presiding over all the semantic fields and, consequently, the entire system.⁹³

Related with the faith to God, the People of Scripture in pre-Islamic times, in the Qur'anic view, had conspicuously degenerated. Originally, they were men of the true religion, who, following their prophets, believed in God and His words. By the time Islam arose, however, they had consciously falsified the truth that had been revealed to them by God, adopting some parts of it that pleased them, and rejecting or concealing others. In short, the original pure religion, which the Qur'an calls the "Hanif tic religion" symbolized by Abraham, the monotheist, hanif had been corrupted into a kind of disbelief. Islam, according to what the Qur'an itself declares, was a movement for

⁹² Ibid, 55.

⁹³ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia: pendekatan semantik terhadap al-Qur'an*, pengantar Dr. Machasin, 1997, Yogyakarta, PT Tiara Wacana, 77.

cleaning up these religious scandals with a view to reconstructing the true monotheism in its pure original form.⁹⁴

The name of Allah, for instance, was not at all unknown to the pre-Islamic Arabs. This is evidenced by the fact that the name appears not only in pre-Islamic poetry and compound personal names but also in old inscriptions. At least some people or some tribes in Arabia believed in a god called Allah and even seem to have gone to the extent of knowing Him as the creator of heaven and earth, as is easy to see from some of the Qur'anic verses. Among people of this type even the highest position seems to have been assigned to Allah in the hierarchy of polytheism, namely in the capacity of the "Lord of the House", the Ka'ba at Makkah, the other gods being regarded as so many mediators between this supreme God and human beings. This latter conception of the divine hierarchy most clearly reflected in the Qur'an. In Surah al-Zumar: 3, we hear some polytheists saying:

مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ

*"We only serve them (i.e. worship other gods) that they may bring us near to Allah."*⁹⁵

In much the same sense, in Surah al-Ahqaf, the gods besides Allah are regarded as qurban, lit. means of approaching, that is propitiation and intercession. There, in reference to those ancient cities that went to destruction as a result of their stubborn refusal to believe in Allah, it is asked with biting sarcasm: "Why, then, did they not help those people, the gods that they had taken to themselves besides Allah as propitiators?"

⁹⁴ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 83.

⁹⁵ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur'an*, Kuala Lumpur: Islamic book trust, 2002, 6.

فَلَوْلَا نَصَرَهُمُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قُرْبَانًا آلِهَةً⁹⁶

These and many other verses show clearly that the existence of a god called Allah and even his highest position among the divinities were known and acknowledged in Jahiliya, but He was, after all, but one of the gods. This age-old system of religious values was gravely endangered when it was proclaimed by the Prophet of Islam that this supreme God was not only supreme in the relative sense of the highest in the hierarchy but absolutely supreme, and also unique, i.e., the one and only God in existence, degrading thereby all other gods to the position of *batil* (false) as opposed to *haqq* (real), in other words, mere names without any reality, mere products of fancy and imagination. If the Arabs were to accept this new teaching, the general situation would have to suffer a complete change and repercussions would not only make themselves felt in the relatively confined domain of religious ideas but practically all spheres of life, both social and individual, would have to be thereby, affected. No wonder formidable opposition to this movement under Muhammad began to manifest itself immediately and grew around him.⁹⁷

It is to be noticed that this did not mean a mere change in the Arab conception of the nature of Allah alone, it meant also a drastic and radical change of the whole conceptual system about which we talked in the preceding section. The new Islamic conception of the supreme God affected profoundly the whole structure of the vision of the universe. For the first time in the history of the Arabs, a monotheistic and theocentric system was established, a system whose center was occupied by the one and only God as the sole source of all human actions, and, indeed, of all forms of being and existence. All the existent things and values were thereby subjected to a complete rearrangement and a

⁹⁶ Surah Al-ahqaf, ayat 28.

⁹⁷ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia* ,,,, 6.

new allotment. The elements of the universe came, without one single exception, to be uprooted from their old soil, and transplanted into a new field; each one of them was assigned a new place, and new relationships were established between them. Concepts that had formerly been quite foreign to each other were now brought into close connections; contrariwise, concepts that had been closely related to each other in the old system came to be separated in the new one.⁹⁸

In the realm of supernatural beings, the acknowledgment of the position of Allah as the sole Lord of the whole universe deprived, as noted above all the other so-called gods (*Alihah*) of all reality. They were now “mere names”, not corresponding to any real entities existing outside of language. In the terminology of modern semantics, we should say that in this conception the term *ilāha* (pi. *Alihah*), when applied to anything other than Allah Himself is nothing but a word having connotation but no denotation.⁹⁹

In Surah Yusuf:

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ

*“That which you worship apart from Him is nothing but names you have named, yourselves, and your fathers. God has sent down no authority? touching them.”*¹⁰⁰

Besides the so-called gods, there were also in Jahiliya a few other types of supernatural beings that were worshipped, feared, and venerated in varying degrees according to places and tribes: angels, demons, and jinn. These were all taken up and incorporated in the new system of Islamic world-conception,

⁹⁸ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia* ,,,, 7.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur'an*,, 6.

but with some fundamental modifications with regard to their respective position and function in the general scheme.

a. The Word Allah, ‘Basic’ and ‘Relational’ Meanings

As we all know in using the semantic method, Toshihiko first looks for semantic elements in the form of the basic meaning and the relational meaning of a keyword that is being discussed. As Toshihiko has pointed out repeatedly in the course of the previous account, Allah is the highest ‘focus-word’ in the Qur’anic system, which is surpassed by no other word in rank and importance. The Weltanschauung of the Qur’an is essentially theocentric, and quite naturally in this system, the concept of Allah reigns over the whole from above and exerts a deep influence on the semantic structure of all the key-words. Whatever aspect of the Qur’anic though one may wish to study, one must-have from the outset a clear idea as to how this concept is structured semantically.¹⁰¹

The name of Allah itself is common to Jahiliya and Islam. When, in other words, the Qur’anic Revelation began to use this word, it was not introducing a new name of God, a name strange and alien to the ears of the contemporary Arabs. The first problem, then, that we must answer is: Was the Qur’anic concept of Allah a continuation of the pre-Islamic one, or did the former represent a complete break with the latter? Were there some essential ties between the two concepts signified by the same name? Or was it a simple matter of a common word used for two different objects?

¹⁰¹ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 101.

As regards the ‘basic’ meaning of Allah, it may remark that many Western scholars according to Toshihiko have compared rightly the word in its formal aspect with the Greek *ho Theos* which means quite simply “the God”. On such an abstract level the name was common to all Arab tribes. In pre-Islamic times each tribe, as a rule, had its own local god or divinity known by a proper name. So, at first, each tribe may have meant its own local divinity when it used an expression equivalent in meaning to “the God”; this is quite probable. But the very fact that people began to designate their own local divinity by the abstract form of “the God” must have paved the way for the growth of an abstract notion of God without any localizing qualification and then, following this, for a belief in the supreme God common to all the tribes.¹⁰²

Besides, it must be remembered there were the Jews and the Christians with whom the Arabs had constant opportunities of close cultural contact. And naturally, these Jews and Christians both used the same word Allah to denote their own Biblical God. This must-have exerted a great influence on the development of the pre-Islamic concept of Allah among the Arabs towards a higher concept than that of a mere tribal divinity, not only among the town dwellers but also among the pure Bedouins of the desert.

However, this may be, it is certain from the Qur’an alone, that by the time Muhammad began to preach, the pagan Arabs had come to cherish at least a vague idea, and perhaps also a vague belief in Allah as the highest God standing above the level of local idols. Thus, much we may reasonably assume as the ‘basic’ meaning of the word Allah

¹⁰² Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 103.

in Jahiliya. And this much meaning, at least, must the word have carried into the Islamic system when the Qur'an began to use it as the name of the God of Islamic Revelation.¹⁰³

All the historical evidence that has come down to us speaks eloquently against this view. Since Jahiliya and Islam have always been put in sharp contrast, we are almost instinctively inclined to think that there must have occurred a complete break in every respect between the two when Islam arose. However, the Qur'an itself bears abundant testimony to the fact that the matter was not so simple.¹⁰⁴

Semantically, it implies before anything that this word, in addition to its 'basic' meaning, had acquired in the Jahiliya system a great deal of 'relational' meaning peculiar to the Jahiliya Weltanschauung. And all these 'relational' elements must have been present in the minds of the people of Makkah who listened to the Qur'anic recitation, at least in the first period of Muhammad's prophetic career, because they were still completely heathen, and were still living in the old traditional Jahiliya system of concepts. To put it in another way, when the Islamic Revelation began, the pagan Arabs of Makkah could possibly have no other way of understanding the word Allah than by associating with it all the semantic elements that were already present in their minds. This was the first big semantic problem which faced the Prophet Muhammad when he started his prophetic career.

Certainly, of all the 'relational' elements that had grown around the concept of Allah in the system of Jahiliya, Islam found some quite

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 104.

erroneous, incompatible with its new religious conception, and it fought strenuously against them and against those who upheld them. The chief of those objectionable elements was the idea that Allah, although admittedly the supreme God, allowed the existence of so-called ‘associates’ (*shuraka*) besides Him.

But apart from this polytheistic element and some other less important points, the Qur’an acknowledges that the general concept of Allah entertained by the contemporary Arabs was surprisingly close to the Islamic concept of God. The Qur’an even wonders in some important verses why the people who have such a right understanding of God can be so obstinate in refusing to admit the truth of the new teaching.

In considering the problem of the development among the pre-Islamic Arabs of the ‘relational’ meaning of the word Allah, Toshihiko thinks it is essential that we should distinguish between three different cases and examine the matter very carefully from the three different angles.

1. The first is the pagan concept of Allah, which is purely Arabian, the case in which we see the pre-Islamic Arabs themselves talking about “Allah” as they understand the word in their peculiar way. The interesting point is that pre-Islamic literature is not the only source of information we have at hand on the subject; full first-hand information is obtainable from an extremely vivid description of the actual situation given by the Qur’an itself.
2. The case in which we observe the Jews and the Christians of pre-Islamic times using the very word Allah in referring to their own God. In this case ‘Allah’ means of course the God of the Bible, a

typically monotheistic concept of God. Exceedingly interesting examples are found in this respect, for instance, in the work of ‘Adi bin Zayd, a well-known Arab Christian, the Court poet of al-Hirah.

3. Last, the case in which we see the pagan Arabs non-Christian, non-Jewish pure Jahiliya Arabs handling the Biblical concept of God under the name of ‘Allah’. This happens, for instance, when a Bedouin poet finds occasion, as he often does in Jahiliya, to compose a poem in praise of a Christian king, his patron. In such a case, he is using the word 'Allah', consciously or unconsciously, in the Christian sense and from the Christian point of view, despite the fact that he himself is a pagan. Quite apart from the problem as to how deep was the degree of the Arab understanding of the Christian concept of God in general, it is, I think undeniable that very often in such cases, particularly when the poet happened to be a man of keen intellectual curiosity like Nabighah and al-A‘sha al-Akbar, or a man of a deep religious nature like Labid, that considerable effort was exerted on their part, if not consciously and intentionally, at least unconsciously, to put themselves in a Christian position temporarily by a sort of empathy.

To that three cases above, it may add one more case an extremely special one, which remained to the last independent of and somewhat aloof from, the others until Islam arose and brought it suddenly into the brilliant light of history. Toshihiko thinking of the concept of Allah peculiar to a very particular group of men in Jahiliya, known under the name *Hanif*, and represented by, in our case, by the poet Umayya bin Abi al-Salt, who, although was neither a Jew nor a Christian, held religious ideas that were strikingly monotheistic in nature, and who

must have made in many ways an important contribution to the permeation of Arabia by Jewish and Christian ideas. He was indeed an extraordinary figure in late Jahiliya. And the way he used the word Allah is most interesting from the Islamic point of view.¹⁰⁵

b. The Concept of Allah in Arabian Paganism

This is the first of the four cases as distinguished above, that is, the autochthonous concept of God in pre-Islamic Arabia. Toshihiko begin this discussion by pointing out that even without having recourse to non-Qur’anic literature, that is, relying solely on the testimony of the Qur’an itself, it can be ascertain the very important fact that not only did the concept of Allah exist in the religious view of the pre-Islamic Arabs, but, furthermore, the concept had already a well-developed inner structure of its own, namely:

1. Allah in this conception is the Creator of the world.
2. He is the Giver of rain, i.e., more generally, the Giver of life to all living things on earth.
3. He is the One who presides over the most solemn oaths.
4. He is the object of what we might justly describe as ‘momentary’ or ‘temporary’ monotheism, the existence of which is evidenced by the recurring expression in the Qur’an “making (momentarily) their faith pure for Him alone”.
5. Finally, Allah is the Lord of Ka ‘bah.

These five fundamental points are discernible in the structure of the concept of Allah in the Weltanschauung of Arabian paganism, this is known from the testimony of the Qur’an. And of course, no stronger

¹⁰⁵ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 106.

testimony could there be on this point. These are, roughly speaking, the major elements of the relational meaning attached to the word Allah in Jahiliya, that the Qur'an did not find incompatible with its new religious conception.¹⁰⁶

The concept of Allah that was prevalent among the pre-Islamic Arabs on the eve of the Islamic era, in general, surprisingly close in nature to the Islamic one, so close, indeed, that the Qur'an sometimes even wonders why such a right understanding of God does not finally lead the disbelievers to acknowledging the truth of the new teaching.

In Surah al-'Ankabut, for example, we read:

وَلَيْنُ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى

يُؤْفَكُونَ

“If you ask them (i.e. the pagan Arabs) “Who has created the heavens and the earth, and has imposed law and order upon the sun and the moon?” They will surely answer, “Allah!” (QS. Al-Ankabut:61)¹⁰⁷

And immediately following this passage.

وَلَيْنُ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِهَا لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

¹⁰⁶ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*, op.cit, 107.

¹⁰⁷ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur'an*, op.cit, 107.

*If you ask them “Who sends down rain from the sky and revives therewith the earth after it has been dead?” They will surely answer, “Allah!” (QS. al-Ankabut:63)*¹⁰⁸

Apparently then, Allah was already in the conception of the pre-Islamic Arabs the Creator of the world and the Giver of rain, i.e., the giver of life to all that exists on earth. The only serious complaint brought against them by the Qur’an in this respect was that the pagans failed to draw the only reasonable conclusion from the acknowledgment of Allah’s being the Creator of the heaven and the earth: that they should serve Allah alone and none else. The Qur’an expresses this sentiment by such second phrases as “How, then, can they be turned aside (from the right direction)?” and “But most of them do not know how to exercise their intellect (i.e. how to draw the right conclusion)”.¹⁰⁹

From the all of five points, Toshihiko is more highlight his discussion on point four he referred to as ‘temporary monotheism’, and which the Qur’an describes by a no less singular phrase: "making their religion sincere, or pure, for Him, i.e., for Allah alone”. In many passages of the Qur’an we are told that the pagan Arabs, when they find themselves in danger of death, with almost no hope of escape, particularly on the sea, call upon Allah for help and “make their religion pure for Allah”.

وَإِذَا غَشِيَهُمْ مَوْجٌ كَالظُّلْمِ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*, op.cit., 108.

“And when waves enshroud them like dark clouds, they cry unto Allah, making their faith pure for Him alone.” (QS. Luqman:32)¹¹⁰

It is indeed remarkable that this expression implies that in an emergency, when they really felt that their own life was in mortal danger, the pagan Arabs used to have recourse to ‘temporary monotheism’ apparently without any reflection on the grave implication of such an act. That the phrase “making one’s religion pure for Allah” in contexts of this kind means what we might call ‘momentary or temporary monotheism’, and not simply ‘sincerity’ or ‘earnestness’ in one’s prayer. Then, when they reach the shore and feel sure of absolute safety, they forget about all that has passed and begin again “to ascribe partners to Allah”, i.e., fall back into their original polytheism.

فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ

“But when He brings them safe to land, behold, they begin to ascribe partners.” (QS. Al-Ankabut: 65)¹¹¹

That the Jahiliya Arabs were prone to neglect the worship of Allah in ordinary daily conditions, but were always reminded of His name whenever they found themselves in an unusual and serious situation is shown also by the fact that, according to the Qur’an, the most sacred and solemn oaths used to be sworn in Jahiliya in the name of Allah.

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ

¹¹⁰ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur’an*, *op.cit.*, 108.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

“*And they swore by Allah their most earnest oath.*” (QS. Fatir: 42, and an-Nahl: 38)¹¹²

Of particular importance in determining the place occupied by Allah in the Jahiliya system of concepts is the fact that He was considered the ‘Lord of Ka’ba’, the highest sanctuary of Central Arabia. This we can prove by ample evidence from pre-Islamic poetry, but nothing, of course, can be more decisive and authoritative than the Qur’an itself. In the very famous Surah Quraysh which is admittedly one of the oldest pieces of Revelation, the Quraysh are urged strongly to worship “the Lord of this House”,¹¹³ who causes the two annual caravans, in winter and summer, to be equipped, and takes good care of them with a view to making them live in peace and security. Here the idea of Allah’s being the Lord of Ka’ba is simply taken for granted as something natural and generally acknowledged. It suggests that at least the religiously more enlightened ones of the people of Makkah were conscious of worshipping Allah at this shrine. Allah, in this particular capacity, was known among the pre-Islamic Arabs in the name of the “Lord of the House” (Rabb al-Bayt), “Lord of Ka’ba” (Rabb al-Ka 'bah) or “Lord of Makkah” (Rabb Makkah).

c. The Jews and the Christians

In those days, the Arabs lived surrounded closely by great Christian powers. One of those Christian powers is Abyssinian empire, Byzantine empire whose high civilization was greatly admired by the Arabs, the dynasty of Ghassaniyyah who served as a kind of outpost in Arabia for the Greek Emperors of Constantinople.

¹¹² Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur’an*, *op.cit.*, 109.

¹¹³ Surah *al-Quraysh*, ayat 1-3.

Until the Al-Hirah which was the Persian vassal-state and which exercised a great influence on the life and conception of even the desert Arabs, was, as is well-known, an important center in East Syrian, i.e., Nestorian Church. And as a result of their direct contact with these big centers of Christianity, some of the big nomadic tribes were in the process of Christianization. Furthermore, as noted above, many of the Arab intellectuals of the age had a considerable knowledge of Christianity. The great poet al-Nabighah is an outstanding example.¹¹⁴

It would be a mistake to suppose that the people of Makkah remained entirely uninfluenced by such a situation, if only for the reason that they, as professional merchants, travelled on business so often to these Christian centers. Besides, in Makkah itself, there were also Christians, not only Christian slaves, but Christians of the clan of Banu Assad bin ‘Abd al- ‘Uzza.

As to the Jews, quite a number of Jewish tribes had settled in Arabia. Yathrib, Khaybar, Fadak, Tayma’ and Wadi al-Qura being some of the most important centers settled by immigrant Jews or Jewish proselytes. And although in Makkah there seems to have been practically no Jew, the Makkans must have been familiar with some at least of the basic ideas and concepts of Judaism.¹¹⁵

Both the Jews and the Christians in Arabia used Arabic as their vernacular, and, as I have pointed out earlier, referred to their Biblical God by the very word Allah, which was something quite natural seeing that the ‘basic’ meaning conveyed by this word was a very

¹¹⁴ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 112.

¹¹⁵ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 113.

abstract one that would correspond roughly to the Greek *ho Theos*. This conceivably provided a good opportunity for the convergence of the two different concepts of God into a certain kind of unity, albeit a very vague one, in the Jahili minds.

In general, Judeo-Christian religious concepts were, so to speak, in the air at that time, ready to influence both sides, I mean, both the Jahili Arabs and the Jews and Christians in their understanding of the position of each other. This is clearly reflected in many important traditions. I will take up here one of them as an interesting example. It is a famous tradition about Waraqa bin Naufal connected with Muhammad's first appearance on the stage of history as Prophet and Messenger of God. Al-Bukhari records it in his chapter on "How Revelation began to visit the Prophet" in his Hadith collection. The story runs like this:

When the very first Revelation "Recite in the name of thy Lord who created"¹¹⁶ came to the Prophet in a very strange and awe-inspiring form, the Prophet who had never experienced such a thing before, naturally got panic-stricken. He lost all self-confidence, he was uneasy, nervous, and distressed. In short, he did not know how he should understand this strange experience.

His wife Khadijah not only reassured him, but sought stronger reassurance for him from an authority. This authority was her cousin, the very famous Waraqa bin Naufal bin Assad. Here is the text of the main part of the story as it has been cited by Toshihiko from Bukhari's work:

¹¹⁶ Surah al-'Alaq, ayat 1.

فانطلقت به خديجة حتى اتت به ورقة بن نوفل بن اسد بن عبد العزى ابن عم خديجة وكات امرا تنصر في الجاهلية وكان يكتب الكتاب العبراني فيكتب من الانجيل بالعبرانية ما شاء الله ان يكتب وكان شيخا كبيرا قى عمى فقالت له خديجة يا ابن عم اسمع من ابن اخيك فقال له ورقة يا ابن اخي ماذا ترى فاخبره رسول الله خبر ما راى فقال له ورقة هذا الناموس الذي نزل الله على موسى ياليتني فيها جذعا ليتني اكون حيا اذ يخرجك قومك فقال رسول الله واخري هم قال نعم لم يأتي رجل قط بمثل ما جئت به الا عودى وان يدركني يومك انصرك نصرا مؤزرا

Then she (i.e. Khadijah) took him to Waraqa bin Naufal bin Assad bin ‘Abd al- ‘Uzza, her cousin. Now this man who, had been converted to Christianity in the days of paganism was thoroughly conversant with Hebrew 10 and had made a copy of a considerable portion of the Evangel in Hebrew. He was at that time a very old man and had already lost his eyesight. Khadijah said, “O my cousin, listen to the son of your brother”. Waraqa asked him, “Son of my brother, what have you seen?” Thereupon the Apostle of God told him about what he saw. Waraqa said, “This is precisely ‘the namus’ that was once sent down to Musa bin Imran (e. Moses). Would that I was young in (your days of prophethood)! Would that I might still be alive when your tribe will expel you!” The Apostle of God asked, “Will they really expel me?” “Yes”, he replied, “No man ever brought what you have brought now without being treated as an enemy. If I could live until the day when you will be expelled, I should support you with all my might!”¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 115.

There is no positive reason for doubting the authenticity of this Hadith, on the contrary, the very occurrence of the word *namus*, which is evidently non-Qur'anic, instead of the common Qur'anic term *Taurat (Torah)* argues very strongly for its authenticity and genuineness. The word *namus*, which is indeed the pivotal point of the story, is clearly the Greek word *nomos* for 'law' i.e. the exact equivalent of the Hebrew *Tora*.

In any case, the story tells us that Waraqa who was well-known for his Christian religion and his good knowledge of Hebrew scripture, as soon as he heard from Muhammad what had happened to him, identified this apparently strange experience of Muhammad as something authentic belonging to the tradition of the Judeo-Christian monotheism. And this identification, to all appearance, gave confidence to Muhammad's mind.

All the preceding consideration would seem to lead us towards the only reasonable, conclusion that by the time Islam arose in Makkah, a considerably lofty conception of Allah had already been developed among the Arabs, or was developing gradually, as a converging point of two originally different concepts of God. On the one hand, the Arabian paganism had been gradually developing the concept of Allah, as the Creator of the heaven and the earth, the Giver of rain which causes the earth to produce all the good things for the benefit of mankind, the Mighty God who watches over the sacredness of oaths, the Founder of some of the old religious customs, and the Great Lord (*Rabb*) having the whole world in his hand.¹¹⁸ For this much, we have the undeniable testimony of the Qur'an itself. And

¹¹⁸ Surah al-Mu'minun, ayat 86-89.

there is no cogent reason to deny that all this was part of the autochthonous religion of Arabian paganism, although this was evidently only the highest and best part of this religion.¹¹⁹

On the other hand, the monotheistic concept of God was spreading steadily among the Arabs, who, if they did not accept it as a matter of personal belief and faith, must have been at least well aware of the existence of some such concept of God among their neighbors and must have been quite familiar with it.

d. The Judeo-Christian concept of Allah in the Hands of the Pagan Arabs

In the last two sections discussed, first, the purely pagan concept of Allah, and then, the Judeo-Christian concept of Allah. We have seen how these two were gradually tending to converge into one in the latter years of Jahiliya. There was also something very important which served, as it was a bridge between the two shores. And with this we turn to the third case as distinguished above, namely, the case in which the Arabs, that is, the pagan Arabs who professed neither Christianity nor Judaism, had to talk about the latter, had to refer in their talk to things about these monotheistic religions. And, it might safely surmise seeing the general cultural situation of the time, such cases must have occurred not infrequently. Although we have no faithful contemporary records of what the Arabian people were saying among themselves on these matters, it will find at least some interesting evidence in the work of the poets, particularly of those who used to compose in praise of their patrons, whether Christian kings of al-Hirah or Ghassan.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 115.

¹²⁰ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 116.

And this is even far more important still than those cases in which we see the Christians and the Jews using the word Allah about their God, because after all that is, in itself, something natural, too natural to give us any valuable clue to anything of real importance.

The case is quite different when, for example, al-Nabighah, a simple Bedouin poet, in addressing the Christian king of al-Hirah, al-Nu‘man bin al-Munzir, and singing in praise of the latter, uses the word Allah in this way:

“Allah has completed upon him the best of his favors and let him gain victory and power over mankind”.

Prince Lakhmi al-Nu‘man, widely known as Abu Qabus, whose reign fell roughly between 580 A.D. and 602 A.D., was a Christian who had been brought up in the Christian family of the very famous Zayd, the father of the poet ‘Adi b. Zayd whom we have just met. So when the poet al-Nabighah uses the word Allah in saying that the king owes his wonderful prosperity, wealth, and power to the great favor of Allah, he must naturally mean the Christian God. At least this must be his intention.

We have confirmatory evidence in another verse by the same poet. Al-Nabighah, having lost the royal favor of al-Nu‘man, went to Ghassan and was warmly welcomed and honored there by King ‘Amr bin al-Harith al-Asghar, and began composing panegyrics on this new patron and his family, known today under the name of *“Ghassanencomia (Ghassaniyyat)*. In one of the most famous *Ghassaniyyat*, can be found:

لهم شيمة لم يعطها الله غيرهم من الجود والاحلام غير العواذب

مجلّتهم ذات الاله ودينهم قوم فما يرجون غير العواقب

“They have nature, like of which Allah has never given to any other man, that is, generosity accompanied by the sound judgment that never deserts them. Their Scripture is that of God (*al-Ilāha*, the original form of Allah), and their faith is steadfast and their hope is set solely on the world to come”.¹²¹

This phenomenon is of particular relevance to our present topic in two important ways.

1. When the poet used the word Allah in this way—and, it must be remembered, He did not do it only once, but very frequently something must have occurred in his psychology. It may have been, in the beginning, simply a slight change of nuance or a slight shift of viewpoint; in any case, something of no small consequence to his religious outlook must have been growing in his mind. For it is difficult to imagine that this way of using the word Allah did not exercise, unconsciously if not consciously, any influence on his image of God particularly when it repeated itself so often. And this, again, may very well have cast its reflection on his conception of Allah even when he was using the same word about the non-Christian, purely Arabian God.
2. Equally important is the fact that in Jahiliya, the social position of the poet was very high. The words uttered by a poet, especially a well-known great poet, were feared, venerated, or loved according to cases as a real spiritual force; and they had all the weight of a valuable social, or even sometimes national, asset. Poetry at that

¹²¹ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur'an*, op.cit, 116.

time was not a simple matter of personal expression of thoughts and emotions. It was a public phenomenon in the full sense of the word.

Impressive words uttered by a famous poet were propagated immediately within the tribe and beyond the tribe to the comers of the Arab world, “flying faster than an arrow” as they said. The poets were literally leaders of public opinion.

So, the fact that a great poet like al-Nabighah used the word Allah in the Christian acceptance, putting himself, at least at that very moment, in a Christian position by empathy, should not be taken as a mere matter of personal liking or inclination. On the contrary, it must have influenced in an indirect unconscious way the religious outlook of his pagan contemporaries. It must have taught them how to understand the word Allah in its Biblical acceptance, more important still, it must have, further, induced them gradually to identify almost unconsciously their pagan concept of God with that of the Christians.

e. Allah of the Hanifs

Discussion of the word hanif is an extremely problematic one. Its etymology still remains obscure, and consequently, its ‘basic’ meaning is very hard to define in a final way. But the problem in itself, however interesting, is of comparatively small relevance to us as far as concerns our present topic. What concerns at this stage is the singularly monotheistic is a Qur’anic conception of Allah.

Among all those pre-Islamic Arabs who are known as *Hanifs*, is Umayya bin Abi al-Salt presents an unusually important case, because he was a very famous poet of the tribe of Thaqif in Ta’if, and a considerable

number of poems have been handed down to us under his name. Besides, Islamic Tradition (Hadith) has also shown a lively concern for this man, because of his very particular relationship with the Prophet Muhammad, so that his life is known tolerable, well at least better than any other Hanifs.¹²²

This man Umayya bin Abi al-Salt is indeed an extraordinary figure in the whole Jahili literature. He was one of the leading personalities of the tribe of Thaqif, and according to Abu ‘Ubaida, the greatest poet of the tribe. In Jahiliya, he was said to be in search of the true monotheistic religion, away from all idol-worship, but he remained an isolated dissenter without being converted to Judaism nor Christianity. And yet the spiritual atmosphere in which he lived was almost completely Christian and Jewish. He also mastered Hebrew and Syriac seriously and read those parts of the Holy Scripture that were available to him at that time in these languages.¹²³

According to tradition he wore always sack-cloth or coarse haircloth (*masuh*) as a mark of a man wholly devoted to worship he was predecessor of the later Sufis in this respect declared wine to be unlawful (*haram*), called the religion he was in search of *din al-hunafa'* (“the religion of *Hanifs*”) and associated it with Abraham (*Ibrahim*) and Ishmael (*Ismail*). So far so good, but here begins that aspect of his which induced the Muslims to call him an “enemy of God” (*‘aduww Allah*). He held the view that after Jesus Christ there would be six appearances of ‘prophethood’ (*nubuwwa*); already five occasions had passed and there remained only one and the last chance, and he was expecting the choice to fall upon him.

Whether this is true or not, when Muhammad appeared as the Prophet of the Arabs, Umayya got furiously angry or disappointed, or perhaps both,

¹²² Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 119.

¹²³ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 120.

and began his campaign against Islam. He instigated greatly the Quraysh of Makkah to oppose him, and some poems have been handed down till now which he composed bewailing the pagans killed in the battle of Uhud. Among them, there were two of his maternal cousins, ‘Utbah and Shaybah, and he urged his tribesmen to take revenge upon Muhammad for their blood. And afterward, he flew to Yemen, his spiritual home.

He did not change to the last this inimical attitude towards the Prophet of Islam, and on his death-bed, he is related to have said:

“This illness will inevitably cause my death. I know that the religion of hanif is true, but I cannot help entertaining a doubt as regards Muhammad”.¹²⁴

As to the Hanif tic conception of Allah, we may observe that according to this poet, He is the “God of the whole world”, the “Creator” of everything and all creatures are “His servants”.¹²⁵

“He is Allah, the Creator of everything, and all the created things save Him willingly as faithful servants.”

That is to say, He is the Lord (*Rabb*) of His servants.

He is the Great King of the heavens and the earth, who reigns over his subjects with absolute sovereignty. This majestic aspect of Allah is referred to by one of the ‘strange words *al-kalimat al-ghariba*, that has greatly vexed the commentators and lexicologists of the Abbasid period. The word in question is *salitat*, originally a Syriac word, which occurs in the couplet:

¹²⁴ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 121.

¹²⁵ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 123.

“All men are Allah’s subjects; He is the Absolute Sovereign, on earth Omnipotent.”

And, most important of all, He is Unique, absolutely One.

“One with whom no one of the creatures ever disputes the kingdom, it is the One who stands alone without peers, even if His servants (men) do not make Him one, (that is, worship beside him other god and idols).”¹²⁶

Such is his conception of Allah. As far as these points are concerned, we see that the Hanif tic conception of God has absolutely nothing contradictory and incompatible with the Islamic one.

In any case, the very existence in Jahiliya of a man like Umayya bin Abi al-Salt would seem to be a striking indication that religious ideas resembling those of Islam were existent among the pre-Islamic Arabs, and that concepts characteristic of a spiritual religion were not at all unknown and alien to their minds, at least in the period just preceding the rise of Islam. This makes it also understandable why the Qur’an attached the new Islamic movement to the Hanif tic tradition. This is the positive side of the matter.

¹²⁶ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 124.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The second and third chapters of this topic have been discussed on some theories, biographies, and also the thoughts of Fazlur Rahman and Toshihiko Izutsu. Among them has also shown a different significance, both from educational, religious, and thinking backgrounds. Now comes the time to compare the thoughts between the two characters. This analysis uses the interpretation of *muqarran* (comparative), which data that has been presented in the previous chapters will be discussed by presenting some of the differences and similarities of views from both characters.

Based on the description in the previous chapter, it can be understood that the concept of God between Toshihiko and Fazlur Rahman has a varied theory and understanding as well as ways of exposure. The focus of Fazlur Rahman was more focused on the nature of God, the existence of the God, guidelines (*hidayah*) giving, the verses of God, the god-human relation, the universe, and illustration of father and son. While Toshihiko highlights his discussion of the *weltanschauung* of the few pre-Islamic clans has mentioned in the Qur 'an, from the *Jahiliya* to the *Hanif* people. In the discussion, Toshihiko also discussed the relationship between God and man as the focus of the discussion of Fazlur Rahman.

1. Comparison of God's concepts in the Qur'an

a. The Nature of God

Fazlur Rahman made a great statement in his discussion, which is basically the first nature of God's was compassion. Everything that belongs to God is a form of His compassion. All justice given by God has been softened by the merciful nature of God. Also cited the attributes of God in the Qur 'an as

the Creator, the Sustainer, the Giver, the just, and the Compassionate, have been implied as a living entity in the Qur'anic concept of God.

There is a strong impression that is immediately felt when reading the Qur'an is the majesty and compassion of God is infinite. Even interpreted by Western scholars as a source of cruel strength, even as an arbitrary ruler. The Qur'an certainly presents God in a variety of contexts. If all statements about Him are not internalized it becomes a complete mental illustration, without the distortion of subjective and fanciful thoughts, it is very difficult and even impossible to be fair to the Qur'anic concept of God.¹

The greatness of God is expressed through His creation, through the maintenance of life and the fulfillment of the needs of His creation, especially humans. The creation of the universe and humans and the creation of the universe for humans is a fundamental manifestation of God's love. Therefore, His power, creation, and compassion are not only equally widespread but also completely complimentary and identical.²

... قُلْ لِلَّهِ كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ...

"He has imposed the law of mercy upon Himself." (al-An'ām:12)³

... وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ...

"My mercy comprehends all." (al-A'rāf:156)⁴

His very infinitude implies not a one-sided transcendence but equally His being "with" His creation. Note that He is nearer to man than is man's jugular

¹ Fazlurrahman, Tema-tema Pokok Al-qur'an.,,., 2.

² Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, University of Chicago Press, 2009, 4.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

vein (Qāf:16). Whenever a person commits a lapse (sin) and then sincerely regrets it and seeks God's pardon, God quickly returns to him.

God uses His majesty, power, and perfection primarily through the expression of His complex compassion. Namely, by creating various forms and creatures, caring for beings, giving guidance to the creature towards fulfilling its potential, and finally returning to humans who after turning away from God and come back again also get closer to the source of life and guidance.

While the nature of God revealed by Toshihiko, Allah is the highest form in the entire hierarchy of forms, He is The One who controls the entire universe and its contents both human and non-human so that no one can oppose the power of God. Semantically, Allah is the highest focus word in the Qur'anic vocabulary, which rules the entire semantic field, and consequently, all systems in the universe.⁵

Allah ethically acts on humans, which is God of Justice and Goodness. In both aspects, God presents himself like the Most Bounteous, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, and the Forgiving. All these aspects are mentioned in the Qur'an with keywords such as *ni'mah* "enjoyment", *fadl* "grace", *rahmah* "affection", *maghfirah* "forgiveness" and so on.⁶

In addition to presenting Allah as God with the qualities mentioned above, Toshihiko also presents Allah as God who is omnipotent rage. This side of the face of God is shown to those who are negligent, do *kufir*, refuse to surrender to God, they are ignorant, and do not think about the hereafter.⁷ To them, Allah shows the hard nature of God, who will retaliate on the judgment day, whose

⁵ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia: pendekatan semantik terhadap al-Qur'an*, pengantar Dr. Machasin, 1997, Yogyakarta, PT Tiara Wacana, 77.

⁶ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 257.

⁷ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,, 261.

reward is very poignant (*sadid al-'iqab*), God who takes revenge (*zu intiqam*), whose anger (*ghadhab*) will throw anyone in destruction.

b. The Existence of God

In his discussion, Rahman opened with a question about the existence of God. It can be felt by anyone who is willing to reflect so that he does not stop being a belief that "does not make sense" to be the highest truth but to recognize and know the existence of his Lord and change something "irrational" into truth. God cannot be considered as one form among others, but God is a dimension that allows the existence of other dimensions. He is the one who gives meaning and life to everything. He is all-pervasive, infinite, and The Only infinite. God is not one thing among other things, or one being among others. He is with all things, He is even unity of all things.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

"Do not be like those who forgot God and (eventually) God caused them to forget themselves."(al-Hashr:19)⁸

In essence, there can only be one God, because every time people try to describe more than one, in the end, there will only be one who appears as the Highest. Allah says:

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا إِلَهَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونَ

"Do not take two gods (for) He is only One."(an-Nahl:51)⁹

In his thoughts, Rahman stated that God is so close but also so far away. The problem is not how to make people believe in a lengthy and complicated

⁸ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, *op.cit.* 3.

⁹ <https://quranyusufali.com/16/>, accessed on 23 June 2020.

theological proof about the existence of God. But, the real problem is how to direct human attention to certain facts and then turn it into a "reminder" of the existence of God, as the Prophet referred to as "warning".¹⁰ For finding God, according to the Qur'an, if someone thinks about the whence (and the whither) of nature, he will surely find God. This is not proof of God's existence. Because, according to the concept of the Qur'an, if you cannot find God, then you cannot prove it.

In essence, God is the light that enables everything to find its true form and behavior:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ
الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا
يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ...

“God is the light of the heavens and the earth: the likeness of His Light is that of a niche wherein is set a lamp; the lamp is (encased) in a glass; this glass is (so brilliant) as though it were a pearly star. (The lamp) is lit by (the oil of) a blessed olive tree which is neither Eastern nor Western, and whose oil is apt to catch the light even though fire hardly touches it. (God is) Light upon Light and He guides to His Light whom He wills. . . .” (an-Nūr:35)¹¹

God is the true meaning of a reality, which is then manifested, elaborated, and presented by the universe, and is played further by humans. That everything in the universe is "signs" (*ayat*) of God. His actions, which are meaningful and purposeful, are further developed by humans.

¹⁰ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, op.cit, 2.

¹¹ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, op.cit, 5.

Various encouragement and invitations of the Qur'an that often appear like "Don't you think?", "Don't you pay attention?", Including invitations about "tadabbur", "contemplation", and "observation" have no relation with formal evidence about the existence of God or "suspect" His existence. However, this has to do with "finding" God and developing certain perceptions that can "expose the *hijab* (curtain)" that covers the human mind.¹²

In agreement with Fazlur Rahman, Toshihiko stated that according to the Qur'an, Allah is not only the highest but also the only Being that deserves to be called "Being" in the full sense of the word, a reality, where no one in the whole world can fight it. Ontologically, God is in the middle of the world of existence, and all other objects, both human and non-human, are His creatures are far inferior to Him in the hierarchy of being.

God as the main source of human existence and humans as a representation of the world of existence whose existence starts from God. In more theological terms, the Creator-creature relationship between God and man. Thus, the existence of humans, the universe, and all its contents are one proof of the existence of God, because the universe and all its contents are creatures, and God is the creator.

c. God's meaning

In interpreting God, Toshihiko took *weltanschauung* from pagan Arab society, Jews and Christians, Jewish and Christian concepts in the hands of pagan Arabs, and *Hanif* people. But, before that Toshihiko opened the discussion about the meaning of God by reviewing the "basic meanings" and "relational meanings" about Allah.

Many Western scholars according to Toshihiko have correctly compared the word Allah with the Greek word *ho Theos* which means God. This became a basic

¹² Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, University of Chicago Press, 2009, 7.

meaning known to all Arab tribes who interpreted Allah as God.¹³ Of course, of all the relational elements that appear around the concept of God in the Jahiliya system, there is an idea that even though Allah is recognized as the highest God, they allow an existence called "ally" (*shuraka'*) beside Him. Of course, this is very, very contrary to the concept of monotheism in Islam. However, this is the relational meaning within the Jahiliya system.

For the pagan Arabs, Allah in this conception is the Creator of the world. He is the one who sends the rain, the giver of life to everything that lives on earth. He was the only one who guides human with the most serious. He is the object described as "temporary" monotheism, an existence evidenced by expressions appearing in the Qur'an that "make their beliefs purely for Him (temporary)". And Allah is the ruler of the *Kaaba*. Their concept is very similar to the concept of Allah for Islam, so close, the Qur'an sometimes wonders why such a correct understanding of God ultimately does not cause the disbelievers to acknowledge the new teaching.

Then for Jews and Christians, Allah is the creator of the heavens and the earth, who sends rain that causes the earth to produce all that is good for human benefit, the Almighty God who oversees the sanctity of oaths, the Founder of some old religious habits, and the Most Great God (*Rabb*) who rules the universe. For this, many testimonies cannot be rejected from the Qur'an itself. And there is no compelling reason to deny that all of this is part of the religion of authentic Arabic paganism, even if it is proven to be the single highest and the best part of this religion.

The Jewish and Christian concept in the hands of pagan Arabs is exemplified by one poet named al-Nabighah who used the word "Allah" in his poetry to praise King Ghassan. The word Allah in stating that the king owes his extraordinary

¹³ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,,,, 103.

prosperity, wealth, and power to Allah's help, should these words mean the Christian God, at least according to himself. And consciously or not, they have understood the words of "Allah" in understanding the Gospels, and more importantly, they should have caused them to gradually identify the concept of a pagan God almost unconsciously with the concept of a Christian God.

And for the *Hanif* people, regarding the hanif concept of Allah, He is the Lord of all the worlds, the Creator, all things and all creatures are His servants, the Lord of all things, and all creatures serve Him, the great King of heaven and earth, the Greatest Control His people with absolute power. He is Unique, Absolute only one.

Toshihiko explained the semantic elements in the form of basic meanings, relational meanings, and also weltanschauung from the people that existed before and when Islam was born in the Arabian Peninsula. Then according to Fazlur Rahman, the meaning of Allah is a God who is merciful. The whole link in the universe, namely creation, preservation, direction, judgment, all of which are manifestations of His compassion.

Fazlur Rahman rejected some theists (believe in God) who illustrated humans as children of God. Children cannot really be judged, they can only be punished modestly, but it does not make sense if an adult human is still considered a child even though the inner light (guidance) has been emitted to him. The naughtiness of children is certainly very different from an adult crime. If not so, when do humans deserve to be considered an adult?

The illustration of an overly indulgent father and an overly pampered child has been severely criticized by verses of the Qur'an which forbidding to impose a childish and fad play to God, verses of the Qur'an which also criticize Jews and Christians who claim exclusive ownership of God.

2. Advantages and Deficiency

a. Fazlur Rahman

1) Advantages

- a) His explanation of the concept of God is so beautiful, like a poem being echoed to the readers.
- b) His figure as a devout Muslim is felt, when conveying the natures of God, he spoke with full respect. He delivered it not only as someone who was discussing the figure of God but also as a servant who was praising his Lord.
- c) In his book, Rahman answered many questions that often arise related to the concept of God from both Muslims and non-Muslims, he even began the discussion with a question.

2) Deficiency

- a) Having such a beautiful description makes the intent and purpose of this discussion more difficult to understand.
- b) Discussions that are less organized and seem to overlap between one discussion with subsequent discussions. Rahman did not divide the discussion into specific sub-chapters to make it easier for readers to make targeted projections of understanding.
- c) Famous for the double movement theory, which sees the socio-historical era of the Qur'an being relegated then brought it to the present context. But Rahman felt very little to express the historical situation that existed at that time. The interpretation seems to be rejecting accusations from non-

Muslims and also from those who have different ideas from them.

b. Toshihiko Izutsu

1) Advantages

- a) As a non-Muslim, his discussions about Allah are carried out with extreme care and respect. He doesn't seem to be discussing God of other religions, even if everyone reads Toshihiko's works without knowing his name and background, maybe the reader will think the writer is a devout Muslim.
- b) His view of the Concept of God is very objective, not bound by laws and norms as a Muslims are ordered to think about God's creation, but not about the essence (*Zat*) of Allah.
- c) The discussion he arranged is very organized, making it easier for readers to understand its intent and purposes.
- d) Toshihiko explains the development of the concept of God from pre-Islamic times to the rise of Islam in a very complete and clear way.
- e) The use of semantic theory in this discussion is clear and to the point.

2) Deficiency

- a) His discussion of God from pre-Islam was complete, but it felt lacking when bringing the concept into the Islamic world today.
- b) The results of the Toshihiko semantics method are still in the realm of linguistics which is the first step of interpretation, it

cannot yet be said to be a finished product of interpretation. So that Toshihiko's thoughts about the concept of God still need contextualization.

3. Affective history

a. Fazlur Rahman

1) Influence aspects

In traditional aspects, as discussed in the previous chapter, Rahman was born in the middle of a newly independent country, which was thinking about the form of the principle of the state that would be adopted, whether it would be traditionalist, fundamentalist, or modernist. In his country, according to Rahman, the quality of education feels slow and low. So that the perspective of the people there is hard to accept new things that come to them.

In cultural aspects, after the debate on the basis of the state in Pakistan has finished, it does not change the sentiment of those who have different ways of thinking. Pakistanis tend to traditionalist thinking, so they assume that people who learn in the West have been influenced by the western system that is against Islam. If it is successful, then it will be difficult to be accepted in society, which is not even uncommon to be oppressed.

In 1961-1968, Rahman became the director of the Central Institute of Islamic Research in Pakistan, but he doesn't have any support from traditionalist scholars because he was a graduate from a country labeled as an "infidel state". Rahman is considered as a

modernist group and has been heavily contaminated with Western thoughts. With this condition, it is understandable if, in Rahman's leadership, this institution always had a strong counterwork from traditionalists and fundamentalists (neo-revivalists), that opposition reached its climax when his first book "*Islam*", was translated into Urdu and published in the *Fikr-u-Nazr* Journal. These tensions continue to be compounded by political tensions between traditional scholars and the government under the leadership of Ayyub Khan, who can be classified as a modernist group. So, Rahman felt that he had to leave his own country, and this was a matter that greatly influenced Rahman's psychic so he became afraid to return to his birthplace.

Because of this, Rahman spent the rest of his life teaching at Chicago and other universities in the West. Teaching in a country where the majority of the population is non-Muslims, makes him must explain to his students about the perspective he uses, especially in discussions about God. Thus, the discussion about God is the first discussion that is rooted and ties the following chapters in his book "*The Major Themes of The Qur'an*".

Other things that influenced Rahman in discussing God was his background as a Muslim. This makes him unable to look totally objective because there are rules and values as a Muslim. It is reasonable if someone still has these limits, but this does not make a reason for Rahman to be unobjective at all, he still be objective with certain limits. Fazlur Rahman gets a Ph.D. in literature, and Doctor of Philosophy.

b. Toshihiko Izutsu

1) Influence aspects

Japanese society at that time was very open with various information around their lives, so that identity was no longer determined by the cultural boundaries of the formal or its customs.¹⁴ They really uphold the values of tolerance, so they respect each other. This also makes Toshihiko in examining the problem of God in the Qur'an so carefully and puts a high respect on the beliefs held by Muslims.

In the cultural aspect, initially, there were two official religions in Japan, namely Shintoism and Buddhism. And according to the Japanese Ministry of Education, followers of Shinto religion are around 107 million people, Buddhism is around 89 million people.¹⁵ Japan is one of the countries in the world that gives full freedom to its people to practice a belief without having to be bound to one particular religion or belief. This shows the uniqueness and characteristics of the belief system in Japan.¹⁶

In this case, Toshihiko adheres to Zen Buddhism, which is educated directly by his father, a Zen teacher. With this freedom from Japan, Toshihiko was able to see a problem without certain religious or belief restrictions. The only limit is on what he has learned so far, especially in the field of linguistics. So, in this discussion, Toshihiko was able to be objective in full.

Toshihiko's perspective on Islam is a thought formed by Zen Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism, and Shintoism. All three are the

¹⁴ Amaliatun Saleha, *Arus Sosial dan Budaya Jepang pada Zaman Globalisasi*, Jurnal Kajian Wilayah Vol. 4, No. 1, 2013, 26.

¹⁵ https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agama_di_Jepang, accessed on 2 May 2020.

¹⁶ Budi Mulyadi, *Konsep Agama Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Jepang*, Jurnal Izumi Vol. 6 No.1 (Semarang: Universitas Diponegoro 2017), 15.

elements of classical Japanese culture. Then with that thought, he was met with the world of the revelation of the Qur'an and Islamic thought.

His academic journey from elementary school to college spent in his own country, with the attitude of the Japanese was very open, and also the current era of globalization has entered Japan, allowed Toshihiko to develop quite well there. During college, initially, Toshihiko majored in the Faculty of Economics, Keio University, Tokyo. However, before he finished studying there, he moved to the Department of English Literature because he wanted to be guided by Prof. Junzaburo Nishiwaki. This causes it to have basic knowledge in the field of literature and language. After studying at Keio University, he chooses to serve by teaching there. He is also active in several world scientific institutions, including Egypt, America, and Switzerland. Which, this helped him in learning various world languages including Arabic, which he used to research studies on Islam.

4. Epistemological analysis

a. Fazlur Rahman

1) Data source

a) Al-Qur'an

Rahman said that the Qur'an and the genesis of Islamic society were formed in relation to historical reality, and the traditions that were introduced by the Qur'an were very controversial with the historical background of the Arab community at that time. Qur'an substance includes the moral, religious, and social rules of society, in fact, exists as a response to certain problems and is opposed to the social reality of the community in

question. In fact, it is not uncommon for the solutions offered by the Qur'an to be accompanied by clear reasons for revelations of *wahyu* (legist ratios), especially cases involving legal and social ethics.¹⁷

b) Hadith

Hadith is everything that came from the Messenger of Allah. Before being sent or after it is either a word, an act, a decree, or an attribute of Prophet.¹⁸ Rahman used the hadith as a reference in reinforcing his opinion.

2) Method

The method is a regular way used to carry out a job to be achieved under what is desired.¹⁹ It is known that Rahman interprets the Qur'an with the double movement method, which looks at the macro conditions in society when a verse is revealed. Following are the methods of interpretation of Fazlur Rahman in his discussion of God:

1. Begin the interpretation with a frequently asked question in people's lives.
2. Mention some surah with similar meaning. As mentioned in the terms "belief and awareness of the unseen" as mentioned in *al-Baqarah*: 3, *al-Maidah*: 94, *al-Anbiya* ': 49, *Fatir*: 18, *Yasin*: 11, *Qaf*: 33, *al-Hadid*: 25, and also *al-Mulk*: 12.

¹⁷ Ahmad Syukri, *Metodologi Tafsir Al-Qur'an Kontemporer Dalam Pemikiran Fazlur Rahman*,.... 55.

¹⁸ Prof. DR. Tajul Arifin, *Ulumul Hadits* (Bandung: Gunungjati Press, 2014), 12.

¹⁹ Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indoensia* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2014), 910.

3. Deliver several verses at once and accompany the meaning to answer the questions are mentioned before.

3) Validity

1) Coherence Theory

This theory says that an interpretation is considered as truth if it is in accordance with previous propositions and consistently applies the methodology built by each commentator. In other languages, if there is consistency in philosophical thinking in an interpretation, then that interpretation can be said to be true coherently.²⁰

Rahman's method of interpretation has been explained before:

- 1) Begin the interpretation with a frequently asked question in people's lives.
- 2) Cite some surah with similar meaning.
- 3) Deliver several verses at once and accompany the meaning to answer the questions are mentioned earlier.

Rahman's consistency in discussions about God can be seen from every point in it. For example, at the point regarding the creation of the universe, Rahman said that God does not create as a frivolity, pastime, or sport, without a serious purpose. It is incompatible with the power of the Powerful and the mercy of the Merciful that He should produce toys for amusement or as a sheer whim, a blind Fate can do this but God cannot:

²⁰ Nida Kholidiyah, *Epistemologi Tafsir Amaly Karya K.H Muhammad Qoyyim Ya' qub*, Skripsi (Semarang: UIN Walisongo, 2018), 90.

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا ...

"Those (are believers) who remember God standing and sitting and lying down and reflect upon the creation of the heaven and the earth (and say): Our Lord! You have not created all this in vain." (Āli 'Imrān:191)²¹

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ...

"We have not created the heaven and the earth and whatever is between them in vain." (Sād:27)²²

And that is it, Rahman only uses some verses to answer the questions before. Sometimes Rahman continues his discussion if needed, but most of these points in his book, after he answers the question by his opinion, he uses some verses, and then he moves to the next point.

2) Correspondence theory

This theory says that an interpretation is called true if it corresponds and matches the scientific facts in reality. This theory can be used to measure the correctness of scientific interpretation. The interpretation related to the verses of *kauniyah* (unspoken verse) is said to be true if it is following the findings of an established scientific theory.²³

²¹ Fazlur Rahman, *Major themes of the qur'an*, op.cit., 5.

²² Ibid.

²³ Nida Kholidiyah, *Epistemologi Tafsir Amaly Karya K.H Muhammad Qoyyim Ya' qub*, 92.

Based on this theory, the compatibility of Rahman's interpretation of scientific facts can be seen for example in discussions about the universe too. Rahman said that according to the Qur'an, the universe is a solid structure without gaps, flawless, and without misplaced. Nature runs by its law, which is inherently by God, and because of that, the universe is autonomous, which means, it moves on its own with its system.²⁴ But nature is not autocratic, because in itself it has no guarantee of itself and cannot explain itself.²⁵

That's statement is true, if we look something that happened in the universe, like the sun that arises in the east. This law is inherent in the universe, and Allah gives that law to the universe as an automatic move system. But the sun can't explain what happened to itself, and the sun can't guarantee itself.

3) Pragmatic theory

This theory says that an interpretation is said to be true if it is practically able to provide practical solutions to social problems that arise. In other languages, that interpretation is not measured by theory or other interpretations but is measured from the extent to which it can provide solutions to problems faced by humans today. Therefore, models of interpretation of theological or legal verses that tend to be exclusive and less humanistic to adherents of other religions may be irrelevant given humanitarian problems in the current era, such as backwardness, poverty, unemployment, ignorance, and natural disasters it cannot only be handled by

²⁴ Kbbi.web.id, diakses pada 10 Feb 2020, 10.13 WIB.

²⁵ Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, University of Chicago Press, 2009, 2.

adherents of one religion, but it needs to work together symbolically with mutualism with other adherents.²⁶

From the pragmatic theory above, the author sees that Fazlur Rahman's interpretation can be said to be valid for several reasons. *First*, Rahman uses English in his writing. English is an international language so that the entire world community both Muslim and non-Muslim can read and understand the contents of these interpretations. *Second*, Rahman's interpretation is the answer to questions that often arise in the life of a plural society such as the place where he lived after leaving his home country. Rahman often answers questions from people in America, and his students, who are mostly not from Muslims.

b. Toshihiko Izutsu

1) Data source

a) Al-Qur'an

Al-Qur'an according to Toshihiko has an extraordinary vocabulary and is unmatched as the language of God revelation,²⁷ it is natural that all systems after the Qur'an have come, it so influenced by al-Qur'an's vocabulary. In this discussion, Toshihiko uses the Qur'an as the main reference.

b) Hadith

For the orientalist, many consider the hadith to be highly suspect, and often accuse the invalid of the historical Sanad, as did

²⁶ Nida Kholidiyah, *Epistemologi Tafsir Amaly Karya K.H Muhammad Qoyyim Ya' qub*,.... 93.

²⁷ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia*,.... 42.

Ignaz Goldzieher and several other Orientalists. Unlike Goldzieher, as an Orientalist, Toshihiko did not use his skepticism in studying the Islamic religious sciences, including hadith. So that the hadith becomes one of the references that help in strengthening the arguments he delivered in the discussion about the concept of God.

c) Related books

As an academic who was interested in the language field, certainly, Toshihiko had other references as a foothold in his research. As when explaining about Umayya bin Abi al-Salt, he cited the work of Friedrich Schulthess entitled *Umajja bin Abi Salt*. And many quotes from books that have related discussions.

2) Method

The method Toshihiko used in this study as we know it is the semantic method, in which he outlines every keyword in the Qur'an, looks for its basic and relational meanings, and reveals weltanschauung (worldview) of these keywords. Then in the discussion method, he does as follow:

1. As we all know, in his discussion Toshihiko used the semantic method, and the first thing he did was look for the basic meanings and relational meanings of the word Allah.
2. Reveal the worldview regarding the keywords discussed. In this case, there are several worldviews used, namely from pagan Arabs, Jews and Christians, Jewish and Christian concepts in the hands of pagan Arabs, and also from Hanifs.

3. The use of verses of the Qur'an and the hadith is used as evidence for the arguments he conveyed, then sometimes he explains the purpose of the verse or hadith.

3) Validity

1) Coherence theory

Consistency and coherence in the Toshihiko Izutsu's explanation can be seen from the way he revealed one by one the evidence he found in the Qur'an. As mentioned earlier, in this study the Toshihiko method used is, searching for the basic meanings and relational meanings of the word Allah, then looking for a worldview on these keywords, after which evidence is presented from sources such as the Qur'an and Hadith.

Like when discussing the concept of god from the pagan Arabs. Toshihiko said that the pagan Arabs knew their God as Allah, and they had the concept of Allah, that is, Allah was the creator of the world, who sent rain and gave life, the Leader, as a temporary belief (temporary monotheism), and as the ruler of the Kaaba. This is proven in surah al-'Ankabut verse 61: *"If you ask them (i.e. the pagan Arabs) who created the heavens and the earth, and subdued the sun and moon? they certainly answer Allah."* And verse 63 *"If you ask them who rained down from heaven and brought the earth to live with it after it died? they will certainly answer Allah."* It is clear that Allah has existed in the pagan Arab conception as the creator of the world, the giver of rain and life to all that exists on earth, but it is unfortunate that the pagans failed to conclude, because in the end, they were negligent and distorted.

2) Correspondence theory

The appropriateness of Toshihiko's explanation can be seen as the concept of God from pagan Arab society. In the conception of the pagan Arabs as the creators of the world, the giver of rain and life to all that exists on earth, but, unfortunately, the pagans failed to conclude, because in the end, they were negligent and distorted. They only worship God only in difficult times such as when being hit by big waves in the high seas, but when they have reached the mainland, they forget who they are asking for when in trouble. They also worship idols in their daily lives. This is a fact that in those days Arabs also made idols their worship.

3) Pragmatic theory

Toshihiko expressed his hopes in the book *God and man in the Qur'an*, he hoped that his work would make a new contribution to understanding the messages of the Qur'an better, even though there were so many scholars who had studied the Qur'an from various points of view.

Pragmatically, Toshihiko's work can be said as a valid work because it provides benefits for readers who want to find new things in the interpretation of the Qur'an. This has also been appreciated directly by Fazlur Rahman in his review in the book *God and Man in The Qur'an* printed Islamic Book Trust, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. Rahman said that "This is the first serious Asian non-Muslim scholar and a Japanese. As such we welcome Dr. Izutsu's work and hope that it will be the harbinger of a growing tradition of Islamic scholarship in the Far East."

CHAPTER V

CLOSING

1. Conclusion

a. Fazlur Rahman's and Toshihiko Izutsu's interpretation of the concept of God in the Qur'an

Regarding the concept of God, between Fazlur Rahman and Toshihiko agreed that God is a God of love, He is God who takes care of all His creatures, God is just, and gives guidance to all of humanity. Allah also has two different sides of the above qualities, namely the nature of wrath. This side is shown to those who are negligent in carrying out religious orders, turn to Him, refuse to surrender, and indifference to the afterlife.

In discussing the meaning of God, Toshihiko explained several world views about the concept of God according to the groups that existed before and when Islam came into their midst. The basic meaning of Allah is equated with the Greek term that is Ho Theos who all agree that the meaning of this word is God. The concept of God from the pagan Arabs, they believe that Allah is their God, but they allow another existence besides Allah as their Lord. Meanwhile, according to Jews and Christians, Allah is the creator of heaven and earth, who sent down the rain, who oversees the sanctity of oaths, and who rules the universe. This understanding is also shared by the pagan Arabs who hold the concepts of the Jews and Christians. And this understanding is also almost the same as the concept used by the Hanifs, the difference is they only worship Allah as their only God.

b. Differences and similarities

The elaboration of the concept from Fazlur Rahman uses the hermeneutic double movement method. Rahman tried to explain a problem by looking at the historical situation, and the macro situation within the boundaries of society, religion, culture, institutions and even about life as a whole in the Arabian Peninsula. Whereas Izutsu uses the semantic method to interpret a study in the Qur'an, this method focused more on the linguistic approach to researching his study, not the social conditions of the people at the time the Qur'an was revealed.

In discussing the existence of God, there is a significant difference between Toshihiko and Fazlur Rahman. Namely in the discussion about the existence of God. which Toshihiko states that God is in the middle of the world of existence, which means that God is with the rest of the world. Whereas Fazlur Rahman stated that God is not one thing among other things, or one being among other forms. He is with all things, He is even a unity of all things, this is an embodiment of understanding from the Qāf verse verse 16, that is God created man, knows what his heart whispered, and God is closer to him than his jugular vein.

In the interpretation of the two figures, many similarities emerge when discussing the concept of God. Like the discussion about the nature of God, the existence of God, the meaning of God, and the relationship between God and humans. So, in the comparison of thought they seem to support each other.

2. Suggestion

In writing this final project, the author realizes that there are deficiencies in several aspects, both in understanding the literature or in presenting less than optimal research. Therefore, for readers who might understand more about this discussion, the authors highly expect constructive criticism and suggestions. So, what has been written in this research will be useful for further research.

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