

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS

#### **A. The concept of *Barakah* in *Sûrah al-Isrâ* verse 1**

*Sûrah al-Isrâ* verse 1 deals with the occurrence of the night journey of the Messenger Muhammad SAW from Sacred Mosque to al-Aqshâ mosque which later the incident was named with the Ascension of the Prophet *Isrâ Mi'râj*.

Here researcher will try to formulate the concept of blessings that is inherent in the al-Aqshâ mosque (الى المسجد الأقصى الذي بركننا حوله) which according to some interpretation of scholars as has been described in previous chapters<sup>1</sup> is located in the Jerusalem which is now being conflict between Palestine and Israel to get the full domination over the city.

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<sup>1</sup> For more detail, please look at the chapter III which elaborated about al-Aqshâ in al- Qur'ân

The word blessed in this chapter when it's viewed from the side of history is to show how the sanctity the al-Aqshâ mosque which is visited by the Prophet Muhammad and it would also al-Haram mosque, Masjid al-Aqshâ was the first *Qiblah* (direction of praying) of Muslims before moving to Masjid al-Harâm, therefore it has a pretty significant role in the heart of Muslims of the world. So probably it's not an overstatement when Karen Armstrong said that there was transfer of the sanctity of the mosque of al-Harâm to al-Aqshâ mosque as for transferring the night journey through the events of the prophet called *Isrâ* Ascension. So, there is a divine relationship among these two cities.<sup>2</sup>

Researchers use the semantic approach to dissect the meaning of *barakah* in Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1, the first step is to find the basic meaning of *barakah*,

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<sup>2</sup> Karen Armstrong, *Jerusalem Satu Kota Tiga Iman*, Risalah Gusti, Surabaya.2004, see p. 299

the basic meaning is a word that has been attached to the word itself, which always carried wherever the word is placed<sup>3</sup> while the basic meaning of the word *barakah* is a virtue or goodness because such kind of meaning is often attached to the meaning of blessing at the verses of the Qur'ân such as al-Imran (3): 96, al-An'am (6): 92, al-Araf (7): 96 and others as researchers have described in Chapter III. And the second step is to find the relational meaning. Relational meaning is a connotative given and added to the existing meaning by putting the word in a special position in the specialized field, located in a different relationship with all other important words in the system<sup>4</sup>. Relational meaning of the word *barakah* is a pleasure, happiness, additional and growth. In terms of something can be said is blessed when it's produced happiness and enjoyment,

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<sup>3</sup> Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia, pendekatan semantik terhadap Al-Qur'an*, Tiara Wacana: Yogyakarta 1997. See P.12

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, see P. 12

and of course the blessings can be felt when there is active participation from human to get it. This kind of understanding as interpretation of the verses of the Qur'ân for instance: al-Isrâ (17): 83, Hud (11): 107, Ibrahim (14): 8 and others as researcher had described in previous chapters. While the third step is to interconnect the word *barakah* which involves the following words *الزيادة, والسعادة, النعمة, النماء, الخير* from the analysis of these words, the researcher has understanding word of *الزيادة* in the context of the Qur'ân in Sûrah Ibrahim (14): 8 speaks of God's promise to give more (plus) to the man if he was grateful for favors in the sense he works harder and more friendly with the environment so more he can gain and enjoyed, thus gratitude add delicious. While *السعادة* word in the context of the Qur'ân in Sûrah Hud (11): 105 explains the classification of human nature at the end of the day that is a happy person and woe, and interpretation of happiness according to the verse is to

bring safety, prosperity and create comfortable. And النعمة said in Sûrah al-Isrâ (17): 83 talked about the nature of *musyrikîn* (polytheist) but the sense of pleasure in this chapter is physical strength, wealth and spaciousness of living. And then word الخير in Sûrah Al-Imran (3): 115 it speaks of virtues and noble values for those who work on these virtues will surely be rewarded by Allah (see Sûrah An-Nahl {16}: 97) the means from virtue is good deeds such as helping others, charity, and so on. From understanding the words on which the term is called as a member of words from the main word *barakah* can be understood, the concept of blessings in Sûrah al-Isrâ is a blessing brings power to get the spaciousness of life (النعمة), therefore many of the scholars who interpret Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1 with the blessing of the verse is the number of plants<sup>5</sup> and of course, benefits can be taken to the survival of local

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<sup>5</sup> As many scholars interpreted the word *barrakna* in Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1 for more detail please look at the previous chapter at chapter III.

communities<sup>6</sup> and the value-added (الزيادة) in the form of good deeds that have a model of divine and social dimensions, (الخير) because of pious charity in Islamic doctrine was promised to be rewarded by God and pious charity it self has a positive impact on social life such as, sympathize the poor, orphans, charity, etc., with the spaciousness of life and care for others (pious charity) will surely bring comfort and prosperity of life (السعادة) for the people who implement them.

### **B. Contextualization meaning of *Barakah* Against Historical Fact in Jerusalem.**

As the researcher pointed out in the previous chapter that the concept of blessing in Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1 is a blessing brings power to get the

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<sup>6</sup> Even though the researcher have not found valid data against the fertility of land in east Jerusalem, where masjid al-Aqshâ is exist and standing strongly right now. Because of the fertility is enabling to grow the plants, fruits densely.

spaciousness of life and the value-added in the form of good deeds which have divine and social dimensions.

But the problem for blessing which is very close to a good, happiness, and pleasure is so highly contrary to historical facts had been happening in the city of Jerusalem where the al-Aqshâ mosque located. As researcher have described in chapter II started from early history up to the present Jerusalem under the Israeli occupation, the city was never free from conflict of humanity that never-ending cycle.

Bloodshed had occurred was in contrast to the name of the city itself. In Hebrew Jerusalem is *Yerushlayim* means "peace city " in Arabic is known by the term "*Madīnah al-Quds*" holy city, Jerusalem's condition reversed with it's beautiful names. Since it's known by ancient manuscript as the State in the city (city-state), the nation Canaan in the Bronze era nearly 4,000 years ago was almost never known peace. The rulers occupied Jerusalem successively, since the King

David, Solomon, continued to fall into the hands of Babylon, Macedonia, Egypt, Seleucid, Greek, Jewish Hasmonean, Roman Byzantine, Persian, Caliphs Muslim, Crusaders, Mameluk, Ottoman (Turkish), Britain, Jordan and now under colony of Israel<sup>7</sup>

The above data<sup>8</sup> further confirms that peace which is synonymous with calm, prosperity, welfare for its population had not happened in Jerusalem. And whereas with a very clear editorial is declared by the Qur'ân in Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1. (الذي الأقصى المسجد الى) (حواله برکنا) that al-Aqshâ mosque had been blessed by Allah SWT. And most of Scholars give the interpretation that the mean from al-Aqshâ mosque is located in Jerusalem or at the time was called with Syria, such as Al-Mawardi in its interpretation of *An-*

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<sup>7</sup> Fuad Kauma, *Men lanjangi Yahudi*, Dunia Ilmu, Surabaya 1998. See P. 88-89

<sup>8</sup> To know more detail about early history of Jerusalem from Daud up to colony of Israel, please look at previous Chapter, namely Chapter II which is discussing about history of Jerusalem from period to period.



*Nuqât Wal-Uyyûn* said al-Aqshâ Mosque which is mentioned in Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1 is the mosque Sulaiman bin Daud ‘*Alaihimâ Salâm* at Baitul Maqdis<sup>9</sup>. Although there are few scholars who understand that the mosque al-Aqshâ in question is a long way in terms of the mosque which is in seven heavens and this opinion according to Quraish Shihab could not be understood by the partners to talk at the time.<sup>10</sup>

So the concept of blessing which the researcher pointed out above and compared with historical facts of al-Aqshâ, as if the blessing is meant by the Qur’ân is not proven, and researcher have understanding the blessing is a blessing in the sense referred to the transfer of the sanctity of the mosque of al-harâm when Prophet committed Ascension *Isrâ Mi’râj* , so there is a relationship was built by these two cities through the

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<sup>9</sup> Abi Hasan Ali bin Muhammad bin Habib al-Mawardi al Basry, *An-Nuqât Wal-Uyyûn Tafsîr Al-Mawardî*, Darul, Kitab ilmiyyah, Bairut-Lebanon, Juz 3. See p. 226.

<sup>10</sup> M.Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: pesan, kesan dan keserasian al-Qur’an*, Lentera Hati, Jakarta 2009. Volume 7 See P. 410

symbol of Ascension of the Prophet, because of Judaism, Christianity and Islam are Abrahamic religions, which had historical roots that are very close together. As if God wanted to show these three religions are intrinsically relative. Islam was born in Mecca, Jews and Christians in Jerusalem. Therefore the transfer of sanctity through ascension *Isrâ Mi`râj* from al-harâm mosque to al-Aqshâ mosque is the transfer of sanctity in the form of a tangible blessing for the security of the Prophet Muhammad's journey to visit al-Aqshâ mosque, and the process trail the previous prophets that ever existed in Jerusalem. So the meaning of blessing in Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1 it's more personal to the prophet Muhammad when carrying out a procession of Ascension *Isrâ Mi`râj* of. And also as a form of appreciation and homage to the previous Prophets who formerly spread the religion of Allah. Moreover, according to researcher after doing historical analysis there is a possibility al-Aqshâ mosque in the

physical shape as we see now did not exist at the time when the Prophet did Ascension *Isrâ Mi`râj*, because of Jerusalem at that time still under the control of Byzantine which had legalized Christianity as the official religion of the kingdom. Ascension of the Prophet performed approximately in 622 AD<sup>11</sup>. And in the same year the Heraclius the king of Byzantine turned to the attack on the Persians who had captured Jerusalem from the hands of them and finally Koshrow II, king of Persia killed. So its very highly possibility when the prophet committed Ascension from Mecca mosque of al-Harâm to al-Aqshâ mosque in Palestine, Muslim was no one there. Because according to historical records that Islam started to go to Jerusalem during the period of khalîfah ‘Umar namely in February 638 AD, and even before coming of Umar al-Aqshâ

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<sup>11</sup> The scholars and historical experts are in controversy about the year of prophet committed *isrâ Mi`raj* more detail of elaboration is in Chapter III.

Mosque is still a trash city<sup>12</sup> and a newly in the period al-Walid ibn Abdul Malik built the mosque of al-Aqshâ permanently. The mosque was until now known by Muslims as the Al-Aqshâ Mosque was built on seven to eight century AD<sup>13</sup>.

And probably the conflict occurred along this time in Jerusalem is blessing in disguise for Abrahamic religions means, it's one of proof that they purify and claim on this city. Therefore it would strengthen their sense of religiosity based on each theological perspective, without exist of conflict around Jerusalem, perhaps the unity of religion whether Islam, Christen or Jews would not such strong.

So the naming of al-Aqshâ mosque at that time in the context of Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1 is simply a symbolic representation of the Abrahamic religions

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<sup>12</sup> Karen Armstrong, *Jerusalem Satu Kota Tiga Iman*, Risalah Gusti, Surabaya 2004. See P.303-308

<sup>13</sup> Nurcholis Madjid *perjalanan Religius Umrah dan Haji*, Paramadina, Jakarta 2000. See P. 55

(Jews and Christians) and the prophets who ever existed in Jerusalem. And the procession of *Isrâ Mi'râj* is one of the mechanisms of transferring the sanctity of the al-Harîm mosque to al-Aqshâ mosque in order to give meaning to the relationship between the three religions. As expressed by Karen Armstrong that there is a divine relationship between the two cities (Mecca and Jerusalem) <sup>14</sup>.

From exposure to the above data, the researcher conclude that the editorial of blessing (بركنا) in Sûrah al-Isrâ verse 1, which is characteristic of al-Aqshâ mosque is a depiction of the sanctity of the transfer through a procession of Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad in the form of travel security therefore, no disturbance in his journey and it also performed to give homage to the previous prophets who ever stayed in Jerusalem, and it is a symbol how close relationship of the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and

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<sup>14</sup> *Opcit.*, see p. 299

Islam). And the sum up, the blessing in Sûrah al-Isrâ Verse 1 is more specific and personal to the prophet Muhammad when committed night journey from al-harâm mosque to al-Aqshâ mosque and definitely by this understanding does not injure the historical fact all this time happened in Jerusalem.