

## The Flexibility of Islamic Law: Criticism Toward the Intepretation of Indonesia Online Preacher on Youtube for Covid-19

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### Abstract

The existence of YouTube as a social media video platform that is easily accessible and has a wide reach, is often used to share ideas, concepts, and thoughts, especially when the Corona pandemic hit the world, preachers were no exception. This article examines the interpretations of preachers on YouTube media regarding Covid-19 that conflict with the adaptability of Islamic law. This article employs an analytical descriptive, the writer evaluates Youtube-based online da'wah content with a focus on the interpretation of Covid-19, then analyzes it based on a flexible approach to Islamic law. A study of the online preachers' interpretations shows there is ambiguity in the opinions of online preachers about Covid-19 epidemic. This interpretation is similar to their claim that the prohibition and restrictions of the pilgrimage during the Covid-19 period were part of a conspiracy against the Islamic faith, the prohibition on congregational prayers during the Covid-19 period was seen an insult to the Islamic religion and keeping distance during congregational prayers during this time was in violation of Prophet's Sunnah. The writer states that the fundamental cause of the conflicting interpretation of Islamic law is a lack of knowledge of how flexible it is.

**Keywords:** *Covid -19, Islamic Law, Interpretation of the Qur'an, Online Da'wah*



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### INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 outbreak not only had an impact on the economy (Rofiuddin 2022: 1), but also had an impact on religious understanding, especially on sacred texts. In the context of the interpretation of the Koran, many interpretations of the Koran related to Covid-19 have emerged, and that some tend to have an understanding that is ambiguous and not in accordance with the explicit meaning of the Koran and how these verses should be interpreted. YouTube media is one of the media that is easy to use and massive, both for sharing and for obtaining information. The irony is that several interpretations of the Al-Qur'an text are ambiguous regarding the Corona pandemic from the preachers, lots of milling about on YouTube media. like the interpretation that Covid-19 restrictions and adjustments to worship during the Covid-19 pandemic constitute a conspiracy and harassment against Islam. This phenomenon is the background for the author to examine more deeply their interpretation and the triggering factors.

We haven't gotten much writing that examines the confusion perpetrated by preachers in interpreting the text of the Qur'an relating to Covid-19 on YouTube media. Even though the

confusion is obvious, the irony is that it is carried out by preachers and their opinions are often used as a reference in religion by the public.

What factors are behind the confusion of interpretation of the text of the Qur'an, related to Covid-19 carried out by a number of preachers, it is also urgent to study in the opinion of the authors, given the negative impact caused by this ambiguous interpretation on a moderate understanding of Islamic teachings, besides many *viewer* who easily watch their videos on YouTube, so that the negative influence is feared to spread in society on a massive scale, if there is no counter-interpretation of their interpretation. It is recorded that the number of internet users in Indonesia is 97.4 percent of the total population, of which 11 percent are YouTube media accessers (Yona Asmara 2020: 2).

In the opinion of the author, there has not been found an article that specifically discusses the confusion of the preachers *online* on YouTube media in interpreting several Qur'anic verses related to Covid-19, with a flexible approach to Islamic law. Some of the writings that are relevant to this article are.

First, an article entitled Tafseer of the Qur'an on YouTube, an article written by Moh. Azwar Hairul with the title "Tafsir Al-Qur'an on YouTube", in this article only examines Nouman Ali Khan's interpretation on the Bayyinah Institute Channel and Quran Weekly and has nothing to do with the interpretation of verses from the Koran regarding Covid-19 (Hairul 2019:197-213).

Second, a thesis written by Putri Sintya Fortuna at the Jakarta Al-Qur'an Institute of Sciences, with the title "Interpretation of Al-Qur'anic Verses about Facing the Covid-19 Pandemic According to Preachers on Social Media", in this thesis although the interpretations of a number of preachers regarding Covid-19 in YouTube media are presented, it has not yet focused on a number of interpretations from preachers who are ambiguous and deserve to be criticized (Fortuna, 2021).

Third, the thesis written by Ridlo Nur Awwali at Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang, with the title "YouTube Quraish Shihab Media Da'wah in Answering the Problems of the Age (Case Study of the Covid-19 Virus Outbreak)". This thesis is limited to presenting several Quraish Shihab's interpretations related to Covid-19, in his capacity as an interpreter figure in Indonesia who uses YouTube as his da'wah media. This thesis has not fully addressed several confusing interpretations by several preachers in Indonesia regarding Covid-19 on YouTube (Awwali, 2021).

From the several articles above, the author believes that there has not been any writing that specifically discusses the confusion in the interpretation of Indonesian preachers on YouTube media about Covid-19, with a flexible approach to the character of Islamic law. Thus, this paper becomes significant in providing enlightenment, especially to the students *viewer* in understanding the Covid-19 phenomenon in the perspective of moderate Al-Qur'an interpretation and in line with the flexible character of Islamic law.

The formulation of the problem in this paper is whether it is true that the prohibition and limitation of Hajj during the Covid-19 period was a conspiracy against Islam? Is the prohibition on congregational prayers during the Covid-19 period an insult to Islam? and does keeping your distance in congregational prayers during the Covid-19 period contradict the Sunnah of the Prophet?

## RESEARCH METHODS

The amount of content on YouTube media is enormous, this article discusses only content related to the ambiguity in the interpretation of the Al-Qur'an text around Covid-19 by preachers, with Indonesian as the language of instruction. This type of article is qualitative. The method used is descriptive analytical. Namely: by presenting the problem object based on facts and existing data. In this case, the material presented on YouTube is related to the ambiguous interpretation of the Al-Qur'an text about Covid-19 by several preachers. Then analyze it, based on a flexible approach to the character of Islamic law. The primary data sources in this study are several YouTube contents from preachers about Covid-19 as well as interpretations and explanations of verses and hadiths about Covid-19. While the secondary data is several writings and articles related to Covid-19, in addition to several books related to Islamic law.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Corona Pandemic

A pandemic can be understood as the spread of a new disease that has hit almost the entire world (Wandra 2021: 1627). On the official website of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia it is stated that Covid-19 is a large family of viruses that cause disease in humans and animals. In humans, it usually causes respiratory tract infections, ranging from the common cold to serious diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). A new type of coronavirus that was discovered in humans since an extraordinary incident appeared in Wuhan China, in December 2019, was later named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV2) and caused Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) (RI Ministry of Health, 2020).

The adverse impact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has been extraordinary, in the economic sector, not only Indonesia but the whole world has experienced a decline in terms of tourism, trade and investment (Darma 2020: 212). In the family sector, the divorce rate in Indonesia increased by 5% during the Covid-19 pandemic (Ramadhani 2021: 88). In the mental health sector, psychological disorders occur in the form of excessive anxiety among family individuals (Rosyad 2021: 44). In the education sector, policy *Social Distancing* during the pandemic, it required the teaching and learning process to be carried out online, the quality of education was certain to decline, such as in the aspect of students' understanding of learning material, due to the absence of direct interaction between educators and their students (Iqbal 2022: 101).

Entering 2023, the Covid-19 pandemic cannot be said to have ended completely, *update* data up to April 8, 2023, it was recorded that there were still active cases of exposure to Covid-19 in Indonesia totaling 6,419 cases. (The COVID-19 situation in Indonesia (Update as of 8 April 2023): 2023) Considering that the Covid-19 pandemic is global in nature, and the magnitude of the negative impact it has caused, multilateral cooperation to end this pandemic and restore post-pandemic conditions will be an inevitability (Waskito 2020: 73–74).

### Da'wah Through Youtube

YouTube is an easily accessible social media video platform (A'raaf, 2021, p. 177). Since its appearance in February 2005 by 3 people named: Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim (Faiqah, 2016, p. 259), YouTube has become a platform that presents videos, where not only the *viewer* for free, you can enjoy it only with internet data, but also content creators who own

*itchannel* on YouTube, more so when *channel* they have been monetized by YouTube, material benefits will also be obtained by the content creators.

Video content presented on YouTube is not only in the form of films, music, and news, but also in the form of religious lectures and lecture materials. There are many preachers who use YouTube as their media for preaching, as well as teachers in conveying their learning material to their students.

Accessing YouTube is so easy and massive, it often has a dual function. On the one hand, YouTube can be used to socialize policies issued by a government during the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, for critics of the government, YouTube can be used as a medium to criticize the policies issued by the government. Therefore, being wise in using YouTube media is needed, as well as enlightenment on video content, including video content uploaded by preachers also needs to be done, as a lesson for the followers. *Viewer* so as not to become a victim of errors and confusion in the material presented in the video content on YouTube.

### Flexibility of Islamic Law

Among the characteristics of Islamic law is that it is neither rigid nor black and white, but it is flexible. A product of Islamic law can not apply when it has the potential to cause harm, because in principle Islamic law is built to protect the safety of religion, soul, reason, honor, and wealth.

The Qur'an in many verses reminds us with its various editorials of the flexibility of Islamic law. In surah al-Baqarah [2]: 185, Allah confirms that He wants ease, not difficulty, for His servants in carrying out His Shari'a:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ .

Meaning: (Allah desires ease for you and does not desire difficulty).

In surah al-Hajj [22]: 78, Allah reminds us that in religion, He does not want narrowness and hardship. In surah al-Baqarah [2]: 286, Allah conveys that He does not burden His servants beyond their means:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا .

Meaning: (God does not burden a person, except according to his ability).

In surah at-Talāq [65]: 7, Allah also conveys that it is not possible for Him to equalize obligations between all His servants, just as He has the prerogative to distinguish His servants in matters of sustenance, so He only obliges His servants according to the sustenance given to him:

لِيُنْفِقَ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِ ۖ وَمَن قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَّا آتَاهَا ۚ سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا .

Meaning: (The person who has plenty (of sustenance) should give sustenance according to his ability, and the person whose sustenance is limited, should give sustenance from what (wealth) God has bestowed upon him. God does not burden a person except (according to) what God has bestowed upon him. God will shall bestow spaciousness after narrowness).

As in surah ash-Syarah [94]: 5-6, Allah repeats the sentence *Ma`a Al`Usri Yusran* twice as an affirmation from Him, even distinguishing between the editors *Al`Usri* (difficulty) in form *Ma`rifah* (definitive) and editorial *Yusran* (facility) in form *Nakirah* (indefinitive), this is to imply that there is convenience behind difficulties, even the convenience that Allah gives to His servants is far wider and far more than the difficulties they face.

The verses above emphasize the flexibility of Islamic teachings, where Islam does not want harm to be experienced by man, because he forces himself to do an act, Islam has tolerated not doing it and has given him facilities. Referring to the word of God in surah al-Jumu`ah [62]: 9:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ .

Meaning: (O you who believe, when the (call) to perform the Friday prayer has been sounded, immediately remember Allah and leave buying and selling. That is better for you if you know).

Islamic law experts agree that the law on Friday prayers is: *Farḍu`Ain* for a Muslim who is independent, intelligent, of puberty, settled and capable. This is the view of Islamic law experts, with a note that if there is no obstacle that allows him not to perform the Friday prayer (Sabiq, 1997).

The Corona outbreak that hit one area, moreover referring to the opinion of credible and competent experts, that Friday prayers in that area must be abolished, because it has the potential to become a source of spreading the corona virus, in our opinion it is much stronger and accepted by reason to be used as an excuse from just the reason for heavy rains, which was why earlier during the time of the Prophet the Friday prayer service was abolished, and instead the companions were ordered to carry out the noon prayer service as usual at their place of residence.

That is a concrete example of the flexibility of Islamic law, a legal product that originates from the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful Substance and be grateful for us as Muslims, whose teachings are flexible and full of convenience values.

### **Critical Study of Preachers' Interpretations in Indonesia Regarding Covid-19 on YouTube Media**

Some interpretations of preachers *online* on YouTube media, related to Covid-19, in the writer's opinion it is ambiguous due to a narrow understanding of Islamic law which is flexible, friendly, easy, and tolerant. Like their interpretation that the prohibition and restriction of the pilgrimage during the Covid-19 period was a conspiracy against the Islamic religion, the prohibition on congregational prayers during the Covid-19 period was an insult to the Islamic religion and keeping distance in congregational prayers during the Covid-19 period was contrary to the Sunnah of the Prophet. The following are ambiguities in their interpretation:

#### **1. The Prohibition and Restrictions on the Hajj During the Covid-19 Period Is a Conspiracy Against Islam**

The spread of Covid-19 is very massive and almost affects the entire hemisphere, where up to the 771st day since its appearance, 398,957,013 cases have been found (*Details Regarding the Development of the World Corona Virus (COVID-19) and Data for Each Country Up to February 8, 2022*, 2022). This has led to policies by several governments to

reduce the spread of Covid-19 by limiting large crowds, even during worship rituals. One of them is the policy of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which prohibits prospective pilgrims from abroad from coming to perform the pilgrimage, and limits it only to internal circles, and even for those who have been fully vaccinated against the Corona virus. *As-Sa'ūdiyyah: Al-Hajj Sayaqtaşiru 'Alal Muqīmīna Al-Lazīna Divorce at-Taṭ'īm Al-Kāmil Didda Fairūs Kūrūnā*, 2022).

This ban by the Government of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and followed by all other Governments, including the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, is understood by a group of preachers as a strong signal that there are problems in managing the country and that there is a political conspiracy against Islam behind it (Rnyy\_Devils Channel, 2021). There are also those who argue that the phenomenon of prohibiting Muslims from performing the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimage due to Covid-19 is a practice of tyranny by iron-fisted rulers against Muslims (Channel Redaksi Islam, 2020).

Is it true that the banning of the pilgrimage during the Covid-19 pandemic was a form of latent policy by the rulers to degrade Islamic teachings? Islam is a religion whose teachings are easy and not difficult (Hasyim 1998: 9). The character of Islamic teachings is to build, not destroy, because the great mission of Islam is to build the universe, both material and immaterial (Zaqzuq 1998: 52). Eliminating difficulties in carrying out religious teachings is an important foundation in Islam, where this foundation often becomes the foothold for several other problems (Ridha 1999: 6/225).

The pilgrimage, which is carried out only in the vicinity of the city of Mecca, may not be carried out in other places. The implementation time is also limited to certain months, not throughout the year. While the domicile of Muslims is scattered in many corners of the world, the number is very large. Under these conditions, it is very wise when the pilgrimage is only obligatory for those who can afford it, as stated in surah Āli 'Imrān [3]: 97:

وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ اِلَيْهِ سَبِيْلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِيْنَ .

Meaning: (Among) the obligations of humans towards Allah are to carry out the pilgrimage to Baitullah, (i.e for) people who can travel there. Whoever denies the (obligation) pilgrimage, then knows that Allah is Rich (does not need anything) from all nature).

The ability referred to, as mentioned in the verse above, can mean being able physically, materially, safe, no war, not even disease outbreaks (Shihab 2002: 2/197-198).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, what is meant by safety can also be understood as a safe condition from the Covid-19 outbreak. In other words, the policy of the Hajj organizing committee, in this case is the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, when it prohibits Muslims who live outside the territory of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from entering its territory to perform the Hajj and limits the pilgrimage to local residents only, while still maintaining health protocols, as long as the Covid-19 pandemic has not subsided, in our opinion, this policy is in accordance with Islamic law. Because in Islamic law, communal security must be prioritized compared to personal security (Imarah 1998: 13). In other words: The prohibition and restriction on the implementation of the pilgrimage, has absolutely nothing to do with the prohibition and limitation of what is the human right of a human being in carrying out the religious rituals he believes in, because the implementation of a religious

ritual in Islam must pay attention to communal security which has a wider scope and complex.

More so to be associated with the hadith of the apostle, in the context of when an epidemic is sweeping in an area, especially if this outbreak is widespread and cross-regional in nature, such as: the Covid-19 outbreak which hit almost all parts of the world. Restricting oneself from traveling outside the region and closing the area from being entered by foreigners, are the right tips recommended by the apostle, to subside and end the spread of the plague. It was narrated in Sunan Abī Dāwūd, hadith number: 3105, that the Prophet said:

إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِهِ بِأَرْضٍ فَلَا تُقَدِّمُوا عَلَيْهِ وَإِذَا وَقَعَ بِأَرْضٍ وَأَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَلَا تَخْرُجُوا فِرَارًا مِنْهُ. «يَعْنِي الطَّاعُونَ».

Meaning: (If you hear that an epidemic has infected an area, then don't dare to face it (but you should avoid it by not entering that area). And if an epidemic has infected an area, and you are in that area, then don't leave the area to avoid it. from the plague (but continue to live in the area, so you don't transmit the plague to residents of other areas)) (Dawud, 2000).

Understanding the character of Islamic law and reading the word of God and the hadith of the Prophet above, the view that the ban and restriction on the pilgrimage during the Covid-19 pandemic is a conspiracy against Islam, in our opinion are only rumors and baseless accusations. In contrast, the policy of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia which does not send pilgrims and the policy of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which restricts pilgrims, if the Covid-19 outbreak has not subsided, is in fact in accordance with Islamic teachings.

## 2. The Prohibition of Congregational Prayers during the Covid-19 Period Is a Harassment Against Islam

When the Covid-19 pandemic peaked, various policies were taken by the Government of Indonesia, to reduce the spread of the virus in society. Among them is the prohibition of congregational prayers for Muslims who live in red zones (Fahiza 2021: 49), a government policy supported by the Indonesian Ulema Council, by issuing fatwa number: 14 concerning holding worship in a situation where there is an outbreak of Covid-19. The fatwa reads:

"In the condition of uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 in an area that threatens lives, Muslims cannot hold Friday prayers in that area, until the situation returns to normal, and it is mandatory to replace it with Zuhr prayer in their respective places. In the same way, it is not allowed to organize worship activities that involve many people and are believed to be a medium for the spread of COVID-19, such as five-time/rawatib prayer congregations, Tarawih and Eid prayers in mosques or other public places. Instead, they were called to replace it by performing salat in their respective homes" (Fatwa N0 14 of 2020 – Organizing Worship in a Situation of a Covid-19 Outbreak, 2020).

The government policy above and supported by the MUI fatwa, has created contraries in society. Some think that this ban creates the impression that the existence of the Covid-19 virus is more feared than the existence of God (Channel Najwa Shihab, 2020). Not even a few among the preachers who reject the prohibition on congregational prayers above, arguing that there is no obedience intended for creatures, in this case is the prohibition of Friday prayers in congregation, on top of disobedience to Allah, in this case is leaving Friday prayers in congregation. Those were among the reasons given by those protesting the closure of the Al-Markaz mosque in the city of Makassar for Friday congregational prayers (Channel Tribun Timur, 2020).

Islamic law is a law that is not rigid, it is flexible. A legal product in Islam may or may not be enforced when it has the potential to cause harm. Because in principle, Islamic law is built to protect the safety of religion, soul, mind, honor, and property. The Qur'an in its many verses reminds us with various editorials of the flexibility of this teaching. In surah al-Baqarah [2]: 185, Allah confirms that He wants ease, not difficulty, for His servants in carrying out His Shari'a. In surah al-Hajj [22]: 78, Allah reminds us that in religion, He does not want narrowness and hardship. In surah al-Baqarah [2]: 286, Allah conveys that He does not burden His servants beyond their means.

The verses above emphasize the flexibility of Islamic law, where Islam does not want difficulties and harm experienced by humans, due to him forcing himself to do something, where Islam has tolerated not having to do it and has provided facilities to him. The need to purify oneself by using water does not occur when a person is in a condition of illness that does not allow him to touch water or when there is no water, but it is possible for him to perform tayammum, thus Ibnu Kasir in his interpretation explains God's mercy towards His servants (Ibnu Kasir 1993: 2/28).

The Covid-19 outbreak hit one area. Moreover, referring to the opinions of credible and competent experts that Friday or congregational prayers in the area must be abolished. Because it has the potential to be a source of spread of the Covid-19 virus. In our opinion it is much stronger and accepted by reason to be used as an excuse than just an excuse for heavy rain, which is why the Friday prayer was abolished at the time of the Prophet, and instead the companions were ordered to carry out the Zuhur prayer as usual, in their respective places. A concrete example of the flexibility of Islamic law, a legal product originating from the Most Merciful, Most Merciful Substance.

The prohibition of congregational prayers during the outbreak of the Covid-19 outbreak was not at all understood as a phenomenon showing excessive fear, let alone understood as a fear that exceeds the fear a servant has for his God. But this is part of a servant's reliance on his God which is taught in Islam. The concept of resignation in Islam is completely different from surrender. Tawakal in Islam is defined as an act of surrendering all problems faced to Allah, after trying and taking the law of cause and effect (Al Alūsi 2005: 2/443). The existence of effort and submission to the law of cause and effect before submitting oneself to Allah is what distinguishes tawakal from surrender.

In fact, trying and taking the law of cause and effect before submitting oneself to Allah is part of what is ordered in many verses of the Al-Qur'an. As stated in the order of the Prophet Jacob to his sons which is enshrined in surah Yūsuf [12]: 67, so that they do not enter the land of Egypt from one gate. But enter it from different gates:

وَقَالَ يَبْنَئِ لَا تَدْخُلُوا مِنْ بَابٍ وَاحِدٍ وَادْخُلُوا مِنْ أَبْوَابٍ مُتَفَرِّقَةٍ وَمَا أُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَحْكَمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَيْهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ .

Meaning: (He (Ya'qub) said, "O my children, do not enter from one gate, and enter from different gates. (However,) I cannot prevent Allah's (destiny) from you a little also. (Determination of) the law is only the right of Allah. In Him I put my trust and let (only) those who put their trust (increase) their trust (his).

There are several analyzes from among commentators, why the Prophet Jacob ordered his sons, totaling 11 people, to enter the land of Egypt from 4 different gates, including: So



that their arrival would not be suspected by the security forces of the state of Egypt, so that their goal of being able to meet Prophet Yusuf can be realized (Thanthawi 2007: 7/392).

The fragment of the story between the Prophet Jacob and his sons above, emphasizes the importance of trusting in the true sense, it is narrated in Sunan at-Tirmidhī, hadith number 2707, that the Prophet ordered a friend to first tether his camel before putting his trust in "*T'qilha watawakkal*" (at-Tirmidhi, 2022).

The text of the verse and hadith above are very much in line for us to relate to the prohibition of congregational prayers for Muslims who live in red zones, when the Covid-19 outbreak occurred. The prohibition is not a prohibited disobedience, but part of what is ordered by Islamic law. Because trying before surrendering to Allah is part of what is ordered in Islamic law. Not excessive fear, let alone understood as a fear of a servant towards others that exceeds his fear of Allah, which is expressly prohibited in Islamic law. As this prohibition also cannot be understood as an attitude of excessive fear of a human being to face his death (Hilmy, 2020), because maintaining the safety of the soul is part of the goal of the law in Islam.

### 3. Maintain distance in congregational prayers during Covid-19 Contrary to the Prophet's Sunnah

The end of 2019 to 2020 will be the year when the Covid-19 pandemic reaches its peak. The Indonesian government has carried out various anticipations to slow the pace of the Covid-19 pandemic, including in the religious sector, including the policy of keeping distance during congregational prayers (Nasir 2020: 29–30). A policy that triggers a cynical view of a group of people, including several online preachers.

YouTube media is one of the media used by those who are at odds with the government policies above in conveying their cynical attitude. Ihsan Tanjung, a pastor Kwah, who often appears on YouTube media, in a lecture he delivered, stated, "That the policy of keeping a distance during congregational prayers during the Covid-19 period is a phenomenon that violates the Sunnah of the Prophet".

He also conveyed several hadiths of the Prophet, such as orders for Muslims to imitate and emulate him in performing prayers. As stated in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, No. Hadith 605 "*Ṣallū kamā ra'aitumūnī uṣallī*" (Bukhari, 2022) and the order to close the gap in the prayer line, as stated in Musnad Ahmad, No. Hadith 11285 (*Wasuddū al-forage*) (Ahmad, 2022). In fact, he quoted the word of God in surah al-Mā'idah [5]: 82, relating to the enmity of the Jewish community against the Muslim community:

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُم مَّوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا  
إِنَّا نَصْرِيَّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قِسِيَّيْنِ وَرُهْبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ .

Meaning: (You will surely find the people who are most hostile towards the believers, namely the Jews and the polytheists. You will surely also find the people who are the closest friends with the believers, namely those who said, "Indeed we are Christians." That is because among them there are priests and monks, also because they are not proud).

According to Ihsan Tanjung, the phenomenon of keeping a distance in the practice of congregational prayers carried out by the Muslim community during the Corona era,

according to Ihsan Tanjung, is a concrete manifestation of the conspiracy of the Jewish community against the Muslim community (Channel Arsr Media Islam, 2021).

The Prophet's Sunnah is Words, actions, decrees, and attributes that are inherent in the Prophet (Farida 2015: 238). In relation to the position of sunnah in Islamic law, it is the second source after the Qur'an (Syahibah 1991: 11). Even though scholars agree that the Prophet's sunnah has legal provisions in the teachings of Islam. At the practical level, the Prophet often showed a tolerant attitude, to correct the assumption that his Sunnah is rigid. On the other hand, his Sunnah is full of the values of tolerance, as his words are recorded in Musnad Ahmad, No. Hadis 22951 "*Bu`istu bi al-ḥanīfiyyati al-samḥati*" (I was sent with (bringing teachings) monotheism and tolerance) (Ahmad, 2022).

As a concrete example, it is mentioned in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Hadith No. 904, after the Khandaq war, that the Prophet instructed his companions, "*Day yuṣalliyanna aḥadun al-`aṣra illā fī banī quraizata* (Don't let any of you pray Asar except in (the village of) Banī Quraizah) (Bukhari, 2022). It turned out that the friends had entered Asr time before arriving at the Banī Quraizata village. Some of them also decided to pray the Asar prayer on the street, while some others still adhered to the Prophet's order not to pray the Asar prayer except when they arrived at the Banī Quraizah village. It is related to the difference in the attitude of these friends, that Rasulullah SAW tolerated the differences that occurred among his friends and did not blame them.

In our opinion, the command to close gaps in the prayer line, as stated by the Prophet, applies under normal conditions, while during an epidemic, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, this order does not have to be understood rigidly. Especially policies *Social Distancing* in the form of maintaining distance in congregational prayers, this is based on authoritative and credible scientific studies, that *Social Distancing* is a necessity during the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, to minimize the spread of the virus.

In Islam, Shari'a and science cannot be contested, because both come from the same source. Even when there is an explicit conflict between the Shari'a and science, the Shari'a should be interpreted so that it is in line with science, if the truth of the science can be accounted for. Thus, Ibn Taimiyyah hinted at this in a statement, "*Lā yumkin an yakūna hunāka tanāquḍun baina ṣaḥīḥ al-manqūl wa ṣarīḥ al-ma`qūl* (It is impossible for there to be a contradiction between what comes from a valid history and a definite mind) (Umar 1991: 83).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that it is not true that the policy of keeping distance in congregational prayers carried out by the Muslim community violates the Sunnah of the Prophet, or is understood as a real manifestation of the hatred of the Jewish community for the Muslim community, as informed in surah al-Mā'idah [5]: 82. On the other hand, this policy is in fact aligned and in line with the Sunnah of the Prophet, and emphasizes that Islamic law does not have to be contradicted by science, because Islamic law is a teaching that accommodates the achievements of science, as long as science is agreed upon by the authorities. scientist. As Islamic law is not only dynamic, humane, and logical, but also scientific (Muta`ali 2022: 3). In a sense: it must be in harmony and in line with the scientific civilization produced by human thought.

### **Impact of Indonesian online Preacher's Interpretation on YouTube**

The impact of the preacher's interpretation studies is extraordinary *Online* on YouTube. Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of YouTube as a medium for sharing online looks increasingly massive, due to policies *Social Distancing* (keep distance) and *Work From Home* (work from home) issued by several governments, including the Indonesian government, including private companies (Elizabeth, 2023).

Interpretation studies which are usually only presented in Islamic education institutions, mosques and majlis taklim, with the development of information technology, can now be accessed via mobile phones at each other's homes via YouTube. The process of filtering the content material of the preacher's interpretation *Online* on YouTube is minimal. Restrictions or blocks by YouTube platform providers are only related to issues of religion or pornography, minus the confusion and misunderstanding of interpretation. Thus, criticizing the ambiguity of the preacher's interpretation *Online* to minimize the negative impacts it causes, such as: misunderstanding in understanding Islamic law, which is flexible, is a necessity.

## CONCLUSION

Islamic law is a legal product that is flexible. It can be not enforced when it causes difficulties and is contrary to benefit, even Islamic law can be interpreted so that it is in harmony with scientific achievements. This lack of understanding of the flexible nature of Islamic law is a contributing factor to several confusing interpretations around Covid-19 on YouTube media. Among the important tips in an interpretation of the Qur'an, so as not to be confused in interpreting it, especially about legal verses, is to be moderate in understanding Islamic law, not to be rigid but also not to be free without limits, but to be in between the two while still paying attention to benefit. The negative impact of the confusion of the preacher's interpretation *Online* very still, so presenting a flexible interpretation of Islamic law, is a must.

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