



Reframing Qur'anic Perspectives on Interfaith Relations in the Contemporary World: A Thematic Analysis

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Abstract

This study examines the Qur'anic perspectives on interfaith relations in the contemporary world, emphasizing the relevance of its principles in addressing modern pluralistic societies. Islam, as a divinely revealed religion, acknowledges the existence of other faiths while upholding the theological stance that Islam is the only religion approved by Allah. The Qur'an recognizes religious diversity as part of divine will and explicitly rejects coercion in matters of belief, positioning the prophets solely as conveyors of God's message. Employing a thematic interpretation (tafsir maudhui), this study systematically collects and analyzes Qur'anic verses related to interfaith relations. This method enables a structured and comprehensive understanding of key principles such as tolerance, peace, equality, deliberation, and justice. The analysis reveals that the Qur'an promotes peaceful coexistence and ethical engagement with non-Muslims while maintaining doctrinal exclusivity in matters of faith (aqidah). Theoretically, this study enriches discussions on Qur'anic hermeneutics by contextualizing interfaith themes within contemporary realities. Practically, it offers insights for policymakers, religious leaders, and scholars seeking to promote constructive interfaith engagement based on Islamic teachings.

Contribution: The findings contribute to contemporary Islamic discourse by demonstrating how Qur'anic principles can serve as a foundational framework for fostering interreligious dialogue and social harmony in an era of increasing global religious diversity.

Keywords: *Qur'anic perspectives, interfaith relations, religious diversity, thematic interpretation, contemporary Islam.*

Abstract

Penelitian ini mengkaji perspektif Al-Qur'an tentang hubungan antaragama dalam dunia kontemporer, dengan menekankan relevansi prinsip-prinsipnya dalam menghadapi masyarakat plural modern. Islam, sebagai agama yang diwahyukan secara ilahi, mengakui keberadaan agama-agama lain sekaligus menegaskan bahwa Islam adalah satu-satunya agama yang diridai oleh Allah. Al-Qur'an mengakui keberagaman agama sebagai bagian dari kehendak ilahi dan secara tegas menolak pemaksaan dalam beriman, dengan menempatkan para nabi hanya sebagai penyampai pesan Allah. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan tafsir tematik (tafsir maudhui), penelitian ini secara sistematis mengumpulkan dan menganalisis ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang berkaitan dengan hubungan antaragama. Metode ini memungkinkan pemahaman yang terstruktur dan komprehensif terhadap prinsip-prinsip utama seperti toleransi, perdamaian, kesetaraan, musyawarah, dan keadilan. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa Al-Qur'an mendorong hidup berdampingan secara damai dan interaksi etis dengan non-Muslim, sambil tetap mempertahankan eksklusivitas doktrinal dalam aspek keimanan (aqidah). Secara teoretis, penelitian ini memperkaya diskusi tentang hermeneutika Al-Qur'an dengan mengontekstualisasikan tema



hubungan antaragama dalam realitas masa kini. Secara praktis, studi ini memberikan wawasan bagi pembuat kebijakan, pemimpin agama, dan akademisi yang ingin mempromosikan interaksi lintas agama yang konstruktif berdasarkan ajaran Islam.

Kontribusi: Temuan ini berkontribusi terhadap wacana Islam kontemporer dengan menunjukkan bagaimana prinsip-prinsip Al-Qur'an dapat menjadi kerangka dasar dalam membangun dialog antaragama dan harmoni sosial di tengah meningkatnya keberagaman agama secara global.

Kata Kunci: *Perspektif Al-Qur'an, hubungan antaragama, keberagaman agama, tafsir tematik, Islam kontemporer.*

Introduction

The Qur'an, the holy book of Muslims, provides a comprehensive view of interreligious relations.¹ The Qur'an acknowledges that Allah created humans with differences, including religion, in plurality and diversity. Verses such as Q.S. *Ash-Shuura* [26]:8 and Q.S. *Yunus* [10]: 99 affirm that this diversity is God's will and part of His plan. Islam teaches freedom of religion and does not force anyone to convert to Islam, as stated in Q.S. *al-Baqarah* [2]: 256. The duty of the prophets, including the Prophet Muhammad, is to convey the truth of Islam without coercion. Many verses in the Qur'an mention other religions or beliefs, such as Jews, Christians, Majuzi, Shobiun, and Muslims, at the same time. This shows that these religions remain recognized until the end of time.² However, many Muslims, including well-known commentators such as at-Thabari, al-Qurthubi, and Jalalain, argue that Judaism and Christianity are no longer the means of salvation.³ This view results in a distortion of the understanding of the Qur'an. It creates the perception that people from these religions will go to hell while creating stereotypes such as "infidels" that can threaten the diversity of society and trigger radicalism and terrorism. This is because classical scholars tend to use a more literal and textual approach, focusing on the literal meaning of the verses of the Qur'an. They also rely heavily on narration and hadith to interpret these verses. In contrast, contemporary scholars are more likely to use a contextual approach, considering historical, cultural, and social factors.⁴

¹ Asma Afsaruddin, *The First Muslims: History and Memory* (Simon and Schuster, 2013); Elizabeth Becker, "Interfaith Practices," in *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Ritual and Practice* (Routledge, 2022); Mun'im Sirry, "Toward Understanding the Qur'an's Polemical Texts," in *Scriptural Polemics: The Qur'an and Other Religions*, ed. Mun'im Sirry (Oxford University Press, 2014), 0, accessed March 1, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199359363.003.0003>.

² Mun'im Sirry, "'Compete with One Another in Good Works': Exegesis of Qur'an Verse 5.48 and Contemporary Muslim Discourses on Religious Pluralism," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 20, no. 4 (October 2009): 423–438; Andi Eka Putra, "Konsep Ahlul al-Kitab dalam Al-Qur'an Menurut Penafsiran Muhammed Arkoun dan Nurcholish Madjid," no. 1 (2016).

³ Mukhlis Abdul Rosyid et al., "The Concept of Ummatan Wasatan in The Qur'an (A Comparative Study of Tafsir Fii Zhilaalil Qur'an by Sayyid Qutb and Tafsir Al-Munir By Wahbah Zuhayli):" (Presented at the International Conference on Islamic and Muhammadiyah Studies (ICIMS 2022), Surakarta, Indonesia, 2022), accessed December 8, 2024, <https://www.atlantis-press.com/article/125976428>; Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Lakum Dīnukum Wa-Liya Dīnī: The Muhammadiyah's Stance towards Interfaith Relations," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 22, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 329–342.

⁴ Mohammad Hayyi Syafwan Husna and Muktafi Muktafi, "Moderasi Beragama Minoritas Muslim Internasional di Buffalo State University Perspektif Muhammad Abduh," *Journal of Ushuluddin and Islamic Thought* 2, no. 1 (June 1, 2024):



Contemporary scholars such as Rashid Ridha, in his famous tafsir, *Tafsir al-Mannar*, in studying the Quran, give a reasonably broad and inclusive interpretation. This is the case in interpreting QS Al-Maidah verse 5. This verse discusses halal food and marriage with a woman of the Book.⁵ Ridha emphasized that in addition to Jews and Christians, other groups include Scribes, such as the Magi, Shabi'in, Hindus, Buddhists, and Confucians. Ridha argued that the food of these groups is halal for Muslims and that marriage to women from these groups is also permissible, provided that they maintain honor and meet the marriage conditions outlined in Islam.⁶ This approach shows inclusivity and flexibility in understanding the concept of the Scribes, which reflects the importance of harmonious relations between religious people.⁷

Other contemporary scholars like Buya Hamka are also quite open to the social context. In interpreting QS Al-Maidah verse 8, Hamka emphasizes the obligation to act indiscriminately against the religion adhered to. Still, the principle of justice is upheld based on humanity, and Hamka interprets QS. At-Taubah verse 6, as long as other religions do not interfere with Islam, it is obligatory for him to do justice.⁸ QS At-Taubah verse 6 is one of the verses that emphasizes the importance of justice and protection in Islam, including against people who do not believe in it. This verse is related to the security that must be given to polytheists who ask for protection from Muslims. This shows the importance of justice and protection in Islam. The principles of justice and protection taught in this verse can be applied widely, including in protecting places of worship such as churches and other places of worship. Islam teaches that every place of worship should be respected and protected.⁹ Therefore, this article offers a more inclusive perspective, in line with the goal of religious literacy in

143–165; Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani and Abdul Waheed, "Current Challenges in Interfaith Relations within the Muslim Ummah: An Analysis of Muhammad Hamidullah's Contributions," *Southern Journal of Arts & Humanities* 3, no. 1 (January 30, 2025): 78–116.

⁵ Jane I. Smith, *Muslims, Christians, and the Challenge of Interfaith Dialogue* (Oxford University Press, 2007); Neil Bowey, "Towards Respectful Relations between Christians and Muslims: An Interfaith Dialogical Approach" (Masters Thesis, Charles Sturt University, 2015).

⁶ Nathanael Gratias Sumaktoyo, "Faith and Friendship: Religious Bonding and Interfaith Relations in Muslim Countries," *Politics and Religion* 14, no. 4 (December 2021): 634–662; Imronudin Imronudin and Riza Muhammad, "Discourse from the Perspective of Mohammed Arkoun: An Examination of the Values of Interfaith Dialogue," *Potret Pemikiran* 27, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 94–112.

⁷ Naufa Izzul Ummam and Abdul Haris, "Deciphering QS. al-Maidah: 51 in Qur'an, Liberation & Pluralism: Analyzing the Interpretation of the Word Auliya' through Farid Esack's Perspective," *Journal of Islamic Civilization* 5, no. 2 (2023): 138–156.

⁸ Ahmad Khoirul Fata, Pepen Irpan Fauzan, and Izzuddin Izzuddin, "From Integration of Islam-State to Integration of Ummah-State: The Biography of Buya Hamka," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 19, no. 2 (December 30, 2024): 141–154; Azmil Iman Hartafan and Andri Nirwana An, "A Study Between Tawhid And Pluralism In Buya Hamka And Nurcholish Madjid's Interpretation Of Kalimatun Sawa In A Comparative Review," *Journal for Islamic Studies* 7, no. 1 (2024).

⁹ Ashimuddin Musa and M Musthafa, "KONSEP KERUKUNAN ANTAR UMAT BERAGAMA:" (n.d.).



reducing religion-based conflict.¹⁰ A more open understanding of other religions is needed to support peaceful coexistence and diversity in a pluralistic modern society. Thus, this insight of the Qur'an serves as an alternative interpretation and an essential tool to encourage interreligious dialogue and strengthen the values of tolerance necessary in the face of today's global challenges.¹¹

Research on religious tolerance and moderation in Islam shows that Islamic teachings have a strong foundation. Kiki Mayasarah (2020) emphasized the importance of tolerance strategies in building harmony between religious communities in Indonesia.¹² Muhammad Amin (2022) explores the concept of social relations in the Qur'an, highlighting Islamic teachings that encourage harmonious and respectful relationships with fellow human beings, including those of different faiths.¹³ Fauziah Nurdin (2021) discusses religious moderation based on the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasizing the importance of moderation to avoid extremism and create a peaceful environment.¹⁴ Fadly et al. (2021) examine M. Quraish Shihab's views on tolerance between religions in interpreting Al-Mishbah, which emphasizes the importance of mutual respect and understanding.¹⁵ Andi Sutrisno (2023) examines the relevance of the Qur'an's teachings on religious moderation to religious harmony in Indonesia, showing how this teaching can be applied in the modern context.¹⁶ Although many scholars have discussed interreligious relations in Islam from a traditional perspective, there is a need for a more in-depth thematic analysis in the modern context.¹⁷

This research has several benefits and objectives. For researchers, this study aims to explore the insights of the Qur'an related to interreligious relations. For readers, this research is expected to be

¹⁰ Faiz Rizal Izuddin, Yeti Dahliana, and Syamsul Hidayat, "Study of the Living Quran: Religious Moderation in the Quran (Role of the Lingkar Perdamaian Foundation in Deradicalization Efforts)," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Islamic and Muhammadiyah Studies (ICIMS 2023)*, ed. Triono Ali Mustofa et al., vol. 773, *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* (Paris: Atlantis Press SARL, 2024), 110–120, accessed December 8, 2024, https://www.atlantis-press.com/doi/10.2991/978-2-38476-102-9_10.

¹¹ Hartafan and An, "A Study Between Tawhid And Pluralism In Buya Hamka And Nurcholish Madjid's Interpretation Of Kalimatun Sawa In A Comparative Review."

¹² Kiki Mayasarah, "Toleransi Strategi Dalam Membangun Kerukunan Antarumat Beragama Di Indonesia," *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies* (2020): 77–88.

¹³ Muhammad Amin, "RELASI SOSIAL DALAM AL-QUR'AN," *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies* 1, no. 1 (February 17, 2022): 30–47.

¹⁴ Fauziah Nurdin, "Moderasi Beragama menurut Al-Qur'an dan Hadist," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah* 18, no. 1 (January 30, 2021): 59.

¹⁵ Fadly Alannajmi Assegaf, "Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama Menurut Tafsir Al Misbah Karya M. Quraish Shihab" (2021).

¹⁶ Andri Sutrisno et al., "QUR'ANIC INSIGHTS ON RELIGIOUS MODERATION AND ITS RELEVANCE TO RELIGIOUS HARMONY IN INDONESIA," *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies* 2, no. 1 (February 2, 2023): 102–115.

¹⁷ Ulummudin Ulummudin, "TAFSIR ATAS ۲۰ ۱۰۰ AYAT PEDANG ۱۰۰ QS AL-TAUBAH (9): ۵: STUDI KOMPARATIF PENAFSIRAN SAYYID QUTUB DAN RASYID RIDHA," *Al-Tadabbur: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 7, no. 02 (2022): 229–246.



applied daily as a reference for harmonizing ties between religious communities. In addition, for scientists, this research can be a reference for future research that discusses harmony in religion more deeply.

This study uses a qualitative method with a literature research approach, where data is collected through analysis of the primary literature and supporting references. The data sources include significant literature such as *Tafsir al-Azhar* by Hamka and *Tafsir Al-Manar* by Rashid Ridha and various supporting theories about interreligious harmony from multiple sources to strengthen the analysis.¹⁸ Data collection is carried out through documentation techniques concerning books, journals, articles, and relevant records about the importance of harmonious relations between religious communities. Data analysis is conducted using the Content Analysis method, which involves categorizing and critically examining data to generate valid interpretations and answer research questions.¹⁹

Islam and the Existence of Other Religions

God wants humans to be created with plurality and diversity in religion. Allah SWT said, "And if Allah wills, Allah will make them one people, but He includes those whom He wills into His mercy. And the wrongdoers are not there for them protectors and helpers." (Q.S. *Ash-Shuura* [26]: 8). And if your Lord wills, believe in all the people of the earth. So, are you forcing people to be believers in everything? (Q.S. *Yunus* [10]: 99). This proves that Allah SWT created humans with differences, including religion. If God wants all humans to embrace one religion, God can do so. However, God gives people the freedom to choose religion according to their conscience and views. The Qur'an itself states that there is no coercion in religion. We cannot impose our beliefs on others, just as we do not want to be forced to embrace the beliefs of others.²⁰ firman Alloh SWT,

¹⁸ Thariq Ibrahim, "UMMATAN WASATAN DALAM TAFSIR AL-MANAR (Penafsiran Muhammad Abdurrahman Terhadap Surat Al-Baqarah: 143)" (2021); Siham Yahya and Simon and Boag, "Till Faith Do Us Part ...: Relation Between Religious Affiliation and Attitudes Toward Cross-Cultural and Interfaith Dating and Marriage," *Marriage & Family Review* 50, no. 6 (September 1, 2014): 480–504.

¹⁹ Hasan NNN Humaizi, M. A. Dalimunthe, and E. Ramadhani, "Harmony in Virtual Space: Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB) Development Communication in Creating Digital Literacy Based on Religious Moderation," *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development* 8, no. 7 (2024): 4299.

²⁰ Andri Nirwana et al., "Exploration of Wasatiyah Diction to Realize Sustainable Tolerance Between Religious Communities: A Study of the Translation of the Quran of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia," *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental* 18, no. 6 (March 26, 2024): e05717.





لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ

There is no compulsion to (enter) the religion (Islam); (Q.S.al-Baqarah [2]: 256)

Asbabun nuzul dari, this verse is about a man from among the Banu Salim who was Auf's mother and was called Al-Husaini. He has two sons who convert to Christianity, while he is a Muslim. So he asked Muhammad: "May I force both of them (to convert to Islam)? Because indeed both of them have rebelled and do not want to accept Islam".²¹ So Allah sent this verse regarding this event.

Islam teaches freedom in choosing religion. The Prophet's obligation is not to force people to believe but to convey the truth of Islam. "The obligation of the Messenger is nothing but to convey, and Allah knows what you are born and what you are hiding." (Q.S. Al-Maidah [5]: 99). The Prophet was sent only to give warnings and was not sent to control someone. "So give a warning, for you are only the one who warns, you are not the one who has power over them, but the one who turns away and disbelieves, then Allah will punish him with a great punishment." (Q.S.al-Ghasiyah [88]: 21-24). Thus, Islam, as a religion brought by the Prophets and Apostles, recognizes the existence (of other religions).²² God accepts the existence of different faiths because God does not want to force people to believe, and prophets' job is to convey God's message without coercion.²³ These principles reflect Islam's attitude of respecting diversity and freedom of religion and emphasizing the importance of conveying messages wisely and respectfully.²⁴

Fairness and Fairness in Interaction

Justice is one of the main principles in Islam that must be applied in every aspect of life, including in the interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims. This principle is based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, which emphasize the importance of justice and kindness to all

²¹ "Tafsir Surah Al-Baqarah - 256," *Quran.Com*, accessed December 8, 2024, <https://quran.com/2:256/tafsirs/en-tafsir-ibn-kathir>.

²² Siswoyo Aris Munandar and Saifuddin Amin, "Contemporary Interpretation Of Religious Moderation In The Qur'an: Thought Analysis Quraish Shihab And Its Relevance In The Indonesian Context," *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafsir Studies* 2, no. 3 (August 22, 2023): 290–309.

²³ Nurdin, "Moderasi Beragama menurut Al-Qur'an dan Hadist"; Alfan Nawaziru Zahara, Umi Sumbulah, and Fauzan Zenrif, "Islamic Tolerance in Qur'an and Hadith: Implications for Educational Institutions," *Khazanah Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 3 (December 31, 2024): 219–230.

²⁴ Fauzan Hidayatullah, "Analisis Pandangan Abdul Moqsith Ghazali dan Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi terhadap Pluralisme Agama dalam Penafsiran Ayat-Ayat Al-Quran," *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 3, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 28.





people, regardless of their religion.²⁵ One of the verses that is often quoted is QS. Al-Mumtahanah: 8, which states that Allah does not forbid Muslims to do good and to be just to those who do not fight them in religious affairs and do not expel them from their hometowns.²⁶ This verse affirms that Islam teaches love, kindness, and justice, even to non-Muslims.²⁷

About the asbabun nuzul, this verse is narrated by Ahmad bin Hanbal from 'Abdullah bin Zubair that Qutailah bint 'Abdul 'Uzzā said that Abu Bakr's ex-wife before converting to Islam, came to Medina to meet her daughter, Asmā' bint Abu Bakr, with a gift. Asmā' initially refused the gift and did not allow her mother to enter her home. After asking the Prophet through 'Aisyah, a verse was revealed that allowed Asmā' to receive gifts and her mother to stay in her house. Allah does not forbid the believers to do good and establish relations with *the Ahl Al-Kitab* as long as they do not intend to destroy Islam and the Muslims. This verse gives the general principle that Muslims should be kind to non-Muslims as long as they are kind. If, in the history of Islam, there is an act of violence against polytheists, it is simply to defend oneself from tyranny. This principle can be applied in Indonesia as long as no party intends to apostatize Muslims or destroy Islam and Muslims.²⁸

According to Wahbah al-Zuhaili, a well-known scholar, in his commentary on this verse, he emphasized that Muslims are allowed to do good to non-Muslims who do not fight them. This shows that Islam highly values harmonious and fair relations between Muslims and non-Muslims.²⁹ In fact, Islam has regulated how to interact with this group, one of which is the permissibility for *Mu'min/Muminah* to marry *Ahl Al-Kitab*. In Q.S. al-Maidah [5]: 5 Allah SWT says,

الْيَوْمَ أَحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَبَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ وَالْمُحْسَنُاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَالْمُحْسَنُاتُ مِنِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا أتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ مُحْسِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ وَمَنْ
يَكْفُرُ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبَطَ عَمَلَهُ ۖ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَسِيرِينَ ۝

"On this day, it is halal for you to be kind. The food of those to whom the Book is given is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them. A woman who preserves honor among the believing women and the woman who

²⁵ Farid Haluti et al., *Moderasi Beragama : Menciptakan Suasana Kondusif Keberagaman Agama di Indonesia* (PT. Green Pustaka Indonesia, 2025); David F. Ford, "An Interfaith Wisdom: Scriptural Reasoning Between Jews, Christians and Muslims," *Modern Theology* 22, no. 3 (2006): 345–366.

²⁶ Sri Rezki and Djepriin E Hulawa, "Rekonstruksi Pendidikan Islam: Analisis Pemikiran Muhammad Abduh dan KH. Ahmad Dahlan dalam Konteks Modernisasi" (2025).

²⁷ Amrullah Amrullah and Mulyadi Bin Jailani, "Toleransi; Keharusan Sosial Ataukah Kewajiban Agama (Sudut Pandang Islam Dalam Konteks Keindonesiaan)," *Al Mashaadir : Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 2, no. 2 (March 20, 2022): 54–71.

²⁸ Muhammad Shohib, "Ukhuwah Islamiyah dan Interaksi Harmonis Antarumat Beragama di Indonesia: Kajian Tafsir Ayat-Ayat Ukhuwah dalam Al-Qur'an" 7 (2024).

²⁹ Rondang Herlina, "Interaksi Sosial Hubungan Muslim Dengan Non Muslim Menurut Penafsiran Thabathaba'i Dalam Kitab Tafsir Al Mizan," *Al-Astar* 2, no. 2 (September 30, 2023): 32–48.





preserves honor among those whom the Book has given before you, if you have paid their dowry intending to marry her, not to commit adultery and not to make her a mistress. Whosoever after believing (does not accept the laws of Islam) then removes his deeds, and he will be one of the losers on the Day of Resurrection" (Q.S. al-Maidah [5]: 5).

Muslim scholars who interpret this verse differ by giving several conditions. For example, Hamka needed a mu'min who was firm in his faith and could preach it.³⁰ Imam Zamahksyari needed a biblical woman, *Ahl-Kitab*, who was not a Polytheist.³¹ Ibn Abbas needed *Ahl Al-Kitab Women* who truly believed in the Torah and the Gospel and *Ahl Al-Kitab Women* who did not fight for Islam. Although there are different opinions, there is a chance of being able to marry *Ahl Al-Kitab*.

In addition to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) having a close relationship with non-Muslims, the Prophet also established trade relations with non-Muslims, even according to the hadith, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) borrowed from the Jews by pawning his armor. The peak of intimacy is recorded in a hadith that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade his people to harm the dhimmi, as follows:

عن ابن مسعود أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : من آذى ذميًّا فأنا خصمه ومن كت خصمه
خصمته يوم القيمة (أخرجه الخطيب في تاريخ بغداد)

Narrated by Ibn Mas'ud ra., the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: Whoever hurts the disbelievers of dime, then I will be his enemy in the future. Moreover, whoever I am against is the one I am against on the Day of Resurrection. (H. R. Al-Khatib).³²

In Indonesia's context of daily life, these principles are very relevant. Indonesia is a country with a high religious diversity, so the application of the principle of justice in the interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims is critical to maintaining harmony and peace. For example, in social, economic, and political activities, Muslims are expected to always act reasonably and non-discriminate against non-Muslims. The principle of justice in the interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims is one of the central teachings of Islam that must be applied in daily life. By using this

³⁰ Mohammad Rif'an Asofik, "Perkawinan Beda Agama Sebagai Harmonisasi Umat Beragama Perspektif Hukum Islam Dan Sosiologi Hukum (Studi Kasus Di Desa Gadingkulon Kec. Dau Kab. Malang)" (PhD Thesis, Universitas Islam Malang, 2023), accessed March 21, 2025, <https://repository.unisma.ac.id/handle/123456789/9424>.

³¹ Yusril Bariki and Nur Afifah, "TINJAUAN SURAH AL-BAQARAH 221 TERHADAP RELEVANSI PERNIKAHAN BEDA AGAMA DI INDONESIA," *Studia Sosia Religia* 6, no. 1 (May 5, 2023): 41.

³² Fritz Krenkow, "The Tarikh-Baghdad (Vol. XXVII) of the Khatib Abu Bakr Ahmad B. 'Ali B. Thabit Albaghdadi. Short Account of the Biographies," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1912): 31–79.





principle, it is hoped that a harmonious and peaceful relationship will be created between religious people in Indonesia.³³

Dialogue and Cooperation in Contemporery World

The most critical effort in the sustainability of a plan is to start with careful planning and good cooperation. The Qur'an encourages dialogue and collaboration between religious people in good matters. Verses such as "Compete in goodness" (QS. Al-Ma'idah: 48) show the importance of working together for the common good. According to tafsir al-Misbah, Q.S. al-Maidah/5:48, Muslims are commanded to compete earnestly in doing good and avoid unnecessary debates that waste time.³⁴ Tafsir al-Misbah, authored by Quraish Shihab, elaborates on Q.S. al-Ma'idah/5:48 by emphasizing that Muslims are commanded to compete earnestly in doing good. This competition should be rooted in sincerity and positive contributions rather than disputes that lead to division and discord.³⁵ The essence of this verse encourages mutual respect and productive engagement among different communities to achieve collective welfare. Competing in goodness, therefore, entails engaging in actions that benefit society, such as social welfare programs, educational initiatives, and ethical economic activities.

Quraish Shihab further explains that the Islamic concept of tolerance does not extend to fundamental aspects of faith (creed) and worship, where Islam maintains a clear and uncompromising stance. However, in social and human interactions, Islam upholds the principle of religious freedom and recognizes the legitimacy of diverse beliefs. This perspective aligns with the broader Qur'anic teaching that Allah has created human diversity as a test of obedience and righteousness. In the Qur'an, human differences in culture, language, and beliefs are viewed as a sign of divine wisdom rather than a cause for division. Thus, the challenge for humanity is to use these differences as a means to foster mutual understanding and cooperation rather than conflict.³⁶

³³ W. Waston, A. R. Ridha, and K. Kumaidi, "Theoretical Construct and Development of Wasatiyah Measurement Instruments. Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam, 24 (01), 137–148," 2023.

³⁴ Seyyed Hossein Azimidokht, "Qur'an And World Peace" (April 26, 2012), accessed March 23, 2025, https://brill.com/view/journals/jqhs/10/1/article-p25_4.xml; Werner G. Jeanrond, "Subjectivity and Objectivity in Theological Hermeneutics: The Potential of Love for Interfaith Encounter" (January 1, 2013), accessed March 23, 2025, https://brill.com/view/journals/jqhs/11/2/article-p71_6.xml; Abdulaziz Sachedina, "Islamic Theology of Christian-Muslim Relations," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 8, no. 1 (March 1, 1997): 27–38.

³⁵ Taslim Hm Yasin, "TOLERANSI BERAGAMA PERSPEKTIF ISLAM DAN KONG HU CU," *Abrahamic Religions: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 1, no. 1 (April 27, 2021): 41; Muhammad Shafiq and Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Interfaith Dialogue: A Guide for Muslims* (International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2011).

³⁶ Assegaf, "Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama Menurut Tafsir Al Misbah Karya M. Quraish Shihab."





The Qur'an acknowledges that Allah could have made all of humanity follow one Shari'ah, but instead, He established different religious laws suited to different times and circumstances. This divergence serves a divine purpose: to test human obedience and sincerity in following their respective paths. Furthermore, it fosters a spirit of competition in goodness among people of different faiths. Rather than seeking conflict, individuals are encouraged to demonstrate righteousness through their actions and ethical conduct. This principle is reinforced by other Qur'anic verses, such as Q.S. Al-Hujurat (49:13), which states that Allah created human beings in diverse nations and tribes so that they may know one another, not despise one another.³⁷ This verse reinforces the idea that diversity should be seen as a means to build bridges of understanding rather than walls of division.

Competing in goodness means striving for excellence in all aspects of life, including personal character, community service, and contributions to global well-being. Islam encourages acts of charity (sadaqah), justice ('adl), and kindness (ihsan) as fundamental principles in human interactions. When different religious communities engage in righteous acts, they contribute to a harmonious and sustainable society. Moreover, the Qur'an reminds that good deeds will be rewarded by Allah, while wrongdoing will bring its own consequences. This concept aligns with the Islamic ethical framework, which emphasizes accountability and the continuous pursuit of self-improvement.³⁸

In this context, Allah promises rewards to those who adhere to the truth and perform righteous deeds while warning those who follow falsehood and engage in immoral actions. The concept of competing in goodness is thus a key principle in Islamic teachings, guiding believers toward constructive and ethical engagement with others. Through such efforts, societies can cultivate an environment of mutual respect, cooperation, and sustainable development. Ultimately, the message of the Qur'an encourages people to work together for the betterment of humanity, ensuring that their actions reflect divine guidance and contribute to long-term peace and prosperity.

Conclusion

This study finds that the Qur'an emphasizes the principle of peaceful coexistence and ethical engagement with non-Muslims while maintaining doctrinal exclusivity in matters of faith (aqidah).

³⁷ "Tafsir Surah Al-Kafirun - 6," *Quran.Com*, accessed December 8, 2024, <https://quran.com/109:6/tafsirs/en-tafsir-ibn-kathir>; Ahmad Husni Haji Hasan, "An Islamic Perspective of the Interfaith Dialogue amidst Current Inter-Religious Tensions Worldwide," *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 1, no. 1 (December 31, 2011): 25–35.

³⁸ Kharis Nugroho et al., "The Concept of Tolerance in Western Civilization in the Perspective of the Quran and Hadith: A Comparative Analysis," *Ethica: International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Studies* 1, no. 1 (September 5, 2023): 40–44.





In the context of diversity and pluralism, the Qur'an acknowledges that differences, including religious beliefs, are part of Allah's divine will in creating humanity. Islam, as the religion conveyed by the prophets and messengers, recognizes the existence of other religions but affirms that the only religion accepted by Allah is Islam. However, this principle does not negate individual freedom in choosing one's faith, as reflected in Qur'anic verses that reject coercion in religion.

In terms of social interaction, Islam regulates relations with non-Muslims based on the principles of justice and benevolence, distinguishing between the People of the Book (Ahl al-Kitab) and polytheists (mushrikun). The Qur'an prohibits marriage with polytheists but allows Muslim men to marry women from the People of the Book under certain conditions. Furthermore, the principle of fair treatment towards non-Muslims who do not wage war against Islam serves as the ethical foundation for interfaith interactions. Allah commands Muslims to act justly and kindly toward non-Muslims who do not oppose Islam, while prohibiting close alliances with those who are hostile and expel Muslims because of their faith. This principle of harmonious relations was also exemplified by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in various aspects of life, including family matters, trade, and social interactions with non-Muslims. He emphasized the importance of upholding the rights of non-Muslims and forbade any form of injustice against them. Surah Al-Kafirun explicitly affirms the theological distinction between Islam and other religions while still acknowledging the freedom of individuals to worship according to their beliefs.

The findings of this study contribute to contemporary Islamic discourse by demonstrating how Qur'anic principles can serve as a foundational framework for fostering interreligious dialogue and promoting social harmony in an era of increasing global religious diversity. Theoretically, this study enriches discussions on Qur'anic hermeneutics by contextualizing interfaith themes within contemporary realities. Practically, it provides insights for policymakers, religious leaders, and scholars in formulating approaches based on Islamic values to strengthen inclusive and ethical social interactions.

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