

Muhammad's Prophecy in Christianity and Islam: Debate and Controversy

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Abstract

The cross-religious debate that is most often discussed is about the claim of the apostle as the final Prophets, which is believed in Christianity that it never happened. The apostle was Muhammad Pbuh, an ordinary human being given advantages and privileges and elevated above all creatures. Contrary to the Christian belief that Isa or Jesus in the Christian belief is their greatest human being, the Bible is written about the arrival of a great figure that was promised. Therefore, this paper seeks to reveal the truth in Christian teachings regarding Muhammad as the complement of previous teachings. By including evidence from several figures from these two heavenly religions, namely Christianity and Islam, supported by evidence found in the Bible and al-Qur'an. The descriptive analysis method is used in this research to analyze the understanding of the two major

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religions of the world and related cross-religious teachings and doctrines. It's supported by comparative methods that make it easier to see and know the comparisons found in both Islam and Christianity. A theological approach is used in this qualitative literature review, where the perspective of this writing is taken from studies that analyze scripts from holy books, discussing interfaith concepts and matters related to doctrine in religion. With this research it is hoped that further researchers will be able to take the value if necessary to be refined with an explanation broader and complete the deficiencies contained in this writing.

Keywords: Muhammad's Prophecy, Islam, Christianity, Debate, Controversy

Abstrak

Persoalan debat lintas agama yang paling sering dibahas adalah tentang klaim Rasul penutup para Nabi, yang diyakini dalam Kristen bahwa hal itu tidak pernah terjadi. Rasul tersebut adalah Muhammad Saw, seorang manusia biasa yang kemudian diberi kelebihan serta keistimewaan dan diangkat derajatnya diatas daripada seluruh makhluk di dunia. Bertolak belakang dengan kepercayaan Kristen yang berpendapat bahwa Isa as atau Yesus dalam kepercayaan Kristen adalah manusia teragung mereka yang sementara itu, dalam Alkitab mereka tertulis tentang kedatangan sosok agung yang dijanjikan. Maka dari itu, penulisan ini berusaha mengungkap kebenaran yang terdapat dalam ajaran Kristen mengenai Muhammad sebagai penyempurna ajaran terdahulu. Dengan menyertakan bukti-bukti dari beberapa tokoh dua agama samawi ini yaitu agama Kristen dan Islam, didukung dengan bukti yang terdapat dalam alkitab maupun al-Qur'an. Metode deskripsi analisis digunakan dalam penelitian ini guna menganalisa pengertian daripada kedua agama besar dunia serta ajaran maupun doktrin lintas agama yang terkait. Ditunjang metode komparatif yang memudahkan dalam melihat serta mengetahui perbandingan yang terdapat dalam kedua agama Islam dan Kristen. Dalam penelitian kepustakaan kualitatif ini, digunakan pendekatan teologis dimana cara pandang penulisan ini diambil dari kajian yang menganalisis skrip dari kitab suci, membahas konsep antar agama serta hal-hal yang berkaitan dengan doktrin dalam agama. Dengan

penelitian ini diharapkan kepada peneliti selanjutnya untuk dapat mengambil nilai yang sekiranya perlu untuk disempurnakan dengan penjelasan yang lebih luas dan melengkapi kekurangan yang terdapat dalam penulisan ini.

Kata Kunci: Kenabian Muhammad, Islam, Kristen, Debat, Kontroversi

Introduction

The different religions and beliefs that exist in the world are a necessity. For every religious believer, there must be solid arguments or reasons to believe that their religion is correct.¹ Islam and Christianity are two interconnected religions. Both religions teach the values of kindness and respect for each other as creatures of God Almighty.² These two religions share the same essential background with Judaism, including; *First*, equality in belief in one God, *Second*, adherence to the same prophet, *Third*, religion without coercion, and *Fourth*, recognition of the existence of other religions.³

Although they have some similarities, the two often dispute the superiority of their respective religions. This perspective and truth claims are problems that never go away in the history of religion.⁴ Among these truth claims is the glorification of the people whom God as carriers or broadcasters of the truth of their religion, namely Jesus or what they know is Jesus in Christianity who is recognized as the son of God, even Jesus is God,⁵ and Muhammad Pbuh in Islam. According to Cregg, one of the figures who discussed Islam-Christian relations stated that Muhammad Pbuh as the bearer and propagator of Islam was the one who continued the Christian religious tradition where both of them had the same theological roots.⁶

¹ Ahmad Kainama, *Dialog Iman Kainama* (Solo: Aqwam, 2020), p. vii.

² Samsi Pomalingo, "Islam Sebagai 'Post-Kristen'; Deskripsi Perjumpaan Teologis Islam-Kristen", *Farabi*, vols. 17, No. 2, p. 132.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 142–3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

If we draw this short line of discussion, we can understand that Islam still has the same theological roots as Christianity (and even Judaism). However, because both are already involved in the conflict, including the chosen people of God and truth claims, it is as if they are a religion and want to prove the greatness and superiority of each religion.

So, from the appearance of the same theological roots, it can be understood that Muhammad *Pbuh* was a prophet who shared the same perception as Jesus in carrying out God's mission, as the bearer of the teachings of the Bible in the past. However, because the Bible experienced deviations, Muhammad *Pbuh* was present as a perfecter of teachings that had been damaged and deviated from previous teachings.

Muhammad in Christianity and Islam

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the one who brought Islam to the world. Muhammad was able to bring the Arab nation, which was originally backward, stupid, uncivilised, unnoticed and ignored by other nations, to become a developed nation through Islam, and he quickly moved to develop the world, fostering a culture and civilisation that was very important in history. As far as human beings are concerned, he was an able statesman, political and administrative leader, in addition to being a religious leader.⁷

As we will see, his life was a "*jihad*," which does not mean "holy war," but rather "struggle." Muhammad worked tirelessly to bring peace to the Arab world throughout his life. His life is a never-ending battle against greed, tyranny, and pride.⁸

However, it differs from the view of Westerners, who have a negative opinion of Muhammad. There are many reasons for this, ranging from theological to political. As early as 850, a monk called Perfectus saw Muhammad as a sorcerer, a heretic and an anti-Christ. Muhammad is also described as a fraud, a medicine man who

⁷ Muhammad Yamin, "Peradaban Islam Pada Masa Muhammad Saw", *Ihya Arabiyah*, vols. 3, No. 1 (2017), p. 108.

⁸ Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad Prophet for Our Time* (Bandung: Mizan, 2013), p. 5.

crowned himself a prophet to deceive the world. He used war to force people to follow his religion. Islam is not a separate revelation, but a failure or deviation from Christianity.⁹

Muhammad in Christianity

In Christianity Muhammad is seen as the founder of Islam, he belongs to the "Auto Sateria" group, but is slightly higher than the level of Hindus, Buddhists, and others because Muhammad can reach the High God level, namely the God class, but not up to the level equivalent to the highest power, and that is Allah Swt.¹⁰

Differing opinions with the following Orientalist views, namely Gibb and Kramers define the Prophet as someone who proclaims the message he receives from the Divine Spirit. This is taken from the understanding of the Christian tradition where the word Prophet is believed to come from the Hebrew word "Navi". Theologically, the Prophet means a person who speaks on behalf of God. They also believe that the Prophet is the 'mouth' of Yahweh who conveys commands and orders from Yahweh. Because the Prophets were sent to speak on behalf of God, the Prophet can also be said to be a Legatus Divinus or someone sent by The Lord God.¹¹

Muhammad as a prophet was opposed by W. Montgomery Watt who thought that Muhammad was a person with a high imagination, and was a creative person, what is meant here is creativity in making a new teaching or product, namely Islam. Muhammad was likened to an artist, poet, and imaginative writer at that time.¹²

⁹ Rifqi Muhammad, "Interaksi Nabi Muhammad dengan Yahudi dan Kristen", *Refleksi*, vol. XIII, No. 3 (2012), p. 40.

¹⁰ Abujamin Roham, *Agama Kristen dan Islam serta perbandingannya* (Jakarta: Tintamas, 1986), p. 55.

¹¹ Muhammad Mahfudin, "Muhammad dan Orisinalitas Al-Qur'an dalam Pandangan Abraham Geiger", *Maghza: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, vols. 6, No. 1 (2021), pp. 141–2.

¹² Danang Fachri Adz Dzikri, "Pemikiran William Montgomery Watt tentang Sosok Muhammad dalam Karyanya Muhammad Prophet And Tasteman", *Al-Dzikra: Jurnal Studi Ilmu al-Qur'an dan al-Hadist*, vols. 16, No. 1 (2022), p. 12.

Some Christian figures are against the prophethood of Muhammad, but some can accept the prophethood of Muhammad, some of whom are like Kenneth Cragg, an Anglican bishop who invites Christians to openly acknowledge Muhammad as a prophet, and at the same time admit that Jesus is more than a prophet. A former archbishop of Madrid also invited Christians to the meeting of the second Christian - Muslim congress in Cordoba in March 1977 to jointly acknowledge the prophethood of Muhammad because of his faith in Allah, and because Muhammad struggled against polytheism and his penchant for upholding justice.¹³

Meanwhile, Abraham Geiger, who is also an Orientalist, said that the Prophet Muhammad was nothing but a person who was influenced by the Jewish culture that had emerged at that time so Muhammad was claimed to be someone who tried to bring up Al-Qur'an as his product and was not a prophet who received miracles of Al-Qur'an. Geiger also claimed that Muhammad was just someone who deliberately took Jewish sympathies to follow Muhammad's teachings because at that time the Jews already had an economic, political, intellectual, and so on base that could be said to be at a superior level. Also, Islamic teachings are claimed to be different from Judaism because Muhammad only had contact with Jews in mere chat, not through his holy book, it is only natural that many Islamic teachings are not in accordance with the teachings of Judaism.¹⁴

Apart from Abraham Geiger, this one figure is also a figure who studies the life of Muhammad, namely William Montgomery who claimed that the story of Muhammad is only a legend based on primitive stories. According to Christian beliefs, the story of when Muhammad met the priest Bahira who confirmed his prophethood was just a story that never existed or was fictional, while Bahira

¹³ Christian W. Troll, *Muslim Bertanya Kristen Menjawab* (Jakarta: Elex Media Komputindo, 2011), pp. 54–5.

¹⁴ Mahfudin, "Muhammad dan Orisinalitas Al-Qur'an dalam Pandangan Abraham Geiger", p. 142.

himself was a priest whose status was not recognized by the Christians at that time.¹⁵

According to Craig Considine, the Koran, which is a miracle to the Prophet Muhammad, was not only revealed to Muslims, but the Koran is a universal book that every human being can study. According to him neither Jesus nor Muhammad, both brought teachings or messages as valuable as Jesus who brought the Bible and Moses who brought the Talmudic teachings, Considine believed aspects of the Bible and the Talmud but not in its entirety.¹⁶

Regarding the revelations brought by Muhammad, a Catholic theologian Claude Geffre who also holds the title of professor at the Catholique Institute in Paris stated that the revelations given to Muhammad were the words of God, but for him, Jesus had a higher position than Muhammad where if the revelations given to Muhammad were only words God then the revelation given to Jesus is the word of God.¹⁷

Apart from the explanation of the notion of prophethood, also from the perspective of Muhammad's teachings according to some Orientalists, here is also the understanding of the revelation of the Prophet Muhammad in the view of a prominent Christian figure, Karen Armstrong, who explained that when the Prophet Muhammad received revelations, he was not like someone who had received a gift, but like someone who was possessed by jinn to the extent that they do not want to live. Such a statement certainly offends Muslims because it describes the incident of the first revelation but seems horrific and frightening. Several reasons were raised regarding the explanation above, it was said that Karen was still influenced by her past setting, and its when she was still a nun so that she described

¹⁵ Fachri Adz Dziki, "Pemikiran William Montgomery Watt tentang Sosok Muhammad dalam Karyanya Muhammad Prophet And Tasteman", p. 8.

¹⁶ Craig Considine (dir.), *A Christian View of Prophet Muhammad* (Dr. Craig Considine), [youtube.com/watch?v=YQJpGGYcPmA&ab_channel=Dr.CraigConsidine](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQJpGGYcPmA&ab_channel=Dr.CraigConsidine), accessed 22 Nov 2022.

¹⁷ W. Troll, *Muslim Bertanya Kristen Menjawab*, p. 52.

the events of Muhammad's first revelation like this, and because Karen does not see what happened with Muhammad at that time.¹⁸

Apart from Karen, W. Montgomery Watt also described what he knew about Muhammad's revelations. According to him, when he received the revelation, he did not meet the angel Gabriel, rather, the Prophet met God. Here, according to Watt, Muhammad experienced a misperception. He also described that while receiving Muhammad's revelation, he experienced visions and a somewhat strange feeling as if seeing an apparition. The same thing was also expressed by Richard Bell who described that Muhammad when receiving revelations was like someone who was receiving suggestions, the suggestion meant was Muhammad's mistake in recognizing who gave the revelation, according to Watt and Bell who came to convey that the revelation was Allah and not Gabriel.¹⁹

Ali Shina, who was also a character who opposed Muhammad, in his writings he argued that when Muhammad was receiving revelations, Muhammad experienced strange experiences such as muscle contractions, stomach pains, feeling squished, sweating, and heart palpitations. He described Muhammad as seeing a ghost or being possessed by a demon. Then it is also explained that Muhammad repeatedly tried to commit suicide, but was prevented by Gabriel. Muhammad's belief about Jibril whose wings spread wide, and the buraq which was believed to be a horse-like animal with bird wings, was claimed as an absurdity and it was believed that Muhammad was experiencing hallucinations.²⁰

Muhammad in Islam

Muslims believe that God's revelation to His Messenger is true, as for the messengers who were given revelation from God, including Prophet Adam, Prophet Noah, Prophet Jesus, Prophet

¹⁸ Budi Sujati, "Kewahyuan Nabi Muhammad Dalam Pandangan Orientalis", *Tamaddun*, vols. 6, No. 1 (2018), p. 111.

¹⁹ Fachri Adz Dzikri, "Pemikiran William Montgomery Watt tentang Sosok Muhammad dalam Karyanya Muhammad Prophet And Tasteman", p. 9.

²⁰ Sujati, "Kewahyuan Nabi Muhammad Dalam Pandangan Orientalis", p. 125.

Idris, Prophet Moses, and Prophet Yusuf peace be upon him, and there are many more that were concluded by Prophet Muhammad *Pbuh* as the closing prophet or the last Prophet.²¹ Prophet Muhammad is also one of the Prophets who received the predicate "a person of the firm heart" who is also known as *ulu al-'azm*, as for the Messengers who are included in *ulu al-'azm*.²²

Muhammad the Messenger of God who brought the religion of Islam. Muhammad as the last Prophet can be referred to through the following hadiths:

*From Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas, he said, "The Messenger of God left Ali bin Abu Talib at the Battle of Tabuk. Ali asked, "O Messenger of God, did you leave me with the children and the women?" He said, "Would you not like it if Your position towards me is like the position of Harun and Musa, only there is no Prophet after me."*²³

*from Tsauban, he said, "The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said, "I am the seal of the Prophets, and there is no Prophet after me".*²⁴

Apart from several hadith narrations above, evidence of Muhammad as the last Prophet is also found in the Qur'an, chapter 33 verse 40 which reads:

"Muhammad is not the father of any of you, but he is the messenger of God and the seal of the prophets. God knows all things." (Qs. Al-Ahzab [33]: 40).

It is clear that the word "Muhammad" here refers to a Prophet of Islam and not as a prophetic title or epithet, this is because in some cases the words Muhammad can be understood as a name and

²¹ Muhammad Adib Fuadi Nuriz, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama: corak pendekatan ilmuwan muslim abad klasik sampai kontemporer* (Jawa Timur: Damai Banawa Semesta, 2020), p. 106.

²² M. Riyan Hidayat, "Studi Komparatif Konsep Nabi dan Kenabian Agama Islam dan Kristen Mormon", *Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama*, vols. 7, No. 2 (2021), p. 203.

²³ HR. Muslim, Al-Bukhari, At-Tirmidzi, Ahmad, dan Al-Hakim

²⁴ HR. Muslim, At-Tirmidzi, Ahmad, dan Abu Dawud.

sometimes as a title "the praiseworthy".²⁵ As for the fact that in the Qur'an the word Muhammad is mentioned only four times, three of which are used as a title and not referring to a proper name.²⁶ But for the verse above, Muhammad is meant to be Muhammad the Messenger of God which refers to the right person.

Some Muslim scholars make this verse very important to prove the validity that Muhammad is true as the last Prophet as well as the completion of the Prophets, so anyone who claims to be a Prophet sent after Muhammad then that person is a false Prophet because it's also written in the Qur'an which is also a Hadith that Muhammad is the last Prophet.²⁷

Islam is present as a closing religion whose teachings have been perfected from other religions on this earth that came down before Islam came.²⁸ As for the word of God regarding Islam as the last religion and the perfecting of other religions, it is found in surah al-Ma'idah verse 3 which reads:

"On this day I have perfected your religion for you, I have completed My blessings for you, and I have accepted Islam as your religion."(QS. Al-Ma'idah [5]: 3)

Because Muhammad is the final Prophet and is the most honored Prophet in Islam, Allah giving revelations or miracles to Prophet Muhammad can be accepted by human common sense. The miracle given to Muhammad is rational, and the miracle is the Qur'an. The Qur'an is the greatest miracle that God has ever revealed to His Messenger, the Qur'an is a revelation that contains clear arguments and evidence that can convince people even if the miracle was not performed by the Prophet directly.²⁹

²⁵ Robert Spencer, *Did Muhammad Exist? : an inquiry into islam's obscure origins* (United States of America: ISI Books: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2012), p. 64.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²⁸ Adib Fuadi Nuriz, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama: corak pendekatan ilmuwan muslim abad klasik sampai kontemporer*, p. 107.

²⁹ Antonie Wessels, *Biografi Muhammad : sebuah studi kritis atas karya Muhammad Husain Haekal "Hayat Muhammad"*, 1st edition (Bogor: Pustaka Litera Antar Nusa, 2006), p. 107.

The miracles of the Prophets were present according to the challenges at that time. Al-Qur'an is a miracle amid the spread of beautiful Arabic poems, so Al-Qur'an is present with its language that cannot be defeated by a poet even if he is the most skilled poet in Arabia.³⁰

The circulating denials that Muhammad plagiarized the Koran from the Bible and also claimed that the Koran was learned from a blacksmith who adheres to Christian beliefs are total errors that are answered in the Koran surah An-Nahl verse 103 which reads:

"Indeed, We really know that they say, "Indeed it (the Qur'an) was only taught to him (the Prophet Muhammad) by a human being." The language of the people they accuse (that the Prophet Muhammad learned from him) is the dialect language (not Arabic). In fact, this (Qur'an) is clear Arabic."

From this verse it can be concluded that how is it possible for someone from a young age to learn a language that is at a lower level than the language he speaks on a par with the language of the Qur'an where the language of the Qur'an is a language that is beautiful, pure, and perfect.³¹

Apart from the greatest miracle Allah gave Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah also commanded his people to perform the obligatory worship of Muslims, namely prayer. The Prophet was taught by the angel Gabriel about the procedure of worship, the beginning of which is ablution, Gabriel taught the prophet how to perform ablution to purify himself to perform worship. So the Messenger followed him. After that, the angel Jibreel also taught the Messenger to perform the salat, which begins with Takbir, standing, bowing, prostrating, and salam. After Gabriel taught the Messenger

³⁰ Ibnul Jauzi, *Al-Wafa: Kesempurnaan Pribadi Nabi Muhammad* SAW (Pustaka Al-Kautsar), p. 247.

³¹ Zakir Naik, *Debat Islam Vs Non Islam: Argumen cerdas Zakir Naik yang membuat orang tercengang bahkan masuk Islam* (Solo: Aqwam, 2016), p. 139.

to pray, the Messenger also taught the same to his family, which at that time was Khadijah.³²

Muhammad's Prophecy In The Old Testament

Muhammad was a great Prophet and had a great influence on changing the world. His story is widely circulated among every human being, not only his story as a leader, as well as a preacher and propagator of Islam, but his story as a prophet whose arrival has been awaited and predicted has reached the ears of historians, missionaries and orientalist, his opinion is also different from for every head of listeners there are, among them there are those who oppose and some who support the truth of this awaited and predicted Prophet. Parties who object usually come from missionary or orientalist groups, while those who support and justify come from mostly Muslims.

The prediction of the coming of Muhammad is also written in the old and new testaments. Before discussing Muhammad's predictions in the old and new testaments, will be explained here some understanding of the book. The Bible is actually the book of Christians only. The Bible is also called the "New Testament", in addition to the new agreement there is also the "old testament". This Old Testament is a book that is recognized by the Jews but not recognized by the Christians.³³

Comparison of Moses and Muhammad

The arrival of Muhammad predicted in the Bible is not something that is made up, there are several gospels that announce the arrival of Muhammad. In the book of Deuteronomy, for example, in the book of Deuteronomy chapter 18 verses 17-19 which reads:

- 1) *Then the Lord said to me (Moses): What they say is good.*

³² Martin Lings, *Muhammad (Kisah Hidup Nabi Berdasarkan Sumber Klasik)* (Jakarta: Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2021), p. 63.

³³ Abdul Ahad Dawud, *Muhammad In The Bible; Bibel pun mengakui Muhammad sebagai seorang Rasul.*, trans. by Fuad Syaifudin Nur (Jakarta: Almahira, 2009), p. xi.

- 2) *I will raise up a Prophet for them from among their brothers, like you (Moses); I will put My words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.*
- 3) *Those who do not listen to all My words that the Prophet will utter in My name's name, I will demand accountability from him.*³⁴

What is meant by their brothers are the Arabs because the Arabs are still relatives of Israel. The Arabs are the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, the brother of Isaac, while the descendants of Israel are the descendants of Isaac. The explanation for why the prophet was not from the nation of Israel is because the verse does not include the argument "from them" but "from among their brothers".³⁵ Here will be explained the genealogy of the descendants of Abraham, namely Ismail and Ishaq. The word "they" here is attributed to the Israelites descended from Ishaq's father Jacob / Israel, while their brothers are from the children of Ishmael (Arabs) who are the "brother" of Isaac and from whose descendants Muhammad was born.³⁶

The following is the genealogy of Muhammad Puh down to Ismail As; Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib (Syaibah bin Hasyim) bin Hasyim (Amr bin Abdu Manaf) bin Abdu Manaf bin Qushai bin Kilab bin Murrah bin Ka'ab bin Luai bin Ghalib bin Fihri bin Malik An-Nadhr bin Kinanah bin Khuzaimah bin Mudrikah (Amir bin Ilyas) bin Ilyas bin

Mudhar bin Nizar bin Ma'ad bin Adnan bin Ud bin Muqawwim bin Nahur bin Tirah bin Ya'rub bin Yasyjub bin Nabit bin Ismail bin Ibrahim.³⁷

While the proposition "like you are" means that the Prophet was similar to Moses in certain aspects, let us now refer to whether

³⁴ *The Holy Bible New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), p. 173.

³⁵ Naser Al-Moghamis, *Islam dan Kristen dalam Al-Qur'an dan Injil; Sebuah Studi Komparatif* (Yogyakarta: Prima Media, 2002), p. 209.

³⁶ Muhammad Yahya Waloni, *Kebenaran Islam Menurut Mantan Pendeta* (Cibubur: Cahaya Indah, 2011), p. 104.

³⁷ Indra Aditiyawarman, "Muhammad Nabi yang Dijanjikan.", *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunitas*, vols. 3, No. 1 (2009), p. 9.

this is addressed to Jesus or Muhammad. Musa was a prophet who brought shari'ah renewal, meaning that the prophet in question also brought shari'ah reform. Yes, indeed that Jesus brought the reform of the Shari'ah, namely the completion of the Torah to his people, namely Israel, but we look at the sentence right before this sentence which is "*from among their brothers*", just like the explanation above which, if concluded, would still return to Muhammad *Pbuh*.³⁸

Muhammad Was a Messenger to All Nations; Jesus Was a Messenger Only to The Israelites

Another prediction is also found in the book of Isaiah chapter 42 verses 1-4 which reads:

- 1) *Look, it's My servant that I hold, My chosen one, in whom I am well pleased. I have put My Spirit on him, that he may proclaim laws to the nations.*
- 2) *He would not shout or filter his voice or make his voice heard in the street.*
- 3) *A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, but he will faithfully proclaim the law.*
- 4) *He himself will not wither away and will not bend, until he establishes law in the earth; all the islands expected his teaching.*

Let's look at the text in bold. The sentence "so that he may declare law to the nations" indicates that the figure of the Prophet in question broadcasts his teachings to all nations in the world. So if this verse is indeed directed at Jesus, let's look again at the arguments that show whether Jesus was sent for all mankind or not.

- 1) *Jesus replied, "I was sent only to the Israelites, especially to those who are lost. (Matthew 15: 24)*
- 2) *The twelve disciples were sent by Jesus and He instructed them: "Do not stray to the path of other nations or enter the cities of the Samaritans. Instead, go to the lost sheep of the people of Israel. (Matthew 10: 5-6)*

Also in the Acts of the Apostles chapter 13 verse 23 which reads:

³⁸ Waloni, *Kebenaran Islam Menurut Mantan Pendeta*, p. 104.

- 1) *And from his offspring, according to what He had promised, God raised up a savior for the Israelites, namely Jesus.*

Look at the verses in bold, it is clearly written that Jesus was sent only to the Israelites, and even though he spread his teachings to his twelve disciples, he still insisted that he spread his teachings to the Israelites and not to spread his teachings to the world's people. This is also written in the Qur'an in surah Ali Imran as well as in surah Az Zukhruf which reads:

"He (Allah) taught him (Isa) the book, wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel. (Allah will make him) as an apostle to the Children of Israel. "(Qs Ali-Imran 48-49).

"He (Isa) is nothing but a servant whom We bestowed favors (prophecy) on him and We made him a lesson (Our sign) for the Children of Israel." (Qs Az Zukhruf 59).

While the figure of the Prophet is as written in Isaiah 41: 1, which reads "so that he may declare law to the nations." It is true that the Prophet or the person mentioned in the book is Muhammad *Pbuh*, because according to history Muhammad was a figure who not only had an influence on his people but on the whole world at that time. Muhammad was also able to unite the disputing people in the Medina agreement, the Prophet was also able to create an order for the Islamic State of Medina which was the formation of a candidate for world order.³⁹In terms of leadership, Muhammad was also recognized by Francois Voltaire⁴⁰ as the originator of a rational religion and a good political thinker. Supported by Boulainvilliers statement ⁴¹ arguesrgue that Muhammad's goal in creating the Islamic religion was to become a world ruler.⁴²

³⁹ Ismail R. Al-Faruqi, Atlas of Islamic Culture: exploring the treasures of a glorious civilization (Bandung: Mizan, 2003), p. 173.

⁴⁰ 1694-1778, by it real name Francois Marie Arouet, was a French writer and philosopher during the renaissance era. Known for his writings that dare to echoing human right in civil liberties, get a proper trial and freedom of religion. Not uncommon in criticizing church dogma and French institutions at that time.

⁴¹ 1658-1722, real name Henri de Boulainvilliers, was a French historian and political writer. Is one of the modern historians who claims

Unlike Isa, who was predicted to come down to the Israelites alone, Muhammad in the Bible and al-Qur'an says that he was sent to all mankind.⁴³

"We did not send you (Prophet Muhammad), except as a mercy to all the worlds."(Qs 21:107)

"We have not sent you (Prophet Muhammad), except to all mankind as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. However, most humans do not know about it."(Qs 34:28)

Muhammad Debate Between Christians and Muslims

As noted above, Christians and Muslims have always disagreed about Muhammad. Not only over their views of his life, but also over Muhammad's prophecies in their respective holy books. Here is a debate between Christian and Muslim interpretations of Muhammad's prophecies.

Muhammad's Refutation by a Christian Figure

Regarding the evidence that Muhammad was the Prophet who completed the previous teachings, especially the teachings of the Prophets Moses and Jesus, it is undeniable that in relation to the above, several arguments have emerged that deny this truth. The following will briefly describe the argument for the non-acceptance of Muhammad's prophecies and will also be straightened out by the opinions of major Islamic figures, and Christologists.

a. Pastor Esra Soru

Some Christian figures or priests or bishops and so on, when it is stated the evidence that Muhammad is mentioned in their holy book, then they will reject and refute this. As the pastor Esra Soru put forward against his opposition to belief in Muhammad. He claims

that the study of history can be very useful for analyzing the state of a society. And is one of the Western writers who did not criticize Muhammad *Pbuh*.

⁴² Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad Sang Nabi : sebuah biografi kritis* (Surabaya: Risalah Gusti, 2011), pp. 24–5.

⁴³ Insan Ls Mokoginta, *Pembelaan Spektakuler Seorang muallaf untuk Islam* (Jawa Barat: Yayasan Dakwah Muallaf, 2019), p. 230.

that Christians do not believe in the prophethood of Muhammad, even though Islam recognizes Jesus as a prophet. Because according to him it is natural for Muslims to acknowledge the prophethood of Jesus because his name is clearly stated in the Muslim holy book, while according to him the name Muhammad has never been written in the Christian scriptures, it is only natural and legal for Christians not to believe in Muhammad Pbuh.⁴⁴

b. Pastor Elyas Zulkifli

Next is a statement from Pastor Elyas Zulkifli stating that it is wrong if Muhammad's name is in the Bible. According to his statement, if Muslims want to make a statement that Muhammad Pbuh mentioned it in the Bible, then Muslims must admit that the Bible is true and not a book that is distorted, because according to him, if Muslims claim that the Bible is fake, Muhammad's prophecies in the Bible are also fake. He also blasphemed that the statement "Ustadz from India" -that was his statement- was wrong when he stated the name Muhammad *Pbuh* in the book Song of Solomon chapter 5 verse 16, because according to his statement the book is a book that tells about an allegory of stories of love and intimacy between God and Israelities which is described through the love story of lovers. In his sight the word "Muhammadim" that written in vesre 16 chapter 5 in Song of Song means desirable in Hebrew.⁴⁵

Argumentation from Muslim Figures Regarding Muhammad

Several conflicting statements more or less illustrate what has been set out above. So there will always be justification or rectification rather than the defection of the priests above and others.

a. Ustadz Zakir Naik

⁴⁴ Esra Soru (dir.), *Alasan Kenapa Kristen Tidak Percaya Muhammad* (Mimbar Kristen), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kE_hxwpjMs, accessed 27 Nov 2022.

⁴⁵ Elyas Zulkifli (dir.), *Hati-hati Bilang Muhammad ada di Alkitab* (Tidak Biasa, 2021), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1vkn0S_DsA&ab_channel=TidakBiasa, accessed 27 Nov 2022.

For the defection of pastor Esra Soru who stated that Muhammad's name was never written in any holy book in their Bible, this can be straightened out through Ustad Zakir Naik's statement in his open lecture which stated that Muhammad was predicted in many Bible verses including Book of Deutronomy 18:18, Book of Isaiah 29:12, Song of Solomon 5:16, Gospel of John 14:16, 15:26, 16:7, 16:12-14, and many more verses, but there are still many who do not believe in it and even deny these verses verses, while still holding on to their wrong beliefs.⁴⁶

b. Yonatan Nandar

Meanwhile, the opinion of Pastor Elyas Zulkifli regarding having to admit the truth of their holy book to admit the truth of Muhammad's predictions is something that is not true, because indeed the Bible has experienced distortion in its translation, that the Bible was indeed rewritten,⁴⁷ but the Islamic authorities did not take the results of the translations of these scribes, but always referred to the original texts of the gospels and even searched for the roots of the words and the rules for their use.

Like Pastor Elyas Zulkifli's denial of the word "Muhammad" which is mentioned in the Song of Song, he argues that the word מִמְּחַמְּדִים (Muhammadim) is not directed at the name Muhammad, and his denial is because the book tells the story of a man praising his lover. This can be explained by a convert Yonatan Nandar who provides a more detailed explanation of the mention of Muhammad's name in the book of Song of Song.

According to Jonathan, if the sentence מִמְּחַמְּדִים is read by Muhammad, this refers to the name of the prophet Muhammad, and not an explanation of a desire as stated by Pastor Elyas above. There is a separate explanation why the sentence can be stated with

⁴⁶ Zakir Naik (dir.), *Nama Nabi Muhammad dalam Bible, Kenapa orang Kristen tak Mau Beriman?! Dr. Zakir Naik* (Islam Akan Menang, 2022),

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8H1mVTvTCI&ab_channel=IslamAkanMenang, accessed 27 Nov 2022.

⁴⁷ Ls Mokoginta, *Pembelaan Spektakuler Seorang muallaf untuk Islam*, p. 11.

confidence that the sentence is the name of Muhammad, which can be referred to the previous verse, namely in verse 10 in Arabic and Hebrew, and verse 11 in the book of Song of Song chapter 5 which mentions the characteristics of a person written there:

حبيبي ابيض واحمر. معلم بين ريوه

דונני צח וְאָדוּם דָּגוּל מֵרֶבֶבָה:

5:10 "My beloved is white and ruddy, pre-eminent above ten thousand."

ראשו כְּתָמָם פֶּז קוֹצוֹתָיו תְּלִמְלִים שְׁחָרוֹת כְּעוֹרֵב:

5:11 "His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are curled, and black as a raven".⁴⁸

In verse 10 it is written there 'My beloved is white and ruddy are the characteristics that a lover has reddish white skin,⁴⁹ whereas in the sentence "pre-eminent above ten thousand" means superior to ten thousand (people). Yonatan explained that after he researched the books of the old testament to the new agreement people with these characteristics were only owned by Muhammad *Pbuh*, where

⁴⁸ *The Holy Bible New King James Version*, p. 595.

⁴⁹ It can be proven from the history of Ibrahim bin Muhammad, from one of Ali bin Abi Talib's sons who said, "Ali once described the Prophet *Pbuh* by saying, 'The stature of the Prophet *Pbuh* was not too tall, nor too short. His stature is among his people. His hair is not curly, nor straight, but wavy curls. His body is not fat, his chin is not sharp, his face is also round. The Prophet had reddish skin with deep black eyes and curly eyelashes. The shoulder and shoulder bones are solid. He has fine hairs that grow lengthwise from his chest to his stomach. The palms and feet are thick. If he walks, he walks like walking down a downward path. If he turns around, his whole body turns around too. There is a khatam (sign of prophecy) between his shoulders. He is the most generous human, truest in speech, gentlest in temperament, and noblest in association. Anyone who ever met and knew him, would respect and fall in love with him. People who tell the nature and figure of the Prophet *Pbuh* will surely say, 'I have never seen anyone like him.'" (HR. at-Tirmidhi, 3638)

Muhammad had a reddish skin color and above ten thousand meant he was superior to the ten thousand, he became the leader among the ten thousand, the ten thousand were Muhammad's entourage for Fathul Makkah.^{50 51}

Furthermore, in the eleventh verse, it is a characteristic of someone's hair, and it is written there "his locks are curled, and black as a raven", which means his hair is curly and black like a crow. It is characteristics of the hair that Muhammad *Pbuh* has, he is not blond but jet black.⁵²

c. Syeikh Ahmed Deedat

Related to the meaning of the word Muhammadim in the book Song of Solomon has also been studied by Sheikh Ahmed Deedat. Regarding the statement of a priest who also said that Muhammad was never mentioned in The Old Testament. So Dr. Ahmed Deedat also replied that this argument was the result of insufficient study, or lack of reading. Muhammadim's sentence is found or written in the Song of Solomon with the addition of the last sentence "im" which means plural of respect. This word Muhammad which has been translated into English from the Hebrew original becomes "altogether lovely", which will never be known that behind

⁵⁰ Yonatan Nandar (dir.), *Bible Berkata: Nama Muhammad ada di Kidung Agung 5:16* (Mualaf Center Aya Sofya, 2022), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-KXR7gH2qU&t=257s&ab_channel=MUALAFCENTERAYASOFYA, accessed 9 Feb 2023.

⁵¹ Told in the book by Martin Lings p. 428-29, on the appointed day Muhammad raised the largest armed force that had ever marched out of Medina. Consisting of the Muhajirin, who numbered seven hundred people with three hundred horses; the Ansar four thousand with five hundred horses; and from various tribes, including those who accompanied them on the journey numbering nearly ten thousand people, were the Prophet's troops prepared for the liberation of the city of Mecca.

⁵² *Bible Berkata: Nama Muhammad ada di Kidung Agung 5:16.*

that word there is someone's name hidden. It is a mistake to translate someone's name.⁵³

Sheikh Ahmed Deedat's statement does not stop there, referring to the book of John 16:13, 12:49-50, is proof that Muhammad was indeed a figure who would continue the teachings of Isa *Pbuh* and also perfect the previous teachings.

In John 16:13 it is written:

*"But when He, who is the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak of Himself, but He will speak whatever He hears, and He will proclaim to you -things to come."*⁵⁴

And in John 12:49-50 it says:

*"For I speak not from myself, but from the Father who sent me, he commanded me to say what I have to say and I say it. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. So what I say, I convey it as the Father said to me."*⁵⁵

In John chapter 16 verse 13 the sentence "Spirit of Truth" as discussed earlier that the spirit of truth here is the Prophet Muhammad. Related to the word "he" which refers to the "spirit of truth" is masculine gender which is no longer found in any Bible, the word masculine gender is written in this verse. This strengthens Deedat's argument that this verse refers to the Prophet Muhammad, not to the Holy Spirit.⁵⁶

Who will declare the truth from his god and will not express words or issue arguments other than the will of his god? For this reason, look again at John chapter 12 verses 49-50, the verse states that Jesus would not convey his teachings to his disciples if they did

⁵³ Ahmad Deedat (dir.), *[Shocking Truth]- Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is mentioned in Bible - Mind Blowing* (Rational Believer, 2021), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3y7GDhPd8w&t=10s&ab_channel=RationalBeliever, accessed 2 May 2023.

⁵⁴ *The Holy Bible New King James Version*, p. 951.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 948.

⁵⁶ *[Shocking Truth]- Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is mentioned in Bible - Mind Blowing*.

not come from the Father, then look also at the verses in the Qur'an surah an-Najm verses 3-5 which read:

“And do not speak (about the Qur’an and its explanation) based on lust (its). He (the Qur’an) is nothing but the revelation conveyed (to him) taught to him by a very strong (angel) (Gabriel)” (Qs. An-Najm 3-5).

The verse above states that Muhammad declared the sentences of the Qur'an to be the will of Allah SWT, not of his own will. From the two verses above, as well as from the Bible or the Koran, both of them indicate the quality of the teachings of Allah's Apostles that they would not teach anything unless it came from their Lord. The verse also reveals how God communicates to His messengers that God will always guide His messengers to the right way to convey the truth.⁵⁷

Conclusion

After analyzing the understanding of Islam, Christianity and Muhammad Pbu, especially regarding Muhammad's prophecy in the two religions, it was concluded that Muhammad was a figure that had been predicted long before his birth, indicating that he was a great figure. The prediction of Muhammad's arrival does not only contain one or two statements, but is contained in many verses in the Bible and the Koran, so if there are verses that write about the arrival of Muhammad, the evidence can be strengthened in the Koran and the Prophet's Hadith as well.

For Christians, Muhammad was nothing more than a reformer, that is, one who brought change to the world like other reformers, Muhammad was also claimed to be no higher in rank than Isa, while those who looked with one eye would find that Muhammad was an expert on religious duplication, as well as a booster with teachings. he brought. But in a good view if not put forward the emotion it would be found that Muhammad was a person who was so influential in the world that he was ranked at the top of all the influential people in the world that ever existed.

⁵⁷ Ahmad Deedat, *The Choice Islam and Christianity Volume One and Two* (South Africa: Abul Qasim Publication, 1994), pp. 81–2.

Muhammad with his teachings was able to change the world order which was originally paralyzed and unbalanced, perfected religious teachings and completed religious understanding that was lacking or missing from previous teachings. Muhammad was able to bring about very significant changes in the world, providing improvements to what the previous teachings could not do because they had not been perfected, so that Muhammad as the closing prophet whose arrival was promised to complete all of these teachings.

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