

A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS

A Study on Isaiah 56: 1-8 from the perspective of Christian-Muslim dialogue

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Abstrak:

Dialog antar agama sekarang nampaknya bukan hanya merupakan pembahasan di arena akademik melainkan juga menjadi diskusi populer di beberapa tempat. Dialog menjadi diskusi hangat di kafe, perkumpulan orang di berbagai tempat, dan khotbah-khotbah di tempat ibadah (termasuk mesjid) Salah teks Alkitab yang dapat digunakan sebagai landasan dialog antara Kristen dan Muslim adalah Yesaya 56: 1-8. Dalam teks tersebut termuat tema keselamatan. Keselamatan tidak dibatasi oleh agama, sehingga semua orang dapat mendapat keselamatan. Semua ciptaan Tuhan dapat menjadi lokus kehadiran Tuhan. Tuhan telah bermanifestasi dalam berbagai bentuk kepada beraneka ragam manusia. Tuhan juga telah menyelamatkan manusia melalui tradisi mereka masing-masing. Penyelamatan Tuhan yang bersifat universal berada di mana-mana dan secara aktif berkarya melalui berbagai cara. Di dalam setiap budaya atau tradisi terdapat Sinar Cahaya Tuhan. Setiap manusia adalah unik, sehingga ungkapan dalam menanggapi “Sabda Ilahi” juga unik dan sekaligus beragam. Tuhan dapat disembah dan dijumpai dalam berbagai cara.

Kata Kunci:

interfaith dialogue, salvation, Christian, and Muslim

1. Introduction

Theoretical Construction: Academic Approach to interfaith dialogue

Interfaith dialogue is perhaps one of the most impressive and important religious developments of the twentieth century. It became the topic of the day, from the formal fora of academia to popular discussion in the cafes. Like any other phenomenon, it does not stand by itself. It emerged as a result of many factors. One of them, if not the most important, is what Gilles Kepel called the “crisis of modernity.”¹

Depending on our own socio-cultural location, those of us who engage in interfaith inquiry are variously inspired, perplexed, and – in some cases – even

repulsed - by what we surmise as each other's insights and practices. Optimally speaking, we find that our various traditions share some of the same fundamental values that each of us cherish in our own religions, albeit expressed in different ways. We also realize that we are being challenged to articulate our own religious identities in an increasingly religiously plural setting where others are, in many ways, listening and asking questions of us as we do so. What this means is that whether we like it or not *to be religious today is to be inter-religious*. That great pioneer of the modern discipline of the history of religions, Friedrich Max Muller once famously wrote, "He who knows one religion knows none," perhaps largely referring in his own scholarly context to those who aspired to become experts in the study of a particular religious tradition. Yet today, this dictum seems to have significance well beyond the membership of the American Academy of Religion and similar scholarly societies. In today's increasingly religiously plural social contexts, these words suggest not only that a failure to engage pluralism is an act of self - marginalization within our own social contexts. They also suggest that, without some understanding of the faith of our neighbor, the religious person (or community) living in a religiously plural society cannot even understand oneself (or itself).

2. Isaiah 56: 1-8 (A House of Prayer for All Nations)

The verses:

Thus, says the Lord: "Keep justice, and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed. Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil." Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, "The Lord will surely separate me from his people"; and let not the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree." For thus says the Lord: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off. "And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath, and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant - these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered." (Isaiah 56: 1-8)

Settings

God would not speak into a vacuum nor would God convey a message formed in a vacuum. If this is true to any religion, it is most certainly true of Judaism and Christianity. The word of God, spoken through the prophets of Israel, was intended

for very specific times and situations. "It was spoken into the communities of an ancient people who inhabited the Palestinian land bridge between Asia and Egypt during the first millennium B.C. Through the Prophets, God dealt with the realities of Israel's day-to-day living"²

The community of audiences of Isaiah is the small community. They were an oppressed and outcast group, which had no power or status in the larger community. It may include foreigners and eunuchs among its number, but certainly saw itself as the real Israel, which was "righteous, chosen, the true servants of Yahweh, his holy people."³

Theological Themes or Issues

The central concept (if there is any) to the book of Isaiah is the vision of Yahweh as the Holy One of Israel. "The focal point of the call of Isaiah is the holiness of God."⁴ It is also the third Isaiah's. Although they make less use of the term *holy*, yet it presents a basically similar portrayal of divine reality. The chapter 56: 1-8 depicts the meeting people in which all are at one, all are equal, and all are welcome in the house of God. All these can be attained only by keeping justice, doing righteousness, observing Sabbath, and avoiding evil. Thus, the ethical or moral dimension which reflected in the first Isaiah, in the third Isaiah it has returned to the place of prominence. "Isaiah of Jerusalem was a constant critic of his people's sins."⁵ Nevertheless, "Isaiah is not inviting people to seek salvation by their own works of righteousness but urging those who belong to the Lord to devote themselves to the life that reflect what he has revealed to be right."⁶

Foreigners and eunuchs

The verses I discuss here are about the proclamation of salvation for foreigners and eunuchs. "Foreigners" are people who are stranger to us. Usually we are distrustful of them unless they are ready to become like us. Eunuchs are people who are outcasts among us. In the Jewish community, they were disgrace because they were sterile and could not bear children. According to Deuteronomy 23: 1, "He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter congregation of the Lord." It can be inferred that such a person (eunuch) was excluded from the congregation of Yahweh by the above code. Thus, "The prophet's protest is perhaps directed against the application of the rule to persons who had suffered involuntary mutilation."⁷

Unlike the above command, Isaiah says that the only requirement for participation in the full privileges of the community of faith is fidelity to the spiritual, ritual and ethical essentials. Thus, eunuchs will have a place in the temple. The guarantee is given to eunuchs and to foreigners that they will not be excluded from the privileges of worshipping Yahweh in the Temple and so sharing in the blessings of Israel's covenant. "Eunuchs represent all of the outcasts who will be gathered into the new community of faith."⁸

Thus, even though basically third Isaiah's view of salvation is nationalistic, as Roberts said,⁹ but in chapter 56: 7, a certain universalism does come through. The nations do refer to Yahweh as "our God", and the temple will be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

The foreigner and the eunuch are also offered as noticeable cases in a point of the all-embracing inclusiveness of verse 2. The message concerns the outcast persons. Indeed "the Old Testament was never exclusivist on a nationalistic basis."¹⁰ The verses are a concrete expression that the grace of God is unlimited.

It is, in one of the most illuminated and radical statements, God in Isaiah sees far into the future and say, "for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations" (v.7b). There is a very essential teaching from this verse, that the prophet has taken to the core of the religious universalism, as already mention, in which Jerusalem Temple is the House of God of the whole earth and must therefore be open for prayer not only to the Jews but also equally to all genuine religious devotees. Indeed, inclusion in the one fellowship of all people which overcome all barriers that separate different members of human family from one another is a necessary condition for human survival in the face of increasing interaction between peoples who are different in many ways. It is more than a moral imperative.

God will bring the foreigners and eunuchs to his holy mountain. They are welcome to the place where God can be found. Thus, not only will they be permitted to come to God's Temple, but God himself will conduct them. They will be treated just as any believing Israelite. God will make them joyful in His house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on His altar (v.7)

Keeping Justice and Doing Righteousness

The requirements to be included in the House of prayer are keeping justice and being righteousness, observing Sabbath and avoiding evil. Isaiah preaches social justice and personal righteousness, for both Jews and Gentiles, as the proof of salvation. It seems that "spiritual religion for any people in any age is still the same. Social justice and personal righteousness go hand in hand as universal virtues that God expects of His children."¹¹ And social justice and righteousness are inseparable. It has to be done as '*because my salvation*' will come. It means that "obedience is to be lived out as a response to salvation."¹²

Righteousness in the verse obviously represents moral conduct, obedience to precepts of God.¹³ It also means a right relationship with the covenant of God that led to loving others as oneself and doing good in order to lead others into the same right relationship with God.

Observing the Sabbath and Avoiding All Evil

Isaiah declares that the person who is experiencing the true blessing of life will be the happy person, and it manifests an attitude that expresses itself in two behaviors. He is careful to avoid two things: *profane the Sabbath*, and *do any evil*.¹⁴

It might be wondered why God in this verse raises Sabbath – keeping to the essential for spiritual religion. The Old Testament gives the answer, i.e., “keeping of the Sabbath signaled the covenant relationship with God. By giving Him a day for rest and worship, we honor His name and renew our covenant relationship with Him.”¹⁵

Joining the Sabbath ritual as a spiritual essential is the ethical expectation that the person of faith ‘keep his (or her) hand from doing any evil’ (v.2c). In our daily life, temptations to do evil are ever-present. In obedient to God’s command, we discipline our selves against the subtle and obvious temptations to sin. “The Sabbath is frontline protection against sin.”¹⁶

3. The significance of the verses for a contemporary encounter of people of different faiths

The prominent issue in these verses is about salvation. Salvation, as already mentioned is the key notion in every religious consideration. It is the objective of every religion. The problem now is who will get the salvation. Does God want absolutely everyone to be saved or only those who have faith in Christ? What is the relationship of Christianity to other religion?

Uniqueness and exclusiveness in Christianity

It can be inferred from the messages of the verse that salvation is for all the people without differentiation, be it Jews or non Jews, by describing that foreigners and eunuch who are considered to be the people who are stranger to us and usually we are suspicious of them unless they are willing to become like us, will have place in the Temple of God. Eunuchs as people who are outcasts among us also not excluded from this code.

Indeed there is another feature of New Testament which says about Jesus or Christianity as exclusive, or at least normative. Jesus is the ‘one mediator’ between God and humanity (1Tim 2: 5), and there is salvation in no one else, for there is ‘no other name’ by which persons can be saved (Acts 4: 12), and no one comes to the Father except through him (John 14: 6), Jesus is ‘the only begotten Son of God (John 1:14), whoever see him sees the Father (John 1:14). Hence Jesus is viewed as the one who truly and fully reveals God. Jesus is claimed to be the particular Savior of the world. If there is no other name than Jesus by which humans are saved, if Jesus is the only way of salvation, then what about all those who have followed of Muhammad or other religious figures that God has worked decisively to save humanity?

If Christology was and is evolutionary, said Knitter, if it is in continuing need of interpretation, it can be asked whether such 'one and only' or 'final' language really does belong to the main content of what the early church experienced and believed.¹⁷

According to Wessels, in reality, Acts 4: 12 ('No other name') does not deal with the relationship of Christian toward other religion, but with the healing ministry of Peter and John. Answering to the question of the rulers, elders, and scribes who asked by what power they did his healing (Acts 4:7), they replied, "by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth . . . And there is salvation in no other name" (Acts 4: 10, 12). This respond is not a sermon dealing with penance or a missionary tract, but a witness in a courtroom. "No other name is a witness, a declaration, respecting the name of the one (not Jesus himself, but God) through whom salvation is achieved."¹⁸ This text is proposed not as a judgment of other religions, but as a confessional statement about the character of the path Jesus Christ followed.¹⁹

Another approach was given by Frances Young, that the 'one and only' adjectives used to describe Jesus belongs "not to language of philosophy, science, or dogmatics, but rather to the language of confession and testimony."²⁰ Thus, in talking about Jesus, the New Testament author uses the language not of analytic philosophers but of enthusiastic believers, not of scientists but lovers. "In describing Jesus as "the one and the only," Christians were not trying to elaborate a metaphysical principle but a personal relationship and a commitment that defined what it meant to belong to this community."²¹

The new interpretation of such traditional claim is also made by scholars in a pluralistic Christological approach. One of the examples of pluralistic model is proposed by Knitter. Christians can continue to affirm and announce to the world that Jesus solely is divine and savior. "Verily but not only" – this, said Knitter, catches the new efforts to affirm the significant of Jesus in a world of many religions. Theologically, according to Knitter,

this means that while Christians can and must continue to announce Jesus of Nazareth as one in whom the reality and saving power of God is incarnate and available, *they will also be open to the possibility/probability that there are others whom Christians can recognize as son or daughter of God.* Personally, such a pluralistic Christology allows and requires Christian to be committed fully to Christ but *at the same time genuinely open to others who may be carrying out similar and equally important roles.* Ecclesiastically, this means that the churches will go forth into the whole world with a message that it universally relevant and urgent, but *at the same time will be ready to hear other messages from very different sources that may also be universally meaningful and important.*²²

Indeed the question of the finality and uniqueness of Christ is a serious issue in interreligious dialogue. Is Jesus unique among the religious figures of history? If so, how is Jesus unique?

Harvey Cox in his book, *Many Mansions*, described why was he so intrigued by the 'many mansions' Jesus speaks of in John 14: 2 as well as by John 14: 6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes into the Father, but by me". Furthermore he said, "these verses stand only a few lines away from each other in the same chapter of the same Gospel, but they have traditionally supplied both the dialogic universalist and antidialogic particularist with their favorite proof texts."²³

In solving the apparent contradictory verses above and showing how Jesus does have something vital to teach us about how to participate in interfaith dialogue, he proposes an evolution of understanding approach. According to him the meaning of religious texts changes from time to time and from place to place. "To follow Jesus means to deal with specifics, not generalities."²⁴ Furthermore, he reminds us that religion is always a mixed blessing. "Jesus, after all, was fiercely opposed by many of the religious people of his day. His attacks on the misuse of religion remind us that, whatever religion exists, we can be sure that someone is trying to use the gods to dominate, frighten, or oppress someone else."²⁵

Considering uniqueness, there are some forms of it, as Knitter argues in his book *No Other Name?* Conservative Evangelical and mainline Protestant models hold to an exclusive uniqueness, affirming that only in Jesus can true revelation be found. In such an understanding, the Christ event is essential of any true encounter with God, anyway in history. The Catholic models, displeased with that exclusivity, propose an inclusive uniqueness for Jesus. They said that God revealing – saving action in Jesus includes all other religion, either as anonymous, cosmic person within them or as their final fulfillment. In this view, Jesus remains, if not essential of, at least normative for, all religious experience, for all times. All this traditional Christian claims are "insufficiently sensitive to the way they contradict contemporary awareness of historical relativity and to the way they impede authentic dialogue with believers of other faiths."²⁶ After criticizing those models, Knitter proposes the theocentric models which called a relational uniqueness for Jesus. It affirms that "Jesus is unique, but with a uniqueness defined by its ability to relate to – that is, to include and be included by – other unique religious figures." Such understanding of Jesus views him not as exclusive or even as normative but as theocentric, as a universally relevant manifestation of divine revelation and salvation.²⁷

The opinion above was based on the principal concern that there has been a new evolution in the "texture" of human experience, very different from the "context" of the New Testament and past dogmatic statement about Jesus.

It includes a new "historical consciousness" of the relativity of all cultures and historical achievements, a new awareness of pluralism, and especially a clearer realization of the need to fashion a new form of unity among peoples. "Not to understand Jesus anew in this new texture, not to open oneself to the possibility of a new Christology, is to run the risk of confining the past in an idolatrous 'deposit of faith'."²⁸

While it is also well known that 'Jesus is the Lord, Mat 7: 12 said: 'that not all my servants who called me 'Lord', 'Lord', will enter the Kingdom of God, but only someone who performs Father's will, that will enter the paradise'. All people try to perform the Father's will, yet not all are succeeded to find the right Father's will. Furthermore, if Mat 28 said: 'Baptize'; in this case, although conversion indeed in the root of baptism, but it was wrong to think that baptism is 'a pure spiritual act' as it was more ' a social-political act.'²⁹ The history saw the fact. Therefore, *if the mysteries of salvation basically depend on an individual encounter with God, all the mediation is relative.*

Although Christians claim that Jesus is their necessary and happy starting point and focus for understanding themselves and other peoples, but they must also remind themselves that the Divine Mystery they know in Jesus and call *Theos* or God, is ever greater than the reality and message of Jesus. Thus Christians are open to the possibility that other religions may have their own valid views of and responses to this Mystery, "Thus they would not have to be unilaterally "included" in Christianity. Rather, all the religions could be, perhaps need to be, included in—that is, related to—each other as all of them continue their efforts to discover or be faithful to the inexhaustible Mystery or Truth."³⁰

Isaiah in Dialogue with the Qur'an and Islamic Tradition

The same spirit from Isaiah also can be inferred from the Qur'an, as we can see in the following discussion.

Human diversity or pluralism is not only inherent in the divine scheme of things, but also deliberately designed to promote understanding and cooperation among various people. This can be inferred from the verse of the Qur'an: 'We (God) have created you (human beings) into (different) peoples and tribes so that you may (all) get to know (understand and cooperate with) each other; the most honorable among you in the sight of God are the pious (righteous) ones'.

The last part of the verse above emphasizes that the quality of morality and human worth is to be judged by the person's moral conduct, rather than by his or her membership in a particular ethnic, religious or other group. In other verse the Qur'an said 'faith in God and the Last Day, rather than religious affiliation, is the sole criterion of right and wrong, truth and falsehood and salvation or damnation on the Day of Judgment. It is also what Isaiah says that the only requirement for participation in the full privileges of the community of faith is fidelity to the spiritual, ritual and ethical essentials. Indeed, *religion is not only what* we believe but how we live.

Indeed, diversity of religions, cultures, ethnicities, languages, etc. is an existential reality; it is a fact of our phenomenal world, both on a global scale as well as on the level of local societies. Of course, this diversity is nothing new. It is as old

as human existence. Equally old is the series of conflicts that appears to have been such an integral part of the human experience of diversity. In one part of the quranic creation story³¹, God declares that He is about to “place a vicegerent on the earth.” The angels object asking, “Will You place on the earth [another being who] will spread corruption and shed blood in it, while we praise and glorify You?” Although God responds by saying, “I know what you do not know,” it appears that the angels have a deep and accurate insight into the future of humanity. After all, through the story of Habil and Qabil /Cain and Abel, both the Qur’an³² and the Bible³³ teach that human beings are the descendants of a figure (i.e., Qabil/Cain) who commits the crime of fratricide. But what is it that God knows about humanity that the angels do not know? Perhaps it is our capacity for knowledge of the truth, wisdom, and compassion? Perhaps it is our capacity to repent from the evil that we do and set out on another path? Indeed, in the quranic story of the original fratricide, when Qabil/Cain has to be shown by the raven (*al-ghurab*) how to bury his brother’s naked corpse, he is overcome with regret for the great crime he has committed (*fa asbaha min al-nadimin*).

The Qur’an’s dominant meta-narrative of human history is not one of ever-increasing violence, moral degradation, and decay, but of a progressive divine revelation and guidance delivered to humanity through the medium of great prophets and messengers who embody human perfection and who invite all human beings in their communities and beyond to fulfill their destiny by perfecting their own lives. Through Qabil’s/Cain’s regret over the murder of his brother Habil/Abel, the reader of the Qur’an is meant to recognize that God intends the human heritage to be one molded, not by the example of mutual hostility represented by Qabil/Cain, but rather by the example of Habil/Abel who prefers to accept death rather than disobey God and raise his hand against his brother Qabil/Cain (*la in basatta ilayya yadaka li-taqtulani ma ana bi-basitin yadiyya ilayka li-aqtulaka; inni akhafu Allaha rabba al-`alamin*). What the angels do not know about Adam is that, despite the fact that he and his descendants will have the capacity to do great evil, their divinely ordained purpose - a purpose toward which God will relentlessly guide humanity - is one of life lived in harmony with one another and with all creation.

Although there are many other verses of the Qur’an that are far more frequently cited as being in support of dialogue (e.g., Q 49:13 and 5:48), the story of Habil/Abel and Qabil/Cain very powerfully conveys the message that the divinely ordained paradigm for human relations is not one of rivalry, envy, and murder, but rather one of fear of God manifest in a deep and abiding respect for one’s fellow human beings and an abhorrence of violence. What is interesting is that this paradigm of peace through dialogue and understanding is as prevalent in “Athens” (i.e., Hellenistic philosophy) as it is in “Mecca” and “Jerusalem” (i.e., quranic and biblical). The story of the death of Socrates memorializes in a pagan idiom the Habili/Abelian virtue of preferring nonviolent dialogue and understanding over violent conflict, even at

the cost of one's life. In a way, then, Habil/Abel and Socrates stand as martyrs for dialogue, both for those who locate themselves within the quranic and/or biblical traditions and for those who see themselves more as humanists without a particular religious affiliation.

4. Conclusion

From the discussion above we can learn that the salvation is not limited to a certain group, but for all the people. All creations can be the locus for discerning the presence of God, as Rahner said, and different forms of prayer, fasting, almsgiving and other type of spiritual discipline are expressions of the human desire to surrender completely to unfathomable mystery, to God, who is the source of knowledge, freedom, and love.³⁴

God has manifested and revealed himself in various ways to different peoples in their respective situation. God saves people through their own tradition, and God's universal saving will is present and active everywhere through various ways. He saves Christian through Jesus Christ (according to Christian beliefs), so Jesus is the way for Christians while respective traditions constitute the way for others. God says in the Qur'an: 'To each among you have We prescribed a law and an open way. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but His plane is to test you in what He had given you, so strive as in a race in all virtue. The goal of you all is to Allah. It is He that will show you the truth of the matters in which you disputes'.³⁵

Since human beings are not generic but unique, the expressions of responses to the 'kalam Allah' (Word of God) will be many and vary rather than one and the same,³⁶ their capacities to experience and to express the ultimate reality are varied and conditioned. The spark of divine creativity animates every culture and that God can be worshiped and encountered in myriad ways.³⁷ Within the human culture we find God's revelation in the very complexity of culture itself, in the warp and woof of human relationship, which are constitutive of cultural existence.³⁸

The contemporary Christian theologian of religious diversity, Mark Heim, draws out the implications of Trinitarian theology for an understanding of the authenticity of a variety of religious forms and ends. In his groundbreaking work on a "Trinitarian theology of religious ends," Heim writes:

Trinity provides a particular ground for affirming the truth and reality of what is different. Trinitarian conviction rules out the view that among all possible claimed manifestations of God, one narrow strand alone is authentic. Trinitarian conviction would rule out as well the view that all or most of these manifestations could be reduced to a single pure type underlying them. A simple exclusivism and a simple pluralism are untenable. There is an irreducible variety in what is ultimately true or of greatest significance. Christians can find validity in other

religions because of the conviction that the Trinity represents a universal truth about the way the world and God actually are.³⁹

Quoting the great ninth-century mystic master of Baghdad, Abu l-Qasim Muhammad al-Junayd (d. 910) who once used the metaphor of water colored by its container as a metaphor for unity or identity in diversity: "The color of the water is the color of its container,"⁴⁰ we might consider that like every other constituent element of the existing order, all religions have their origin in God. We might paraphrase Junayd's water metaphor by asserting that if the water represents the divine Being, differences between religions is represented by the color or colors of the container. There are some religions which may be monochromatic or whose colors are strictly limited or faded. Other religions may have more distinct colors, but all of the same basic hue. Still others may have distinct colors of different hues, etc. This idea is very rooted in the Qur'an, especially Q 11:118-119: "If your Lord had willed [it], He would have fashioned humanity into one community, *but they will not cease to differ*, except those upon whom your Lord has been merciful."⁴¹

In the face of the universality of religions and of their fundamental unity, all of the apparent differences among religions are but the external forms and the symbolical expressions of the same and one perennial truth which are basically ineffable, since "what counts at the deepest level in religion is the spirit of faith and not any formal affiliation."⁴² God gives every community their own way to attain salvation, and there are many. Not one, of doing so although man should be cautious regarding some of them which may mislead. *We are co-pilgrims in pursuit of the Divine.*

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Catatan akhir:

- ¹ See Gilles Kepel, *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*, 191.
- ² Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56-66*, 9.
- ³ Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56-66*, 17.
- ⁴ J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 17, see also, J.J.M. Roberts, "Isaiah in Old Testament Theology," 131.
- ⁵ Roberts, "Isaiah", 134.
- ⁶ Motyer, *The Prophecy*, 464.
- ⁷ Elmslie, and Skinner, *Isaiah*, 84.
- ⁸ McKenna, *The Communicator's*, 570.
- ⁹ Roberts, "Isaiah," 141.
- ¹⁰ Motyer, *The Prophecy*, 466.
- ¹¹ McKenna, *The Communicator's*, 565.
- ¹² John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapter 40-66*, 455.

- ¹³ Elmslie, and Skinner, *Isaiah*, 83.
- ¹⁴ Oswalt, *The Book*, 455.
- ¹⁵ McKenna, *The Communicator's*, 566.
- ¹⁶ McKenna, *The Communicator's*, 567.
- ¹⁷ Knitter, Paul, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions*, 182.
- ¹⁸ Antonie Wessels, "Some Biblical Consideration Relevant to the Encounter Between Traditions," Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Z. Haddad, (Eds.), *Christian-Muslim Encounters*, 55.
- ¹⁹ Wessels, "Some Biblical", 55
- ²⁰ Frances Young, "A Cloud of Witness," in *The Myth of God Incarnate*, 13 .
- ²¹ Knitter, *No Other Name?*, 185.
- ²² Knitter, *One Earth many Religions, Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility*, 35 (Italic is mine)
- ²³ Harvey Cox, *Many Mansions, A Christian's Encounter with Other Faiths*, 10.
- ²⁴ Cox, *Many Mansions*, 12.
- ²⁵ Cox, *Many Mansions*, 13.
- ²⁶ Knitter, *No Other Name?*, 172.
- ²⁷ Knitter, *No Other Name?*, 172.
- ²⁸ Knitter, *No Other Name?*, 173.
- ²⁹ Amalados, 'Dialogue and Mission', 58
- ³⁰ Knitter, *One Earth Many Religions*, 8.
- ³¹ Q 2:30.
- ³² Q 2:30.
- ³³ Genesis 4: 3-16.
- ³⁴ See Karl Rahner, *The Practice of Faith: A Handbook of Contemporary Spirituality*, New York: Crossroad, 1983. See also his *Spirit in the World*, New York: Continuum, 1994, cited by Michael Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality*, 34.
- ³⁵ Translation from the Qur'an
- ³⁶ Anthony J. Gittins, (Ed.), *Life and Death Matters, The Practice of Inculturation in Africa*, 25.
- ³⁷ Gittins, *Life and Death Matters*, 25
- ³⁸ Bevans, , *Models of Contextual Theology*, 49
- ³⁹ Mark Heim, *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends*, 127.
- ⁴⁰ Ibn al-`Arabi, *al-Futuhat al-Makkiya*. II, 316.10; William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-`Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination*, 149, 229, 341-344.
- ⁴¹ *Wa law sha'a rabbuka la-ja`ala al-nasa ummatan wahidatan wa la yazaluna mukhtalifin illa man rahhima rabbuka.*
- ⁴² Vahiduddin, *Islam and Diversity of Religion*, 3-11

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