

The Concept Of Rejecting The Trinity In Islamic Teaching In Surah An-Nisa Verse 171 (Study Of Tafsir Al-Azhar By Buya Hamka)

Satriaji Abimanyu^{1*}, Ainur Rhain², Yeti Dahliana³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

rejecting the concept of the trinity, verse 171, Tafsir Al-Azhar

1*g1002283@student.ums.ac.id,
2ar175@ums.ac.id,
3yd669@ums.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This article examines the concept of rejecting the Trinity in Islam through the analysis of Surah An-Nisa verse 171, focusing on Tafsir Al-Azhar by Buya Hamka. The method used in this research is categorized as library research. In the verse, Allah rebukes Ahlul Kitab, especially the Christians, who have exaggerated in glorifying the Prophet Isa Alaihissalam to consider him as God. Buya Hamka emphasized that Jesus was only a messenger of Allah and not God, so the teaching of Tawhid must be upheld by Muslims. This explanation includes the prohibition not to associate Allah with anything and the importance of respecting prophets without going beyond the limits. This study shows that the rejection of the Trinity is not only theological, but also an attempt to protect the faith of the people from deviation. Thus, Tafsir Al-Azhar provides a comprehensive understanding of the rejection of the Trinity in Islam and emphasizes the importance of maintaining the oneness of God as the core of religious teachings.

Copyright © 2024 Jurnal Ju- SoSAK. All rights reserved is Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution- Non Commercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)

INTRODUCTION

The concept of the Trinity, which is a central doctrine in Christian theology, is firmly rejected in Islam. This rejection is based on the principle of the oneness of God (Tauhid), which is very strong in Islam. There is a fundamental difference between Islamic and Christian views on the nature of God. In Christianity, God is understood as a single entity consisting of three divine persons: Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit. Islam, on the other hand, affirms the belief in tawhid, which is the recognition that God is One and not divided into any form. Since the beginning of the spread of Islam in Arabia in the 7th century, there has been intense debate between Muslim scholars and Christian theologians regarding the concept of the Trinity.

Muslim scholars argue that the concept of the Trinity contradicts the teaching of monotheism, which emphasizes that God has no partners or children. This discussion reflects the fundamental differences in the understanding of God between the two religions. This paper provides a more structured and clear explanation of the differences between the concepts of the Trinity in Christianity and tawhid in Islam, as well as the historical context of the debate.

The affirmation of the oneness of God in Islam reflects an attempt to assert the truth of their respective beliefs. Tawhid as the main pillar of Islam is known as a steadfast monotheistic religion. The main pillar of the Islamic faith is tawhid, which is the belief in the one and only God, who has no other partners, children, or parts of God. Affirmation of the

oneness of God The Qur'an expressly rejects the concept of trinity. Surah An-Nisa' verse 171 is one example that affirms that Allah is the One God and is pure from having any children or parts of any kind. This verse reads: "Do not say: 'God is three'... Verily, God is One God" (QS. An-Nisa: 171). The rejection of the trinity in Islam also reflects an attempt to maintain distinct religious identities and beliefs amidst the diverse cultural environment of the Islamic world. In Islam, monotheism is the greatest foundation of religion and the essence of Islam.

A Muslim believes that monotheism is the core and foundation of all Islamic teachings. By pledging the sentence of Syahadat, a Muslim establishes himself to make only Allah as the goal, motivation, and way of life. The definition of tawhid is the oneness of Allah SWT, which refers to the strong belief that Allah SWT is only one and there is no God besides Him. Thus, affirming the oneness of God in Islam is not only an effort to maintain religious identity, but also a way to understand and live the teachings of Islam deeply. Despite fundamental differences in religious concepts, Islam also teaches the importance of interfaith dialog and tolerance. This allows Muslims to explain their beliefs with respect for other beliefs and seek to build mutual understanding.

The background to the rejection of the trinity concept in Islam includes aspects of the historical, theological and social contexts that influence the way Muslims view the concept. By understanding this context, we can appreciate the importance of religious identity awareness, respectful interfaith dialog, and affirmation of tawhid as the main foundation of Islamic faith. This article will discuss the rejection of the concept of the trinity through tafsir tahlili of Surah An-Nisa verse 171, and review the reasons behind this rejection based on Islamic sources. Historically, since the beginning of the spread of Islam in the 7th century, there has been a debate between Muslim scholars and Christian theologians regarding the concept of the trinity. Muslims view the doctrine of the trinity as a violation of the principle of the oneness of God (tawhid).

In the Islamic view, monotheism is the belief in the one and only God, without partners or children. This affirmation is reflected in various verses of the Qur'an that reject the idea that God has children or parts of Himself. One of the verses that affirms the rejection of the concept of trinity is Surah An-Nisa verse 171. In this verse, Allah emphasizes that He is the One God and there is no equal to Him. The rejection of the trinity also reflects Muslims' efforts to maintain their religious identity in the midst of a diverse cultural environment. Thus, an understanding of the rejection of the trinity concept in Islam is not only related to theological aspects, but also involves awareness of religious identity and the importance of respectful interfaith dialogue. The affirmation of tawhid as the main foundation of the Islamic faith becomes the foundation for Muslims to understand and explain their belief in the One God.

RESEARCH METHODS

The method in research can be interpreted as the way taken to do something. This type of research is categorized as library research. This research aims to obtain and process library data to get answers to the main problems raised. The approach used is thematic, which is an attempt to understand the verses by focusing on a predetermined theme.

In this process, researchers seriously examine the verses related to the theme to gain a deeper understanding. Thus, library research with a thematic approach is an effective

strategy for collecting and analyzing data from written sources, so as to provide accurate and comprehensive answers to the main problems raised. (Mustaqim, 2017)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Buya Hamka and Tafsir Al-Azhar

Hamka, short for Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, or often called Abdul Malik, was born on February 16, 1908 in Maninjau, West Sumatra, and died on July 24, 1981. His father, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, known as Haji Rosul, was a major figure in the youth Islamic movement in Minangkabau. Hamka's early education began with learning to read the Qur'an at his parents' home. In 1914 AD, he entered the madrasa 'Thawalib School' which applied the classical system, curriculum, and traditional materials. After that, Hamka continued his education at the Diniyyah school owned by Zainuddin Labai El Yunusi in Pasar Usang, Padang Panjang. Hamka had a special talent in Arabic, which allowed him to access a wide range of Arabic literature, including translations of Western writings. Hamka's daily pattern is reflected in his dedication to knowledge: in the morning, he went to school in the village; in the evening, he attended Diniyyah school; and in the evening, he spent time in Surau with his peers. (Ichtibar baru Van Hove, 1993)

One of Hamka's monumental works is the tafsir of the Qur'an entitled "Tafsir Al-Azhar", which is written in Malay that is easily understood by ordinary people. This work has become one of the most popular Qur'anic commentaries in Indonesia and is widely recognized for its ease of understanding. Tafsir Al-Azhar originated from Buya Hamka's lectures and displays various dimensions of his writing expertise, including imagination, sharp memory, and strong memorization. Buya Hamka wrote Tafsir Al-Azhar because he wanted to leave a valuable legacy for the Indonesian nation, the majority of whose population is Muslim. He also wanted to show his expertise as a writer, writer, and journalist. In addition, he wanted to show his ability to relate to contemporary issues and the culture of the people, especially the Malay-Minangkabau culture.

Tafsir Al-Azhar is included in the category of tafsir bi al-ma'tsur, where the interpretation is done based on the text of the Qur'an itself. In the preparation of its interpretation, this tafsir uses the tahlili method, which means starting from Surah Al-Fatihah to Surah An-Naas. Regarding the way of explanation, the method used is the muqarin method, which is an interpretation that compares a group of verses that discuss a problem carefully. The style of this tafsir, characteristically, follows the adabi al-ijtimā'i approach, by presenting beautiful Malay language and relevant to the social context and society at that time.

A brief history, Tafsir Al-Azhar is a monumental work produced by Buya Hamka, a prominent Indonesian scholar. This work originated from the Fajr lectures delivered by him at the al-Azhar Grand Mosque since 1959. Despite the challenges of time and other obstacles, Buya Hamka persisted in writing every morning after Fajr prayer. The name Al-Azhar itself is taken from the al-Azhar Grand Mosque, which was named by the Rector of Egypt's al-Azhar University, Sheikh Mahmud Syaltut, and has a deep meaning, linking the place of interpretation with the place of writing. Despite being detained by the Old Order authorities in 1964, Buya Hamka's passion for writing never died. Even behind bars, he continued to craft meaning and give life to the holy verses of the Qur'an. After his release in 1966, Buya Hamka

The Concept Of Rejecting The Trinity In Islamic Teaching In Surah An-Nisa Verse 171 (Study Of Tafsir Al-Azhar By Buya Hamka)– Satriaji Abimanyu et.al

continued the refinement of Tafsir Al-Azhar that he had long worked on. The method used in this tafsir is the tahlili method with a comprehensive approach, which focuses on understanding the overall message of the Qur'an. The systematic writing begins with an introduction that explains the context of the surah, followed by an explanation of the verses in sequence.

Definition of Tawhid

Islam recognizes and believes in only one God (Tawhid). In the sentence of the shahada (confession of faith), there is the phrase. أَشْهَدُ "أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ أَشْهَدُ" "ashhadu an laa ilaaha illallaah," which means "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah." This sentence contains two important meanings: first, the rejection and denial of all forms of worship, be it gods or goddesses, other than Allah; second, the affirmation that the title of God, Ilah, Dewa, or worship belongs only to Allah. This expression is also found in the azan (call to worship) of Muslims (Hs & Hasanah, 2011; Noorsena, 2005; Saputro, 2016).

In shar'i terms, the meaning of Tawheed is to make Allah the only true worship with all its specificities. From this meaning, it can be understood that many things are worshiped by humans, such as angels, prophets, pious people, or even other creatures of Allah. However, a monotheist only makes Allah the only worship (Purnama, 2021).

In Islam, Tawhid is the main foundation of faith. Tawhid emphasizes that God (Allah) is one, having no partners, children, or any form of incarnation. The concept of the Trinity, which involves three persons of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), is considered a violation of this principle.

Surah An-Nisa Verse 171

Surah An-Nisa verse 171 is one of the verses that explicitly rejects the concept of the Trinity:

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلٌ

"O People of the Book, do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak against Allah except what is right. Verily, Jesus, the son of Mary, is but a messenger of Allah, and His word was conveyed to Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe you in Allah and His messengers and do not say: '(God) is three', cease (from saying that). That is better for you. Verily, Allah is the One God, the One who is pure from having children. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and the earth, and Allah is the Sustainer." [Quran 4:171]

Trinity

The Christian faith emphasizes the concept of Tawhid (the Oneness of God), which is stated in Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is one" (see also Mark 12:29). Nonetheless, the dogma of the Holy Trinity is the most important and fundamental teaching in Christianity. It does not teach about the number of Gods, as it is clear that there is one God, but rather explains how the one God exists.

For hundreds or even thousands of years, this dogma has successfully safeguarded the church's teachings on the divine mysteries from foreign, deviant and heretical teachings. The Nicene-Constantinople Creed, formulated by the church fathers, was pledged by the church

throughout the ages to affirm the dogma of the Trinity. In this context, there are three persons in one God: first, the Father, who is the only God in Christianity. In 1 Corinthians 8:6 it states, "But for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and for whom we live." The term "Father" does not denote the male gender, but rather describes that everything comes from Him. Second, the Son, who is the incarnation of the Word of God made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). Jesus Christ proceeded and came from God the Father (John 8:42). The statement that Jesus came forth from the Father indicates that He was previously in God. As such, there remains only one God. Although Jesus is not God the Father, He is essentially God the Word. Third, the Holy Spirit, known as the Spirit of Truth, proceeds from the Father (John 15:26).

The existence of the Holy Spirit was previously in the Father, thus showing that God remains one and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God Himself. In summary, the dogma of the Trinity teaches that there is only one God-the Father-who from within Himself brings forth His Son (Jesus Christ) and His Spirit (the Holy Spirit). Thus, despite the existence of three persons in one divine essence, the Christian faith affirms that the oneness of God is maintained. This paragraph presents information in a comprehensive and structured manner regarding the Christian faith and the dogma of the Trinity

Interpretation of surah an-nisa verse 171 tafsir al-azhar

The following is an analysis of the interpretation of surah an-nisa verse 171 in *Tafsir al-Azharr*:

1. Q.S. AN-NISSA (6) verse 171

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةٌ انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلٌ

"O People of the Book, do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak against Allah except what is true. Verily, Jesus, the son of Mary, is the messenger of Allah, and (by) His word which He conveyed to Mary, and (by) the blowing of a spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers, and do not say, '(God is) three.' Stop; that is better for you. Verily Allah is the One Lord. Glorified is He from having children. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. Sufficient is Allah as a protector." Tafsir Al-Azhar

In Tafsir Al-Azhar, this verse explains the prohibition of exaggeration in religion and emphasizes not to say anything about Allah except the truth. The verse confirms that Isa (Jesus) is a messenger of Allah, not God, and emphasizes the importance of the oneness of Allah. In addition, the verse also warns against the notion of three Gods, but only one God. It underlines that all creatures will return to God and emphasizes the importance of faith in God and His messengers. It also refers to the discussion between Islamic scholars and Christians regarding the understanding of Jesus, where emphasis is placed on the creed of monotheism brought by the previous prophets. Thus, this verse serves as a reminder to return to the correct creed and avoid deviations in the understanding of God. according to a Hadith narrated by Bukhari from Umar bin Khathab "The Messenger of Allah said: Do not lift me up,

as the Nosroni lifted up the son of Maryam. I am nothing but a servant of Allah. Therefore say the servant of Allah and His Messenger." (tafsir al azhar p.1568)

In a Christian faith lesson it is mentioned: One God in three persons. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is also God. But all of them are not three Gods, but one God who exists in three persons, which are simultaneously far and different persons. For they all have one distant, one divinity and one substance. None of them is greater or more glorious or more powerful than the other two, for they are all equal in their greatness and greatness and power over everything, apart from their power. And we will not be able to grasp this essence perfectly, because it is a secret that is very deep, beyond the power of reason and the results of human thought." (tafsir al Azhar p.1571)

Buya Hamka's View of Surah An-Nisa Verse 171 (*Tafsir Al-Azhar*).

From the verse above, we can see that *Tafsir Al-Azhar* explains in detail the interpretation of the verse *rejecting the concept of trinitas in Islamic teachings*. In *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, Buya Hamka explains Surah An-Nisa verse 171 as a prohibition of exaggeration (ghuluw) in religion, especially to Ahlul Kitab, especially Christians, who have exceeded the limit in glorifying the Prophet Isa Alaihis-Salam. They regarded him as God, whereas he was only a messenger of Allah. This verse emphasizes that Allah is the one and only God, which is the core teaching of Tawhid in Islam. Buya Hamka emphasized that the belief in the oneness of God must be maintained by Muslims and become the foundation of religion.

In addition, this verse also rejects the concept of the Trinity held by some Christians, who consider God to consist of three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In his interpretation, Buya Hamka invites people to believe in God and all His messengers without associating Him with anything. This rebuke to Ahlul Kitab also serves as a reminder for Muslims not to fall into an excessive attitude in honoring the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, although the Prophet Muhammad has a high position as the last messenger, Muslims must still maintain a balance in their respect. Overall, Buya Hamka provides an in-depth explanation of the importance of maintaining the oneness of Allah, honoring the prophets without going overboard, and avoiding extremes in religion. This paragraph presents comprehensive and structured information about Buya Hamka's view on Surah An-Nisa verse 171.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Buya Hamka, it can be concluded that Islamic teachings explicitly reject the concept of the Trinity embraced in Christianity. In Surah An-Nisa verse 171, Allah rebukes Ahlul Kitab, especially the Christians, who have exaggerated in glorifying Prophet Isa Alaihis-Salam to consider him as God. Buya Hamka emphasized that Isa was only a messenger of God and not part of divinity, reminding Muslims to maintain the oneness of God (Tawhid) and not fall into extreme attitudes in honoring prophets. This verse also serves as a reminder that belief in one God is the core of Islamic teachings. In Buya Hamka's view, the rejection of the Trinity is not only theological, but also an attempt to protect the faith of the people from deviation. He underlined the importance of believing in Allah and all His messengers without associating Him with anything. Thus, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* provides a comprehensive explanation of the rejection of the Trinity in Islam, emphasizing that the true teaching must be based on the oneness of God and recognition of

The Concept Of Rejecting The Trinity In Islamic Teaching In Surah An-Nisa Verse 171 (Study Of Tafsir Al-Azhar By Buya Hamka)– Satriaji Abimanyu et.al

the position of the prophets as His messengers without exceeding the limit. Overall, Buya Hamka's view in Tafsir Al-Azhar shows that the understanding of the oneness of God must be well maintained by Muslims, and warns against being trapped in exaggeration that can damage faith.

REFERENCES

- Islam Menolak Keras Pandangan Azas Trinitas, Imam Chirri, 16 Desember 2023.
Answering Islam, Penolakan Muslim: Tak Ada Trinitas, diakses pada 2023.
Arsip Armansyah, Kenapa Islam menolak Trinitas, 16 Desember 2011. Alviyah Avif, 'Metode Penafsiran Buya Hamka Dalam Tafsir Al-Azhar', *Ilmu Ushuluddin*, Vol.15
Dewan Redaksi Ensiklopedia Islam, 'Ensiklopedia Islam' (Jakarta: Ichtiar baru Van Hoeve, 1993), Hal.75.
Avif Alviyah, 'Metode Penafsiran Buya Hamka Dalam Tafsir Al-Azhar', *Ilmu Ushuluddin*, Vol.15 Nom, Hal.28.
Hamka, Falsafah Hidup (Jakarta: Pustaka punjimas, 184). Hal.2
Messakh, J. (2019). AJARAN DASAR TENTANG ALLAH TRITUNGAL: DINAMIKA KEBERADAANNYA SECARA TEOLOGIS DAN SIGNIFIKANSI BAGI IMAN. *The Way: Jurnal Teologi Dan Kependidikan*, 5(36), 125–132.
Sinaga, E. D. (2019). Dogma Allah Tritunggal dan Masalah Distorsi Ajaran Trinitas. *Jurnal Theologia Forum STFT Surya Nusantara*, 7(2), 63–79.
Retrieved from <http://jurnalstftsunus.ac.id/index.php/stft/article/view/39>
Noorsena, B. (2005). *The History of Allah* (5th ed.). Yogyakarta: Andi.
Purnama, Y. (2021). Makna Tauhid. Aqidah. Retrieved from <https://muslim.or.id/6615-makna-tauhid.html>
Saputro, I. (2016). Konsep Tauhid Menurut Abdul Karim Amrullah dan Implikasinya terhadap Tujuan Pendidikan Islam. *At-Ta'dib: Journal of Pesantren Education*, 11(2), 259–24. https://doi.org/10.21111/at_tadib.v11i2.779
Suryaningsih, E. W. (2019). Doktrin Tritunggal Kebenaran Alkitabiah. *PASCA: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen*, 15(1), 16–22.
<https://doi.org/10.46494/psc.v15i1.64>