

# Wasathiyah in the Tafsir of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia: A Study of Theory and Implementation

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## Abstract

As a multi-religious and multicultural country, Indonesia has shown a peaceful face with its plurality in accordance with the motto of Bhineka Tunggal Ika. But on the other hand, it cannot be denied that there is a potential for conflict and even friction to violence in the reality of religious life. This potential arises due to the attitude of not being able to accept differences in interpretation, understanding so that they claim and blame each other. So a moderate attitude becomes important to implement in an effort to create religious harmony. Islamic moderation is the solution to extremism and radicalism (including terrorism) in the name of religion. Recently, the government has continued to narrate the wasathiyah attitude or religious moderation carried out by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. What is done is part of a continuous and consistent effort to create a more harmonious religious and inter-religious life by promoting the spirit of the middle way, balance, proportion and tolerance. Of course, the concept of Islamic moderation that is raised is inseparable from religious normative sources including interpretations of religious texts. *Al-Quran and Tafsirnya* is a tafsir book produced from the basis of power space, in this case the government, which involves many Muslim scholars and scholars. This tafsir was compiled collectively with a team appointed by the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs. This research is a literature review with a qualitative descriptive method that explores the concept of wasathiyah, its values and characteristics in the Quran and its Tafsir. That the value of wasathiyah contained in the interpretation of the verses can certainly be a guide to be implemented in religious life so that a harmonious life can be created and minus the conflict between religious communities in Indonesia.

**Introduction**

Azyumardi Azra, one of the Muslim scholars said that Indonesian Islam is wasathiyah Islam which displays Islamic moderation in Indonesia, even mentioned as one of the characters and characteristics of Islam that is unique to Indonesia. Its actualization is not only in the area of doctrine alone, but also seen in empirical, historical, sociological and cultural realities (Azra, 2000). Even so, the moderation of Indonesian Islam is faced with various challenges of radicalism, extremism and terrorism originating from the understanding and practice of transnational Islamic movements.

As a multi-religious country, Indonesia has shown a peaceful face with its plurality in accordance with the motto of Unity in Diversity. But on the other hand, it cannot be denied that there is a potential for conflict and even friction to violence in the reality of religious life. This potential arises due to the attitude of not being able to accept differences in interpretation, understanding so that they claim and blame each other. This fact is a complex form of religious life in Indonesia which is very pluralistic and multicultural. On the one hand there are those who look liberal in thought, on the other hand there are those who are radical and violent in their religious thought and practice.

Islamic moderation is the solution to extremism and radicalism (including terrorism) in the name of religion. In other words, moderation (wasathiyah) is the main character of Islam that must be implemented in every aspect of people's lives. Shaukat 'Ulyan strongly believes that Islamic moderation is the best way to create stability in world security (Ulyan, 2012). Hasyim Muzadi also emphasized that moderation or wasatjiyyah is a balance between tolerance and strong belief. Said Agil Siraj stated that wasathiyah is a combination of the text of the Qur'an and Hadith with reason. Likewise, Yunahar Ilyas gave an understanding of wasathiyah as an attitude in maximizing common sense and intelligence, rejecting extremism and not ignoring it.

In the author's note, that the narrative of Islamic moderation or religious moderation narrative as a discourse and concept and practice has indeed been going on for a long time, it's just that the massive campaign and mainstreaming of Islamic moderation or religious narrative in Indonesia began to be carried out intensively again at the end of the period of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Lukman Hakim Saifuddin in the 2018-2019 range. Furthermore, the government of the Republic of Indonesia through the Ministry of Religious Affairs (previously called the Ministry of Religion) continues to narrate and echo religious moderation for the wider community in an effort to maintain harmonious relations between religious communities and between extreme left and extreme right groups in carrying out religious teachings. The mainstreaming of religious moderation gave birth to different responses in various circles of society both at the upper and lower levels, educated people and ordinary people.

In the Qur'an has provided guidance on wasathiyah or moderation as an attitude, in social facts and reality there is still the behavior of some Muslims who have a tendency and lead to extreme attitudes, in religion, such as in thought, namely the monopoly of religious understanding that considers its understanding the most correct (truth claim), violence in the name of religion, including conflicts of religious organizations, and so on. In addition, in the Islamic repertoire in Indonesia, we can also find a form of liberal interpretation of religious

texts, which has an impact on the emergence of conservative, fundamentalist and radical groups.

So, the author is of the view that today's facts in Indonesia that continue to narrate Islamic moderation or religious moderation carried out by the Ministry of Religion as a representation of the Government are part of a continuous and consistent effort to create a more harmonious religious and inter-religious life by promoting the spirit of the middle way, balance, proportion and tolerance. Of course, the concept of Islamic moderation that is raised is not separated from the normative sources of religion, including the interpretation of religious texts.

The study of *wasathiyah* or moderation in Islam still and still has the urgency to present the treasures and good and correct understanding, in an effort to create Muslims as *ummatan wasathan*. The reason is, as the opinion of Sheikh Ahmad al-Thayyib during his visit to Indonesia stated that it is important for humans to make their religious teachings with centric *wasathiyah* Islam which balances and unites the truth of its elements and unites opposite poles, free from excess (*ifrath*) and deficiency (*tafrith*) (Shihab, 2020).

This research will examine further and in depth the concept of *wasathiyah* from the tafsir product which in fact becomes the literature of Indonesian Muslims from various circles. There are several reasons that encourage the author to choose this tafsir book, namely: *First*, Tafsir of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (now called the Ministry of Religious Affairs) is a tafsir book produced from the basis of power space in this case the government involving many Muslim scholars and scholars. This tafsir is compiled collectively with a team appointed by the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs. *Secondly*, this book was written, printed up to the enhanced edition through a fairly long time, namely 5 years. This shows the Government's very serious attention to help and facilitate Indonesian Muslims in understanding the content of the Qur'an in their own language. In addition, the presence of this tafsir is expected to meet the needs of the community both as people and learners in studying the interpretation of the Qur'an in Indonesia.

### **Understanding of *Wasathiyah***

The word moderation also comes from the Latin *moderatio* which means moderation (neither excess nor deficiency). It also means self-control (from extreme excess and deficiency). In English, the word moderation is often used in the sense of average, core, standard, or non-aligned. In general, moderation means promoting balance in terms of beliefs, morals and character, both when treating others as individuals, and when dealing with state institutions. In Arabic, *wasathiyah* etymologically comes from the word *Wasatha*, which means middle, moderate and fair in everything. In addition, the word *wasath* also means *al-Nishf* which is the middle between two sides. The word *wasath* or *wasathiyah*, which is equivalent to the words *tawassuth* (middle), *i'tidal* (fair), and *tawazun* (balanced). People who apply the principle of *wasathiyah* can be called *wasith*. In Arabic too, the word *wasathiyah* is translated as 'the best choice'. Whichever word is used, they all imply the same meaning, namely fairness, which in this context means choosing a middle way position between various extreme options.

As for the term, *wasathiyah* intended by the author is a proportional attitude shown in the practice of religion so that it does not lead to an attitude that exceeds the limits of either the

extreme left (liberal) or the extreme right (radical), including neither ifrath nor tafrith. According to al-Qardhawi, wasathiyah is the same as al-Tawazun, which is an effort to maintain a balance between two contradictory or contradictory sides, so that no one is more dominant. (al-Qardhawi, t.t)

According to Abdul Karim al-Zaid is a concept that has a breadth of meaning that includes every praiseworthy character (*khaslah mahmudah*) between the two extremes (*tharfani mazmumain*), such as between generous and stingy, extravagant, brave and cowardly attitudes. In the book Strategi al- wasathiyah published by the Ministry of Waqf and Islamic Religious Affairs of Kuwait as quoted by Muchlis Hanafi, *wasathiyah* is defined as a method of thinking, interacting and acting based on an attitude of tawazun (balanced) in dealing with two conditions of behavior that are likely to be analyzed and compared, so as to bring out an attitude that is in line with the situation and does not contradict religious teachings in principle and prevailing in society. Therefore, based on this definition, *wasathiyah* can provide protection to anyone from the possibility and opportunity to fall into an excessive. (Hanafi, 2019).

### **Principles of Wasathiyah in Islam**

Discussing of *wasathiyah*, Islam as a religion has provided life guidance in the Qur'an to be proportional, fair and balanced. So, the values of moderation itself in principle already exist and are very accommodating to be implemented in life. Among the principles that have become part of the teachings in religious practice are justice (*'adalah*), balance (*Tawazun*) and tolerance (*Tasamuh*). For this reason, Muslims should take the path of splendor in implementing religious teachings, this can make it easier for them, especially in principle Islam is a religion that provides space for ease in carrying out Allah's commands. Yusuf Qaradhawi mentioned that as Muslims must spread mercy to all nature as a manifestation of Islam which is *rahmatan li al-'Alamin*, by presenting a face that is shady not scary, understanding the teachings properly through religious texts and implementing them proportionally. In the following, the author explains some of the principles of *Wasathiyah* in Islam:

#### **1. Justice (*al-'Adl*)**

Justice is one of the main principles and values brought by all the heavenly laws. So that when Allah sent His messengers then at the same time His books were revealed. Allah says: "Indeed, We sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance (of Justice) so that man may be just" (QS. al-Hadid/57: 25). If we look at the Qur'anic guidance, the justice that is desired is certainly in various matters, not only in legal matters, such as determining the decision of two people in dispute, but also in personal justice both in speech and action. When we speak, we should speak the truth, even when dealing with close relatives (QS. al-An'am/6: 152). When carrying out a debt contract, the one who writes the note must also write honestly and correctly (QS.al-Baqarah/2: 282)

In relation to leadership, the Qur'an positions it as a "divine covenant" with a consequent responsibility to uphold justice and reject injustice. The Quran also raises the discourse of justice in a variety of meanings including tawhid, prophethood, leadership, personal matters and community matters. Anyone who wants to obtain personal perfection, then there must be a fair attitude in him, including a way to get happy in the hereafter.

**Balance (*al-Tawazun*)**

The word *Tawazun* comes from the word *Tawazana yatawazanu Tawazunan* which means balanced. This word has another meaning, which is to give something its due, by not adding something or subtracting it. This middle and balanced attitude has consequences for humanity, equality and justice. However, this middle stance does not mean that it is not firm and has no arguments. In fact, those who are balanced in this way are firm, though not harsh. Such an attitude is more inclined to the justice taken not to cause harm to other parties. Not being excessive, proportional and necessary is a balance that means neither liberal nor extreme. Being balanced is a good service for the realization of harmonious relations between humans and human relations with God, the Creator.

When we look at the creation of the human body with all its limbs, it is very clear that we find the intention of a balance. Allah created humans with *fitrah insaniyyah* which includes the five senses, heart, soul and mind. All of this is clear evidence of Allah's power to create balance and can be directly felt by humans. In carrying out daily activities, whether personal activities, family matters, the world of work, or social community activities, every Muslim should be balanced and proportional and put something more priority. Not everything should be done equally in all matters. When working, work well with integrity according to duties and obligations, when it's time to rest, then give the body the right to get it. There are times when you are busy with work, but still give time to your family.

**Tolerance (*al-Tasamuh*)**

The word tolerance in practice often creates pros and cons. Pros and cons cannot be avoided when in the name of tolerance on the one hand, but crashing religious norms on the other. Therefore, it is important to clarify the meaning of tolerance. The word tolerance comes from the Latin word "tolerar" which means to be patient, bear with, refrain, and respect the arguments of others or other people's religions and beliefs. It is also said that tolerance is willing to respect or accept other people's different opinions (Abdullah, 1993). The word tolerance covers a variety of attitudes such as respecting, allowing for the attitudes taken and respecting the arguments of others, or communities that are not the same or different beliefs from oneself.

Tolerance in Arabic is called *al-Tasamuh* which means tolerance or respect and appreciation for others, either to Muslims or to non-Muslims. Tolerance is another fundamental teaching as wisdom (*hikmah*), universal benefit (*maslahah 'ammah*), compassion (*rahmah*) and justice (*'adl*) (Muqsith, 2013). In its implementation, tolerance is a value that can create peace in religious social life amid religious plurality in Indonesia. In the Javanese philosophy of life, there is something called *tepo seliro* which means a tolerant attitude. This attitude prioritizes self-introspection over something. So if you don't like to be hurt, then don't hurt others. This attitude seeks to maintain friendships and stay away from commotion and conflict with others.

Internally, Muslims themselves also need to be open-minded, accepting differences and respecting them. Therefore, differences in mazhab, recitation groups, community organizations (mass organizations) and differences in understanding and views, should not be used as an excuse to create conflict and not respect each other. Meanwhile, related to interactions with non-Muslims, Islam also puts rules and orders to continue to do good and

tolerance to them. This tolerant attitude is shown by continuing to respect them in social affairs, but remaining firm and having a stance when it comes to matters of worship, faith and sharia as Allah says in QS. al-Kafirun/109: 6: *lakum dinukum waliyadin* (for you your religion and for me my religion). Islam is a religion of *rahmatan li al-'Alamin* that brings mercy to all nature, revealed through the Prophet Muhammad. In the Qur'an, it has been emphasized that religious differences are not the cause of the inability to create a bond of brotherhood between fellow human beings even though their religions are different (Izzan, 2017).

### **The Characteristics of Wasathiyah**

Islam is a moderate religion that intends to be in the best position, the middle that does not teach extremity behavior in all its aspects. That *ummatan wasatan* is a people in the middle, not inclined to side with the right or the left. Rather, they are balanced and fair. Thus, the teaching of Islam in substance is to eliminate all forms of extremity in many cases (Ali, 1938).

Therefore, *wasathiyah* invites its adherents (in this case Muslims) to be able to be open both in terms of interacting, dialoguing with all parties include in interactions between religions, cultures, and civilizations. This is because Muslims cannot be witnesses or be just if they are closed (exclusive) or close themselves off from the environment and global developments that present diversity and the dynamics of life that move dynamically. In part, it is important to explain the features and characteristics of *wasathiyah*. Islam is a moderate religion that intends to be in the best position, the middle that does not teach extremity behavior in all its aspects. That *ummatan wasatan* is a people in the middle, not inclined to side with the right or the left. Rather, they are balanced and fair. Thus, the teaching of Islam in substance is to eliminate all forms of extremity in many cases (Ali, 1938).

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### **Understanding of Reality**

There is a good expression to be used as a lesson that nothing is fixed in this life, nothing changes but change itself. This is a reality as a human being created by God with all the potential that can change, develop and progress (progressive). In today's modern era, we get many realities of pluralistic societies, different conditions make many fatwas that appear as a response to the problems of the people. For example, in Indonesia there is the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) issuing a different fatwa on one case with Fatwa institutions in other countries, both in countries with a majority or minority of Muslims. Islam as the majority religion in Indonesia in the application of its teachings remains adjusted in the life of the state and nation. Even so, the general view is still based on the Qur'an and Hadith.

If the verses of the Qur'an are used as a basis, then the implementation must still be in accordance with state regulations. If it is forced to be as the text of the verse, then even this will create disharmony in the life of the nation and state. For example the words of Allah: "And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed (because he denies it), then they

are the disbelievers." QS. Al-Maidah/5: 44. Textually normative, the above verse explains that anyone who judges other than what was revealed and determined by Allah, then the person/group/government/country is a disbeliever. So, there are those who think that the application of this law must be realized including in the context of the state and all aspects of life. Of course this can be a problem for the harmony of state life if it imposes its will. It would be very difficult for this view to be implemented in Indonesia. This is why we must understand the reality that Indonesia is not an Islamic state. So, it is unrealistic if the above interpretation is forced to be applied in the Indonesian context. For anyone or any group struggling in the implementation of Islamic law (sharia) is allowed and there is nothing wrong as long as they pay attention to the reality of different societies in understanding the teachings of Islam without having to impose their wishes, let alone to make damage (anarchist).

### **Not Excessive Fanaticism**

Actually this trait if it exists in a person in practicing his religion is fine and even good and justified. However, if fanaticism makes other people humiliated, brings discord and hostility, to damage brotherhood for brothers and sisters, brothers of the nation or fellow human beings in general, this is the case that must be avoided (Dadang, 2006).

A Muslim is indeed required to believe in his teachings, istiqamah and always do good. However, in the practice of social life, religious and national life still does not have to leave a tolerant attitude on the other hand as part of religious teachings. In an effort to avoid excessive attitudes and religious or cultural fanaticism, it is necessary to synergize all plurality of religious believers to fight for harmony among adherents without having to sacrifice matters of faith.

This assertion can be taken from the verse "for you your religion (to be believed and practiced) and for me my religion" (QS. al-Kafirun/109: 6). This statement proves that there is mutual recognition of the existence of religion and belief, so that each religious adherent can practice what he believes in properly and correctly, without making absolute arguments to others and each of them does not deny his belief. The attitude of ta'assub and fanaticism will become more dangerous when this attitude is manifested in the form of coercion, verbal violence to criminals.

### **Making Religion Easy**

Islam is a rational, comprehensive religion, in accordance with human values that make it easy. Islam demands that its followers become pious people in both ritual and social matters. If we really carry out the teachings of religion properly and correctly, it is found that Allah always makes it easy based on the rules and regulations that apply. Pursuing piety in ritual and social matters can also be realized.

Islam recognizes the urgency of fulfilling the desires of human nature. However, the fulfillment of these desires must be within the rules so that humans do not fall to the lowest level like animals. Therefore, practicing religious laws is an easy matter - in the sense that the laws are in line with and in accordance with human nature, not in accordance with human tastes and desires. Allah says: "(By such a decree) Allah wants you to have ease, and He does not want you to endure hardship" (QS. al-Baqarah.2: 185- QS. Al-Hajj/22: 78).

In this regard, the Prophet Muhammad also said in his hadith from the Companion Anas bin Malik that: "Make it easy and do not make it difficult, give good news and do not make people run away." (HR. Bukhari).

### **Description of Kitab *al-Quran dan Tafsirnya* Department of Religious Affairs**

The *al-Quran dan Tafsirnya* Department of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (now called the Ministry of Religious Affairs) is a tafsir book produced from the basis of the power space in this case the government involving many Muslim scholars and scholars. This tafsir is compiled collectively with a team appointed by the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs as a form of attention from the Indonesian government that sees the need and is committed to fulfilling the expectations and needs of the Indonesian people in getting the availability of holy books for religious people, especially Islam with the tafsir book in Indonesian. In the process, this book was written, compiled and printed until the edition was perfected through a fairly long time of 5 years. This shows the Government's very serious attention to help and facilitate Indonesian Muslims in understanding the contents of the Qur'an in their own language. In addition, the presence of this tafsir is expected to meet the needs of the community both as people and learners in studying the interpretation of the Qur'an in Indonesia.

From the beginning of the writing of this tafsir book until the time of revision in its publication, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia used various references both from the book of tafsir, the book of hadith, ulum al-Qur'an and related as a source of interpretation. This commentary makes the source of its interpretation a collaboration between tafsir *bi al-Ma'sur* and tafsir *bi al-Ra'yi*. The *al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya* is written in 10 volumes and each consists of 3 juz which writing until its completion was carried out in stages from 2003 to 2008.

The methodology used in the *al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya* is the tahlili method of interpretation. In tahlili method, the interpretation is done by describing the meaning of the Qur'an, verse by verse and surah by surah in accordance with its order in the Mushaf. While in the writing systematics using tartib mushafi with *adab ijtimai* style of interpretation.

### **Interpretation of verses related to wasat}iyah in al-Qur'an and its Tafsir, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia**

#### **Be Fair and Balanced: QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 143.**

One of the important things that should not be ignored in discussing wasatiyyah is fairness and justice. In fact, the word justice is one of the central themes mentioned in the Qur'an. Allah says: "And likewise We have made you (Muslims) "a people in the middle" that you may be witnesses to the people and that the Messenger (Muhammad) may be a witness to you."

The Department of Religious Affairs team interprets the word *ummatah wasatan* as a people who receive guidance from Allah Swt, so that they become a just people and a chosen people who will bear witness to the denial of the disbelievers. For this reason, Muslims must always uphold justice and truth and defend the right and eliminate the false. In the affairs of life, Muslims take a middle position between people who are only concerned with world affairs or only focus on the affairs of the hereafter. This attitude will make Muslims a fair and chosen



witness against those who focus more on the material affairs of the world who obey their lusts and then forget the rights of Allah to be worshiped, including will also be a witness against those who exaggerate in matters of religion so as not to pay attention to physical health or physical by being proportional and reasonable in his life. This is why Muslims deserve to be called *ummatan wasat* because of their fair and balanced attitude in running their lives by taking the middle path.

**Freedom of Religion: QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 256.**

It is a fact that the continuity of life so far presents diversity in the form of nations, languages and religions. So embracing a religion is a call of the soul and in the name of guidance. So there is no force for humans to embrace a particular religion. Allah says: "There is no compulsion in (embracing) the religion (Islam), indeed the difference between the right path and the misguided path is clear. Whoever disbelieves in *taghut* and believes in Allah, then indeed, he has taken hold of a very strong rope that will not break. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

In the Qur'an and its Tafsir, it is explained that the phrase *no ikrah* in this verse means that we should not force others to convert to Islam. A person's entry into Islam is not due to coercion, but because of his own desire. A person's Islam from sincerity (especially if it is guided by Allah: the author), will be more effective. So, our task in preaching is limited to *tabligh* and there is no need to use force, because guidance is Allah's business (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2008)

It is not a mistake to be forced to embrace Islam. In QS. *al-Nahl*/6: 25, it has been mentioned how to preach properly, namely in a good way full of wisdom, reasonable advice, until when in certain conditions *jidat* occurs, still emphasizing good *jidat*. When someone decides to convert to Islam, then it is of their own accord. However, if the message and invitation have been delivered, then they do not accept and do not want to believe, then our obligation is released and has become a matter for Allah. To corroborate this statement, the Compilation Team included the words which mean: "Do you want to force them until they become believers?"

In the Qur'an and its Tafsir, the Compilation Team also emphasizes that it is not true that Islam came and developed with swords and war. This verse was revealed in the third year after the *hijrah* when the Muslims in Mecca performed worship still in a closed and hidden way, there was no demonstrative worship before the pagans. It was only after the strength of the Muslims was evident, and their numbers increased, that the Muslims openly showed their identity and worship.

From the various territories controlled by Muslims, everyone was given the right to freedom and choose whether to stick with their religion or decide to embrace Islam. If they persisted in their religion, they were required to pay a tax (*jizyah*) to compensate them for the protection given to them by the Islamic government. There is a guarantee of full protection and safety for them with the caveat that they do not show hatred let alone commit acts that are hostile to Muslims. All of this becomes a historical fact that Islam does not provide space for coercion for its people in inviting others to embrace Islam, even teaching to continue to respect their existence in religion even though they are in a minority position. However, it is an ironic fact in various records, both past and present, that some Muslims get the opposite

treatment if they become a minority group in a region or country (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2008).

**Not insulting other religions and their symbols: QS. al-An'am/6: 108**

Insulting and criticizing are bad things that are not in accordance with religious teachings. Insulting is tantamount to showing hatred. So, Islam regulates its people to respect others, including those with different beliefs, without insulting them. Allah says: "And do not insult those whom they worship besides Allah, for they will later insult Allah beyond measure without knowledge. Thus, We have made every people to appreciate the good of their work. Then to God is their return, and He will tell them what they have done."

The prohibition in this verse aims to prevent Muslims from doing what the polytheists have done, namely reviling Allah. When Muslims revile the polytheists' gods, they are reviling and denouncing their own Lord. Because their reproach of the polytheists' gods causes the polytheists to reproach or revile Allah in return. Thus, Islam forbids its believers from denouncing the god of a particular people.

From this verse it can be understood that if an action is used for the realization of other immoral actions, then it should be abandoned, all actions have a bad impact, so they are prohibited. This verse also hints to the Muslims that they are forbidden to do something that causes the disbelievers to move further away from the truth. Reviling idols is essentially reviling inanimate objects. Although swearing at idols does not lead to sin, it causes the polytheists to feel offended and angry, which in turn they will retaliate by swearing at Allah. (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2008).

Therefore, the standard of whether an action or habit is good or bad sometimes arises from people's own judgment, whether it is a hereditary tradition or just a new habit, such as the offense of the polytheists when people curse their idols. This also indicates that the measure by which an action is judged to be good or bad is a matter of ikhtiyari. However, Allaah has given man the instinct to judge the deeds and habits, whether they are good or bad. While the Messengers are tasked with conveying revelation and guiding and directing human instincts to develop properly to the right path so that they can judge the deeds and habits that are good or bad.

**Plurality is Undoubted: QS. Hud/11: 118-119.**

Allah has created the universe and human beings with diversity and differences that have become sunnatullah. Allah says: "And if your Lord had willed, He would have made mankind one people, but they are always at variance, except those whom your Lord has mercy upon. And that is what Allah has created them for. The sentence (decree) of your Lord is fixed: "I will surely fill Hellfire with jinn and men (who disobey)."

This verse makes it clear that, if Allah wills, mankind can become a people of one religion in accordance with their original nature. In the beginning, human beings were one people with no disputes among them, but after they multiplied, there were various needs and desires that were not the same, so at the same time there were differences and endless disputes, as Allah said. And mankind was once but one people, then they disputed (QS. Yunus/10: 19).

The disputes that occur are not only related to various religions, whether Jews, Christians, Magi, Muslims, or shirk, but also within one religion, except for those who receive grace and guidance from Allah. They are united in always trying to create unity so that people obey the provisions of Allah, doing what He commands and avoiding what He forbids. Such is the will of Allah regarding human diversity. There are those who receive mercy, guidance and help from Allah, they unite and build unity, and they are among the happy people who will become residents of Paradise. There are also those who never stop disputing and they are among the wretched people who will become residents of hell (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2008).

**Not forcing others to believe: QS. Yunus/10: 99-100**

Allah says: And if your Lord had willed, all the people of the earth would have believed. But do you (want to) force people to become believers? And no one will believe except by Allah's permission, and Allah inflicts punishment on those who do not understand."

This verse explains that if Allah wanted all people to believe in Him, then it would be easy for Allah and would definitely be done, because there is no barrier for Allah to do so. But in fact, Allah does not want this. Allah is determined to carry out His sunnah in His creation (Sunatullah). So no one can change His Sunnah unless Allah Himself wills it. Among His Sunnahs is to give man reason, mind and emotions that distinguish him from angels and other creatures.

With reason, thought and feeling, man becomes a cultured being, able to distinguish between what is good and what is bad, both for himself, for others and for the universe. Then human deeds are rewarded according to the deeds they have done; every good deed will be rewarded and evil and bad deeds will be punished in the hereafter (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2008). That Allah sent messengers to convey His religion and laws and explain to people what is good to do and what should not be done. With the mind and feelings that Allah has given, humans can judge what the messengers convey. So that there is no compulsion for humans in making their choices, good or bad, but later humans will be punished based on their choices.

The Compilation Team of the Qur'an and its Tafsir emphasizes that everything that happens in this nature is by the will of Allah, so that nothing happens outside His will. Allah guides and makes it easy for someone to believe, if that person wants to understand and practice the verses that have been conveyed by His messengers. Allah also despises anyone who does not want to understand and practice His verses if they have received the invitation of His messenger. This means that they reject the invitation of the messenger to follow the straight path. In this tafsir, the conclusion is stated that the Prophet Muhammad and his people are strictly forbidden by Allah to force others to believe. Because whether or not someone believes is up to the will and iradah of Allah.

**Wise in Action: QS. Al-Isra/17: 29.**

Allah says: "And do not let your hands be tied around your necks, nor do you overextend them (be generous) lest you become disgraced and regretful."

In this verse, the Qur'an and its Tafsir explain that Allah Swt explains how to be good and wise in spending wealth. Allah describes the condition of those who are stingy and wasteful with

the expression do not make the hand shackled to the neck, but also do not stretch it out too much. These two expressions are commonly used by the Arabs. The first expression means the prohibition of being stingy or miserly, so as not to share and give wealth to others, even if only a little. While the second expression means to prohibit people from being extravagant in spending wealth, so that it exceeds their abilities. The habit of wasting wealth will cause a person to have no savings or savings that can be used in times of need.

From this verse it can be understood that a good and wise way of spending wealth is in an appropriate, appropriate and reasonable way, in the middle position, not too stingy and also not too extravagant. Being too stingy will make a person despicable, while being too extravagant will cause losses and the culprit can become bankrupt or bankrupt. Imam Ahmad narrated from Ibn 'Abbas that the Prophet said: "He who is frugal will not become poor." This Hadith explains the importance of frugality, so the Prophet said that people who are always frugal will not be a burden on others or will not become poor. Imam al-Baihaqi also narrated a tradition from Ibn 'Abbas that the Prophet said: "Being frugal in spending wealth is half of livelihood" (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2008).

The author underlines that implicitly there are values that can be implemented in realizing *wasathiyah*. If the use of wealth in charity is not too stingy and not too generous, then this also applies to the acceptance of facts in religion. That multi-religious life requires this kind of wise attitude. That way, conflicts between religions, organizations and groups can be avoided when each party is wise in speech and action when different in views and beliefs.

### **Conclusion**

Being *wasathiyah* does not mean not taking a stance between the two extremes, or rejecting both, nor does it mean being soft or weak. Moderation means maintaining a balance so that one extreme is not so dominant that it ignores or dismisses the other. Moderate attitudes harmoniously gather elements that are good again in accordance with each pole and at the required level so that an attitude is born that is not excessive, but also not lacking. While the value of *wasathiyah* in the Qur'an and its Tafsir of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia as explained above becomes urgent to be understood and implemented in an effort to create religious harmony in the context of nation and state.

Theoretically, this research and study is expected to be one of the references and enrich the treasures of the study of Al-Quran Science and tafsir in the discussion of Islamic *wasathiyah*. This research can also provide valuable input on the concept of *wasathiyah* in improving a better understanding of the Indonesian Muslim community in particular and Muslims in general. Practically, this research contributes scientifically to the concept of Islamic *wasathiyah* or Quran-based religious moderation and the perspective of Indonesian Quranic exegesis, so that it can become literacy and its implementation in religious life in Indonesia.

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