Evolution of an Islamic Ritual
Salāh: From a Personal Ritual to a Communal One

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Abstract: *The ṣalāh (prayer) command in the Qur'an frequently accompanies zakāh (alms-giving). Nonetheless, during the Meccan period, the command of ṣalāh was often stated separately. This article analyzes the command for ṣalāh in the Meccan verses to highlight how this ritual evolved from a personal ritual of the Prophet Muhammad into a communal one. As previous studies have highlighted ṣalāh about pre-Islamic rituals known to the first audience of the Qur'an, this article is intended to examine the extent to which ṣalāh had evolved following the nubuwwah (prophethood) paradigm of the Prophet Muhammad, which was initially intended to be more personal and vertical, into risālah (apostolate), which was more public and horizontal. By analyzing the Meccan verses about the command for prayer in the context of the chronology of revelation, this article argues that prayer in the Qur'an evolved from the private ritual practice of the Prophet Muhammad into a communal one through the prophetic justification of the rituals of earlier prophets and their followers. This evolution went hand in hand with the nubuwwah paradigm, namely the claim that the Prophet Muhammad was able to communicate with the metaphysical realm, on the one hand, and the risālah paradigm, i.e., his claim about the mission of conveying this metaphysical information to his people, on the other.*
Keywords: Ṣalāh; Evolution; Personal And Communal Rituals.

Abstrak: *Perintah salat dalam Al-Qur'an sering kali menyertai zakat (sedekah). Meskipun demikian, pada masa Mekkah, perintah ṣalāh seringkali disebutkan secara terpisah. Artikel ini menganalisis perintah ṣalāh dalam ayat-ayat Mekkah untuk menyoroti bagaimana ritual ini berkembang dari ritual pribadi Nabi Muhammad menjadi ritual komunal. Sebagaimana penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya yang telah menyoroti ṣalāh tentang ritual-ritual pra-Islam yang diketahui oleh para pembaca pertama Al-Qur'an, maka artikel ini dimaksudkan*

untuk mengkaji sejauh mana salat berkembang mengikuti paradigma nubuwwah (kenabian) Nabi Muhammad SAW yang pada awalnya dimaksudkan untuk menjadi lebih personal dan vertikal, menjadi risālah (kerasulan), yang lebih bersifat publik dan horizontal. Dengan menganalisis ayat-ayat Mekkah tentang perintah salat dalam konteks kronologi turunnya wahyu, artikel ini berargumen bahwa salat dalam Al-Qur'an berkembang dari praktik ritual pribadi Nabi Muhammad SAW menjadi praktik komunal melalui pembenaran profetik atas ritual tersebut. para nabi terdahulu dan para pengikutnya. Evolusi tersebut berjalan seiring dengan paradigma nubuwwah, yaitu klaim bahwa Nabi Muhammad SAW di satu sisi mampu berkomunikasi dengan alam metafisik, dan paradigma risālah, yaitu klaim beliau tentang misi menyampaikan informasi metafisik tersebut kepada manusia. rakyatnya, di sisi lain.
Kata Kunci: Salat; Evolusi; Ritual Pribadi dan Komunal.

INTRODUCTION

The command to establish *ṣalāh* (prayer) in the Qur'an frequently comes along with that of *zakāh* (alms-giving), since both are believed to represent the symbols of vertical and horizontal worship. Such interpretation has been concluded from the Qur'anic verses revealed during the Madinan period, known as *Madaniyyah* verses. In contrast, during the Meccan period, the call for prayer was often mentioned separately from that of *zakāh*. This article aims to examine the meaning of *ṣalāh* in the Meccan period by analyzing the historical context and the evolution of early Islamic rituals.

Several types of pre-Islamic rituals were still in practice during Muhammad's prophethood. During the early Meccan period, the Qur'an once criticized the practice of "whistling and clapping" (*mukāʾan wa taṣdiyah*) in pre-Islamic prayers —as stated in Q. 8:35 and Q. 107:4 because they were deemed as "negligent" (*sāhūn*). However, apart from these criticisms, Allah also revealed a dialogue between the inhabitants of heaven and hell in the early period of the Qur'anic revelation, where one of the reasons for going to hell was attributed to the negligence of *ṣalāh*.[1] Judging from the Qur'anic verses sent down during the early days of the Meccan period, it was clear that, on the one hand, the Qur'an

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[1] Q. 74;42. The dialogue in sūrah al-Muddaththir reads*, "What has landed you in hell? They will reply, "We were not of those who prayed."*

condemned those who prayed but, on the other hand, criticized those who abandoned it.

In describing the practice of prayer during the revelation and post-revelation periods, Gerhard Bowering highlights an evolutionary process between pre- and post-revelation times. He argues that praying five times daily was only institutionalized after the post-revelation period.[2] In this line, Arent Jan Wensinck provides an additional explanation that rituals in Islam in *fiqh* (Islamic law)n and *ḥadīth* (the prophetic tradition) sources are a continuation of the Jewish worship in a more lenient form.[3] Gerald R. Hawting also views that the five daily prayers in Islam are stipulated in *ḥadīth*, but not in the Qur'an, as he quotes a report in Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīrah* that Gabriel came to the Prophet Muhammad and taught him how to pray. Several more reports from Ibn Isḥāq mention that the command to pray five times a day first came to Muhammad during *Isrāʾ Miʿrāj* (the Prophet's miraculously night journey to Jerusalem and then to the heavens).[4] Jawwād ʿAlī, who writes about the history of prayer from the pre-Islamic time until the arrival of Islam, informs that the presence of Islam in Mecca had instantly made it obligatory for Muslims to pray. However, the command came in two cycles.[5]

From those mentioned above, it is evident that there has yet to be any specific attention on the study of prayer during its formative period in Mecca. Focusing on the revelation of the command to pray in the Qur'an during the Meccan period, this article aims to answer the question: why did prayer become the initial ritual that accompanied the prophetic mission? How did this ritual evolve from the personal ritual of the Prophet Muhammad to a communal one? To what extent was this evolution related to the phenomenon of *nubuwwah* (prophethood) and the *risālah* (apostolate) of the Prophet Muhammad?

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[2] Gerhard Bowering, "Prayer", in *The Encyclopaedia of The Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, vol. 4. (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 227.

[3] A.J. Wensinck, "The Origin of The Muslim Laws of Ritual Purity", in Gerald Hawting, *The Development of Islamic Ritual* (London: Routledge, 2016), 75.

[4] Gerald Hawting, "Introduction", in Gerald Hawting (ed.), *The Development of Islamic Ritual* (London: Routledge, 2016), xviii.

[5] Jawad Ali, *Tārīkh al-ṣalāt fī al-Islām.* Volume 10 (Baghdad: Jāmiʿatu Baghdad, Tth), 92.

To answer the above-mentioned questions, a semantic analysis of the word *ṣalāh* is carried out to investigate the actual meaning of *ṣalāh* in the Qur'an carefully. In addition, this study also examines the meaning of *ṣalāh* in the chronological order of the verses to see how the practice of *ṣalāh* developed in the early days of Islam. Given the numerous mentions of the word *ṣalāh* and its derivations in the verses of the Qur'an, this chronological analysis is based on verse-based chronological theory. The verses related to the command to pray are classified and analyzed according to their historical context. This study argues that *ṣalāh* represents not only the first and foremost ritual for every religious phenomenon and claim, but in the context of the emergence of Islam, it evolved from a personal to a communal practice along with the development of the Prophet Muhammad's career from the personal-oriented *nubuwwah* into a public-oriented *risālah*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
A Semantic Study of *Ṣalāh*

Ṣalāh is often equated with *duʿāʾ* (supplication), which refers to human requests to God. Toshihiko Izutsu, who traces the meaning of *ṣalāh* in the Qur'an by relating it to the concept of revelation, argues that while revelation refers to the process of God's communication with humans, prayer is the opposite since it refers to human communication with God.[6] However, God's communication with humans is non-verbal because humans and God are separated by different levels of being, except for some humans —as Muslims believe— who can pass through His intermediary, a messenger.

In English, *ṣalāh* and *duʿāʾ* are often translated with the same word, "to pray". However, *ṣalāh* bears its meaning separated from *duʿāʾ* in the sense of making the request. According to Izutsu, in the communication process between humans and God, God remains active in the context of revelation, while humans

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[6] Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur'an: Semantic of The Qur'anic Weltsanchauung* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2008), 208.

are passive. Prayer in this communication process symbolizes that humans actively respond positively to God's communication. Concerning the concept of revelation, prayer contains the meaning of *taṣdīq* or justification of revelation.

Apart from *duʿāʾ*, the word *ṣalāh* is associated with the word *dhikr* (remembering Allah), as in Q. 20:14, which means, "and establish prayer in remembrance of me (*li-dhikrī*)." The word *dhikr* is often interpreted as "remembering". However, in several other verses, *dhikr* does not refer to the meaning of "remembering" in the context of forgetting then remembering Allah but is intended for revelation. For example, Q. 41:41 reads, "Surely many people disbelieve in *al-dhikr* when they come to him, and *al-dhikr* is a noble book," and Q. 15:9, "Indeed We have sent down *al-dhikr*, and We certainly guard it". The above verses mention *al-dhikr* to imply the meaning of revelation, not the opposite of forgetting because *al-dhikr* denotes the Holy Scripture. While the scripture is a form of God's communication with humans, prayer insinuates an act of human communication with God. This act of communication justifies the contents of the revelation.

The Context of Arab Rituals in the *Makkiyah* Period

The word *ṣalāh* is at least mentioned in the Qur'an 31 times in 90 different surahs. This number consists of various derivative forms: command (*amr*), noun (*maṣdar*), and verb (*fiʿl*). Of these different word forms, sometimes *ṣalāh* takes the form of a single command to the Prophet Muhammad, while some are in the form of plural commands, mentioned in the stories of previous prophets, or referred to as an emphasis on its function. With the diversity of word forms and the intended direction of meaning, this study aims to arrange a chronology of revelation based on a logical sequence by considering the events that accompanied the prophetic period in Mecca.

Forming a prophetic personality is inseparable from the existing social context during the prophecy. During the prophetic period of Muhammad, there was a long-established institution known as Dār al-Nadwah, which was formed at

the time of Quṣay bin Kilab (d. c. 480 AD).[7] This institution was established to organize better the Adnaniyyah Arab tribe, which previously was in total disarray. Once Quṣay gained the reign as the ruler of Mecca through a 'battle for the throne' against the sons of the tribe of Khuzāʿah, he started to establish the institution.[8]

This period of Quṣay was significant in the history of Mecca, during which the Adnaniyyah tribe formed and organized themselves. Gerald Hawting considered the organization of the Adnaniyah tribe as an early form of the growth of dynasty-based political institutions,[9] which happened around 450 AD and was still developing at the time of Muhammad. This Adnaniyyah Arab tribe geographically occupied northern Arabia with herding and trading as their main livelihood.[10] Al-Masʿūdī said that initially, they were united but were divided by war and formed different languages and nations—the difference between the two only lies in the sense of language use.[11]

In addition to the two tribes, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dūrī highlighted a distinct Arab group in the South, known as the Qahṭan Arabs. This Arab tribe had a better-established kingdom than those in North Arabia. Four major kingdoms were known to reign in the South: Ma'in, Saba', Qutbā, and Hadramaut.[12] These four significant kingdoms from the Arab Qahṭan were more economically developed

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[7] Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*. Volume 1, 138. Al-Ṭabari, *The History of al-Ṭabari: Muḥammad at Mecca*. Volume 6. Translated and Annotated by W. Montgomery Watt and M.V. McDonald (New York: Suny Press, 1988), 24.

[8] Ibn Hisham, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*. Volume 1, 136-139.

[9] Gerald Hawting, The Sacred Office of Mecca From Jahiliyyah to Islam, in F.E. Peter (ed.), The Arabs and Arabia, 244.

[10] Ibn Hazm, *Jamharat al-Ansāb al-'Arab*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muāammad Hārūn (Kairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1926), 8-9. 7. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dūri, *Takwin Umat al-Arabiyah: Dirāsat fī al-Huwaiyah wa al-Wa'y* (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahdat al-Arabiyah, 2002), 23.

[11] Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*. Volume 1. Tahqiq, Abd al-Salām al-Tadmurī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabi, 1990), 22. Angelika Neurwith (ed.), Qur'an in Contxt. Essay Ernst Axel Knauf, "Arabo Aramaic and 'Arabiya: From Ancient Arabic to Early Standard Arabic, 200-600 CE, 198.

[12] Abd al-Aziz al-Dauri, *Takwīn Umat al-Arabiyah: Dirāsat fī al-Huwaiyah wa al-Wa'y*, 25. Lihat Nobert Nebes, The Martyr of Najran and The End of Ḥimyar: on The Political History, of South Arabia in The Early Six Century, in Angelica Neurwith (ed.), Qur'anic in Context, 27.

due to their deep-rooted civilization, particularly in agriculture and trade. It was recorded that they had traded their goods in Ceylon (Sri Lanka).[13]

Dār al-Nadwah was an Arab parliament where dignitaries used to hold important meetings. This institution comprised two major divisions, namely *ḥijābah* and *siyādah*. The *Ḥijābah* was the division to deal with ritual matters around the Kaʿba, while the *siyādah* dealt with political and commercial matters.[14] *Ḥijābah* was further branched into two sub-divisions, namely *siqāyah*, was in change of taking care of the Zamzam issues, and *rifādah* managed the food supply for the pilgrims.[15] The *siyādah* and *ḥijābah* divisions immediately took the lead, making Mecca a center for rituals and commerce.

In the third generation after Quṣay, the Meccan chiefs were led by ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib. Under the rule of Abraha, South Arabia decided to attack the Kaʿba to take over Mecca since the institution of Dār al-Nadwah was seen to have achieved significant commercial success and turned the city into the primary economic center. Despite their failure, they learned the lessons from the incident about ways to organize the tribe. North Arabia immediately devised a strategy to reorganize the existing ritual patterns in northern Arabia. The reorganization was aimed at uniting the various practices of worship under one institution, later known as Ḥums. This institution was established to urge the Arabs to respect the sanctity of Mecca. The tribes willing to join the Ḥums institution were called *muhrimūn*, while those reluctant to join the institution were called *muḥillūn*.[16]

Ugo Fabiety, who analyzes the ideological side of the Ḥums, describes that this organization was created as the association of ethnic groups and ideological religion. All tribes that respected the sacredness of Mecca were embraced by this group, including the Arab nomads and those who had settled. These tribes typically showed their respect for the sanctity of the Kaʿba during the holy months (*ashhur ḥurūm*) by visiting the Kaʿba to honor its sacredness and, at the same

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[13] Abd al-Azis al-Dūri, *Takwin*, 222-23 .
[14] Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*. Volume 1, 138-145. Ugo Fabietti, "The Role Played By The Organisation of The Ḥums in The Evolution of Political Ideas in Pre-Islamic Mecca," in F.E. Peters (ed.), *The Arabs*, 348.
[15] Ibn Hisyam, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*. Volume 1, 139-145.
[16] Ugo Fabietti, "The Role Played by Organisation of The Ḥums" 349.

time, to perform the ḥajj rituals. This Ḥums institution first determined the clothes to be worn by pilgrims to distinguish them from non-pilgrims.[17] During the pilgrimage, pilgrims were required to recite specific recitations, such as *talbiyah*, to welcome the holy month.[18] The grouping of people to respect the sanctity of the Kaʿba made it easier for the tribal chief to impose control on all the member tribes and to deal with the common enemy.[19]

The power of ideological religion in the Ḥums institution was particularly apparent during the Aḥābish involvement in the war against Muhammad during the Battle of Uḥud as triggered by their anger because Muhammad was considered to have disrespected the sanctity of the Kaʿba.[20] In addition to the ability to start a war, they have the power to break the relationship between individuals. For example, in 618 AD, they expelled Prophet Muhammad's community from this Ḥums. In addition, they also required the termination of the marriage relationship between the Prophet's daughter, Ruqayyah, and Utbah ibn Abu Lahab.[21] In Q. 68:35, the Prophet's group is called Muslims and Ḥums as *mujrimūn* (the sinners).

The claim of the Ḥums as a *mujrimūn* group who shall defend the sanctity of Mecca is refuted by the Qur'an in Q. 90: 2, which reads, *wa anta ḥillun bi-hādha al-balad* (and you are free of restriction in this country). In his interpretation, Muqatil bin Sulaiman defined the word *ḥillun* as *wa lam yaḥillu bihā al-qatla liaḥadin* (Allah does not allow any killing to occur in Mecca).[22] In

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[17] W. Montgimery Watt, *Ḥums*. Encyclopaedia of Islam (Leiden: Tp, 1971), 340. See also Aredonk, *Ḥums*—Encyclopaedia of Islam (Leiden: Tp, 1936), 361.

[18] Tilman Seidensteiker, "Sources of The History of Pre-Islamic Religion" in Angelika Neuwirth, Nikolai Sinai, and Micael Marx, *The Qur'an in Context*, 294.

[19] Wolf E, "The Social of Organisation of Mecaa and The Origins of Islam". *Southwestern Journal Antropology*. Volume ???, 1950, 337.

[20] Ibn Hisyam, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*. Volume 2, 83. Ibn Saʿad, *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubra*. Volume 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutūb al-Ilmiyah, 2017), 132. al-Ṭabari, The History of Ṭabari. Volume 7. Translated Montgomery Watt (New York: State University Press, 1987), 105. Ibn Kathir, *Bidayah wa Nihayah*. Volume 4 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutūb al-Ilmiyah, 2006), 402. al-Waqidi, *Kitāb al-Maghāzi*. Volume 1. Ed. Marsdan Junas (No Place: 'Alam al-Kutūb, No Year), 199-200.

[21] Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*. Volume 2, 8.

[22] Muqatil bin Sulaiman, *Tafsīr Muqātil bin Sulaimān*. Taḥqīq Abdullah Maḥmūd. Volume 4 (Beirut: Muassasah Tarīkh al-'Arabi, No year), 696.

principle, it was clear that they formed this institution to legalize war and killings in the name of the sanctity of Mecca.

In this regard, some historians, such as Bowering,[23] Write that pre-Islamic prayers had been performed by these Ḥums. However, in Q. 107: 4, Allah criticized the actions of the Quraysh prayers because they ignored the human aspect by stating, "So woe to the worshippers who are negligent in their prayers". This negligence prevented Allah from classifying these worshippers as those who perform prayers, as stated in Q. 74:43. From the verses in the Qur'an, prayer does not always denote the rituals with the leading spirit of worshiping Allah as the only God. In some ways, prayer is also related to human aspects.

Some historical investigations on the condition of pre-Islamic Mecca disclosed that the criticisms and encouragement to pray in the Qur'an are spread in the Meccan verses. To ensure a more holistic understanding of this issue, it is essential to generate a logical sequence by way of tracing the chronological order of the Meccan verses regarding the word prayer, which were arranged into the following order: first, the single command to the Prophet Muhammad and the advice to do so, which include Q. 108:2, Q. 11:114, Q. 29:45, and Q. 87:15; second, the command to pray for the Prophet's family, covering Q. 20:132; third, the prayers of the previous prophets in Q. 10:87, Q. 11:38, Q. 14:37,40 and 31, Q. 19:31,55 and 59, Q. 20:14, Q. 21:73; fourth, the commands to the followers of the Prophet in the plural form, as mentioned in Q. 30:31, and Q. 73:20; fifth, the morality of the prophetic community, as indicated in Q. 23:5, Q. 27:3, Q. 31:4, Q. 35:18 and 19, Q. 42:38, Q. 70:22, 23 and 34; sixth, criticism of people who are negligent in the spirit of prayer, mentioned in Q. 107:4 and Q. 74:43; and seventh about the procedure for implementing *ṣalāh*, as indicated in Q. 17: 78, 110, and Q. 11:114.

From the above verses' chronological order, the verses' Qur'anic orders revealed during the Mecca period evolved from the command to individuals, families, and communities. They ended with the procedure to implement *ṣalāh*.

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[23] Gerhard Bowering, "Prayer", 227-228.

The story of the rituals of the prophets in the Qur'an serves as a "justification" for the evolution of rituals from personal prophecy to communal prophecy.

Rituals of the Ancient Prophets

The Qur'an also refers to *ṣalāh* as a ritual of the previous prophets, presumably to link the *ṣalāh* ordered to the Prophet Muhammad with the religious traditions of the previous prophecy. This fact is reinforced by the stylistic narrative of the Qur'an, which never specifies any particular place and time, as is generally required to ensure the validity in the writing of history as historical truth. Therefore, reading history through the stories of the Qur'an principally generates a meaningful context at the time of the Prophet Muhammad without merely aiming to teach the Prophet Muhammad about the historical truth of that story.[24]

In shaping the Prophet Muhammad's personality, the provided meaningful context reinforces his prophetic vision. For example, Ibrahim's story about the construction of *al-Bayt al-Muḥarram* (the Sacred House) was only mentioned in 1 verse. Still, when the construction began and ended, the year of manufacture was never explained in the Qur'an. The place issue is generally known as *fi wādin ghairi dhī zarʿin* (a barren valley).[25] This aspect insinuates that the historical narrative in the Qur'an is not merely for the sake of historical truth but is more about the meaningful dimension of the word highlighted.

The stories of the previous Prophet presented in the Qur'an also use the word *ṣalāh*. These stories can be found in several surahs that were revealed during the time of Mecca, namely in Q. 31;17, Q. 11;87, Q. 14;40, and 37, Q. 21;73. It is undoubtedly impossible to consider the worship practice of *ṣalāh* by the previous prophets as the same as the contemporary five-time practice of *ṣalāh* as today's because this worship practice was only assigned in the post-revelation period.

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[24] Mun'im Sirry, *Rekonstruksi Islam Historis*, 40-46.
[25] The Qur'an Surah Ibrahim; 37.

In the Sūrah Ibrāhīm, the command to prayer is indicated by the command to build the Kaaba, the purpose of which is for his descendants to pray, *innī askantu min dhurriyatī bi wādin ghairi dhi zarʿin inda baitika al-muḥarram, rabbana li-yuqīmu al-ṣalāta* (I have settled some of my offspring in a barren valley, near Your Sacred House, our Lord, so that they may establish prayer).[26] Prophet Ibrahim himself also prayed that he and his descendants would be among those who continued to pray, *rabbī ijʿalnī muqīma al-salāt* (My Lord, make me an establisher of prayer).[27] However, the Qur'an never clearly specifies the form of prayer performed by Prophet Ibrahim as it puts more emphasis on the symbol of building in the form of an inscription—*al-Bayt al-Muḥarram* and the command to pray, which further probes a semantic question about the relation between the two.

In semantics, the meaning of a word is not always derived from the text.[28] Meaning can originate from verbal, site objects and gestures.[29] In principle, the shape of a building like *al-Bayt al-Muḥaram* symbolizes a world view of the direction facing a single being, namely Allah. The prayer in the story of Prophet Ibrahim can refer to a ritual that acknowledges submission to one God, a monotheist.

However, during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, *al-Bayt al-Muḥarram* was widely used as the center of many gods (*ālihah*) through statues, which serve as an intermediary towards Allah.[30] In essence, this practice generated an impression of the monotheistic traces in his time, obscured by polytheistic culture. In other words, there was a shift in the way of treating *al-Bayt al-Muḥarram*, from monotheism to polytheism, carried out by the Prophet Muhammad's tribe, the Quraysh. As the site builder symbolizing monotheism, the Prophet Ibrahim was forgotten and replaced with polytheism, with despotic power, the Ḥums.

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[26] Q. 14: 37.
[27] Q. 14: 40.
[28] Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000), 8-9. Sahiron Samsudin, *Hermeneutika dan Pengembangan Dalam Ulumu al-Qur'an.* Cet ke 2 (Yogyakarta: Pesantren Nawesea Press, 2017), 34. Abdurrahman al-Hadhrami, *Mantiq* (Kediri: Lirboyo Press, Tth), 3.
[29] Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, 8. Tioshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in The Qur'an*, 6.
[30] Uri Rubin, "The Ka'bah: Aspects of Its Ritual Functions and Position in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Times, 314-315. W. Montgomery Watt, "Belief in a High God in Pre-Islamic Mecca", 309 in F.E Peters (ed.), *The Arabs and Arabia on The Eve of Islam*. Volume 3.". Jawad Ali, *Tarikh al-Arab Qabl al-Islam.* Volume 6. 2nd Edition (Baghdad: Jami'atu Baghdad, 1993), 8 and 16-17.

Apart from the practices of Prophet Ibrahim, the word *ṣalāh* in the Qur'an is also implied from the story of Prophet Shuʿayb, *a ṣalātuka ta'muruka an tatruka ma yaʿbudu ābāʾuna* (does your prayer command you that we should leave what our fathers worshipped).[31] Regarding the Prophet Mūsā, the word *ṣalāh* is also found in sentences, *innanī ana Allāh lāilāha illa anā faʿbudūni wa aqīmū al-ṣalāta li-dhikrī* (It is genuinely I. I am Allah! There is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Me. So worship Me ˹alone˺, and establish prayer for My remembrance).[32] In the stories of the Prophets Lūṭ, Isḥāq, and Yaʿqūb, the word *ṣalāh* is mentioned in verse *wa awḥainā ilaihim fiʿla al-khairāt wa iqāmi al-ṣalāti wa ītāi al-zakāti wa kānū lanā ʿābidīn* (and inspired them to do good deeds, establish prayer, and pay alms-tax. And they were devoted to Our worship).[33] In Prophet Isa's story, the word *ṣalāh* is articulated in *aynamā kuntu wa awṣa bi al-ṣalāti wa al-zakāti mā dumtu hayyan* (wherever I go, and bid me to establish prayer and give alms-tax as long as I live).[34]

While the sub-chapter on the formation of a prophetic person denotes that *ṣalāh* is closely related to *nuṭʿim al-ṭaʿām* and *naḥr*, it is clear from the prophetic stories above that the Qur'an implies a new term in addition to *ṣalāh*, namely *zakāh*. If the term *zakāh* is only limited to the provision of meals, Allah will undoubtedly remain using the terms *nuṭʿimu al-ṭaʿām* and *naḥr,* which imply the provision of meals. This makes it clear that the word zakat indicates a different practice of more than just giving food.

The stipulation of zakat in the story of the previous Prophet indicates that the practice of *zakāh* is different from merely feeding people experiencing poverty, which individuals can do. *Zakāh* shall inherently lie in the economic cycle in the social order formed by the previous prophets. During the time of Abu Bakr, the war against those boycotting *zakāh* resulted in a *riddah* war, thereby

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[31] Q. 11: 87.
[32] Q. 20: 14.
[33] Q. 21: 73.
[34] Q. 19: 31.

denoting that *zakāh* is related to feeding people experiencing poverty and state income.

The term *zakāh* in the wording of the verse above suggests a clear difference between the order built by the prophets and the economic order built by Dār al-Nadwah with its various subdivisions.

The next question to answer will be about the relevance of this term in the stories of the previous Prophets, such as Isḥāq, Ismāʾīl, ʿIsā, Shuʿayb, and Mūsā in the Qur'an for the context of Mecca, where the lineage of Ibrāhīm and Ismāʾīl mainly established Dār al-Nadwah and its subdivisions. The reason presumably lies in the fact that the Mecca of Muhammad's time was a cultural zone that served as the melting pot for various religious teachings of the previous prophets.

Barbara Finster described Mecca in the 6th and 7th centuries as the "cultural zone". Through her writings, she concluded that Mecca used to be the melting pot of diverse cultures and many religious teachings.[35] Brown further revealed that in the context of Mecca as a cultural zone, the Prophet Muhammad was the one who brought the Arabs out of their isolation.[36] Christian adherents of Nestorian, Monophysite, and Orthodox were spread across Saudi Arabia.[37] Several tribes in Arabia, namely the clans of Asad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā (from Quraysh), Kalb, Ṭayyi, ʿUdhra, Tamīm, 'Ibad, Judham in the area around Wādī al-Qurā were known to embrace Christianity, especially Nestorian.[38] Several priests were also known to settle in Wādī al-Qurā.[39] The adherents of Jews in northern Arabia, however,

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[35] Barbara Finster, "Arabia in Late Antiquity: an Outline of The Cultural Situation in The Peninsula at The Time of Muhammad", in Angelika Neurwith, Nicolai Sinai and Micael Marx, *The Qur'an in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into The Qur'anic Milieu.* (London: Brill, 2010), 62.

[36] Peter Brown, *Society and The Holy in Late Antiquity: The Rise and Function of The Holy Man in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: 1982), 103-104.

[37] Barbara Finster, "Arabia in Late Antiquity: an Outline of The Cultural Situation in The Peninsula at The Time of Muhammad", 70. Also read Nobert Nebes, "The Martyr of Najran and The Himyar: On The Political History of South Arabia in The Early Sixth Century", 29 in Angelika Neurwith (ed.), *The Qur'an.*

[38] Trimingham, *Christianity Among The Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times* (London: Routledge, 1979), 283. Potts, *Arabian Gulf in Antiquity*, volume 2 (Oxford: 1990), 243. McCullough, A *Short History of Syriac Christianity and Rise of Islam* (California: 1982), 179.

[39] Irfan Shahid, *Byzantium and The Arabs in The Fifth Century* (Washington: 1989), 526-527. Trimingham, *Christianity*, 259. Abu Duruk, *Introduction to The Archeology of Tayma'* (Riyaḍ: 1986), 27.

remained a minority, except in areas near Yathrib, such as Khaybar, Fadak, and Tayma.[40] It was even revealed that in the Kaʿba, there used to be a picture of Mary, the mother of the Prophet ʿIsā,[41] which would have been impossible without Christians in the Mecca area.

In the context of Mecca as a "cultural zone", the story of the previous prophets is directed to strengthen the direction of the prophetic vision of Muhammad as an Arab prophet. Since the beginning of the revelations, the Qur'an has paid considerable attention to Arab society to unite all tribes by presenting the Prophet Muhammad as a figure exposed to various religious teachings of the previous prophets living around northern Arabia.

Ritual of a New Monotheistic Community

The prophetic ethics and revelations claimed by the Prophet Muhammad during the Meccan era started to take a position against the authority of Dār al-Nadwah and its subdivisions. Taking an opposition was undoubtedly far from easy for people to follow, given its harmful risks in facing an institution with extensive power and influence in the Arab world. Nevertheless, the truly genuine personality of the Prophet Muhammad as a trusted figure (*al-amīn*) and the evidence of revelation accompanying his mission slowly but surely attracted people's attention, and thus a community of followers began to grow.

Montgomery Watt highlights the economic inequality of the existing social system during the early period of the Prophet's mission. Many enslaved people and weaker tribes did not find a clear future unless they allied (*ḥilf*) with the stronger tribes, although the alliance never treated any tribe members equally. The weaker tribes were only entitled to protection but still had to work hard to change their lives for the better.[42]

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[40] Trimingham, *Christianity*, 282. Shahid, *Fifth Century*, 294.

[41] Al-Waqidi, *Kitab al-Maghazi*. Volume 2.

[42] W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad Prophet and Statesman* (Oxford: University Press, 1961), 39-55.

Some followers of the Prophet Muhammad were mainly from the lower middle class, although some wealthy figures, including Khālid ibn Saʿīd, a son of Abū Uhayhah from the clan of ʿAbd Shams, were also known to convert to Islam. Abū Uhayhah was one of the three wealthiest people in Mecca. However, during the Prophet Muhammad's struggle against the Dār al-Nadwah group, he did not play much of a role. There was indeed a well-off trader like ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, but there were not many people like him except for himself and Khadīja.[43] Apart from a few well-to-do figures, most of the Prophet's followers were youths and children thirteen to thirty-five years old.[44] Therefore, Muhammad's group could be called the youth movement of Mecca.

Another notable prophetic community is slaves, mainly from Byzantium and Abyssinians, bought by rich Meccans from small tribes. Watt explains that most youth followers were those who were aware of the unequal social system that made their future obscure. A bright future was only possible and accessible to the children of the wealthy who had high positions in Dār al-Nadwah.

People with great despair and hopelessness due to a dim future found answers in the revelations that descended upon Muhammad. In the early days of the prophethood, most of the revelations were directed towards criticism of the dignitaries of Mecca, for example, Q. 107, Q. 104, Q. 102, Q. 90:2, Q. 74:43, 44, 45, Q. 70:19 and 20, and so on. People of lower social status who constantly felt social discomfort finally found the answer with this revelation, in addition to the genuine personality and trusty figure of the Prophet Muhammad.

Indeed, several sources revealed the motives of the followers of the Prophet Muhammad. For example, Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri in *al ʿAql al-Siyāsī al-ʿArabī* mentions three motives for following Muhammad: *qabīlah* (tribe); like Hamzah, *ʿaqīdah* (belief); like Bilāl ibn Abī Rabāh, and *ghanīmah* (wealth); like ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf.[45] Some others decided to convert because they considered the

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[43] Some of the names of Muhammad's followers see Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri *Aql al-Siyasi al-ʿArabi: Muḥaddidāt wa Tajalliyātuhu.* Cetakan ke 4 (Beirut: Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥdat al-ʾArabiyah, 2000), 58.
[44] Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad Prophet and Statesman*, 45.
[45] Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābirī, *Al-ʿAql al-Siyāsī al-ʿArabī: Muḥaddidāt wa Tajalliyatuhu*, 58-59 .

Prophet Muhammad a holy figure, as described by Peter Brown.[46] However, such massive conversion into the prophetic community in the Meccan period was more attributed to the willingness to form a new community based on prophecy, which opposed the institution of Dār al-Nadwah, whose basis was the Adnaniyyah tribe.

The main distinctive characteristics between the communities of the Prophet Muhammad and Dār al-Nadwah underpinned the reason for the establishment of the new community. The community of the Prophet Muhammad since the time of Mecca was not formed by kinship but more by ethical morality. This ethical morality is more related to their disapproval of the social structure created by Dār al-Nadwah. This last institution had turned Mecca into a center for trade and rituals, but the daily life practice of this institution was rife with socio-economic inequalities. It was this dissatisfaction of several small tribes as well as many weak circles in Mecca that did not find comfort in the order created by the land-based institution of Mecca's sacredness that mainly urged for a new change.

Therefore, the formation of a prophetic community in the context of Mecca is also based on a political context. However, politics, in this case, is not in the sense of seizing existing power. Still, politics based on the revealed moral ethics of revelation that descended after this prophetic community was formed, as could be seen from the narrative of how it contributed to this moral ethics.

How did revelation shape the moral ethics of Muhammad's followers? In the late Mecca period before moving to Medina, the command to establish *ṣalāh* in the Qur'an was ordered in the plural form, Q. 30:31, Q. 35:18 and 29, Q. 42:38, Q. 73; 30, Q. 22:78, and Q. 6:72, which was because in recent times there have been many communities of followers of the Prophet Muhammad. Some followers had migrated to Ethiopia, while others still lived in Mecca. Several Muslim sources listed several names that migrated to Abyssinia. Ibn Kathīr mentioned approximately 80 names, while those who stayed and later joined the migration to

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[46] Peter Brown, *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity*, 103.

Medina were 32 people. [47] This number makes it possible to use imperative sentences in the plural form, namely *aqīmū al-ṣalāta wa ātū al-zakāta*.

The revelations on the command to pray that has descended since the early formation of the prophetic community often went along with the command to perform zakat in plural forms. The command for *zakāh* becomes a symbol of social and ethical morality, as seen from the context of the socio-economic inequality in Mecca. Even though the economic system of Zakat was still far from reality, the spirit of building a justice-based economy had been there to be realized later in Medina. The lack of political authority of the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca made it impossible to change the existing system because his tribe, the Quraysh, still rejected him, and he was still searching for safe shelter from fugitives from his tribe. Therefore, *zakāh*, in the Meccan context remained a practical concept of "moral ethics",[48]."

Because in Mecca there were no standard rules about the amount to be considered obligatory to pay *zakāh* and their distribution (*aṣnāf*). The concept was merely in the form of *nuṭʿimu al-ṭaʿām* (giving others in voluntary form). However, because this *nuṭʿimu al-ṭaʿām* occurred within the prophetic community, it can be called *zakāh* as well. Only later in Medina this *zakāh* play its role as an economic concept, mainly through tax.

In addition to the word *zakāh*, the word infāq (charity) is also included in the late Mecca period. Infāq is undoubtedly different from giving food and *zakāh*. The word *infaq* in Sūrah al-Faṭir is juxtaposed with *rizq* (sustenance), *wa aqāmu al-ṣalāta wa anfaq mimmā razaqnāhum sirran wa ʿalāniyatan yarjūna tijāratan lan tabūra li-yuwaffīhim ujūrahum wa yazīduhum min faḍlihi innahū ghafūrun shakūr* (establish prayer, and donate from what We have provided for them—secretly and openly—ˈcanˈ hope for an exchange that will never fail so that He

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[47]. Ibn Katsir, *Tarikh Bidayah wa Nihayah*, volume 3, 223.

[48] The meaning of the term "moral ethics" in this case means the social concept that is encouraged by theocentric, to distinguish it from manūʿ (kinky) and *jazūʾa* (like to complain), which is encouraged by polytheistic "moral ethics

will reward them in full and increase them out of His grace. He is genuinely All-Forgiving and most Appreciative).[49]

The word *infāq* is mentioned before *rizq*, which refers to subsistence (livelihood).[50] This subsistence denotes a horizon of understanding of God's gift in the form of the blessings of the universe and everything in it which reaches us. This meaning is deduced from Sūrah al-Faṭir in the previous verse, in which Allah explains His creation in the form of sending down rain from the sky (*anzala mina al-samāʾi māʾan*), and bringing forth fruit from the earth of different colors (*fa akhrajnā bihī thamarātin mukhtalifan alwānuhā*).[51] Meanwhile, *infāq* means to sell well (spend).[52] Thus, after receiving sustenance from nature that Allah has created, he spends it and hopes to get a reward for his work. In this context, *Infāq* denotes the spirit of giving what we have to others.

Behind this literal meaning, *infāq* implies a view of life, namely the matter of trade morality as a tradition for the Arab nation. The formation of prophetic morality is not only about giving alms from our wealth and not only about rituals but also about work. By working, people are expected to hope to receive reward and priority from Allah for their work, so that besides reaping profit (*lan tabūr*), he is also rewarded by Allah. Trade morality in this prophetic community is different from the commercial morality of the wicked (*mujrimūn*), which covers many cheating practices (*mukhtālan fakhūra*).

The question of forming the morality of the prophetic community is also related to ethics towards fellow human beings, such as deliberation, *wa alladhīna astajābu lirabbihim wa aqāmu al-ṣalāta wa amruhum shūra bainahum wa mimmā razaqnāhum yunfiqūn* (who respond to their Lord, establish prayer, conduct their affairs by mutual consultation, and donate from what We have provided for

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[49] Q. 35: 29-30.
[50] Hans Wehr, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, 336.
[51] Q. 35:27.
[52] Hans Wehr, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, 987.

them).[53] This council is to guard against going overboard, *ṭaghā*. This means that humans have limitations in terms of ability and knowledge. With deliberation, the knowledge of others covers the lack of knowledge. This enables a reciprocal process between human beings, which positively affects humans.

After the community of the Prophet Muhammad started to gain awareness of ethical morality and personal ethics, in the final period, Allah began to mention the implementation of these concepts. The procedures to implement this concept are divided into two models. The first is related to time, such as Q. 17: 78 and Q. 114, both of which are related to ethics in recitation, such as not being too loud or too slow, or shall be in the middle of the two, as written in Q. 17:110.

All in all, the formation of the prophetic community was motivated by the large-scale conversion of people disadvantaged by Mecca's socioeconomic system. The Prophet Muhammad was considered a figure who could accommodate their aspirations, so any rituals introduced by the Prophet became a reference for them to follow. Finally, this prophetic community is clearly and distinctly different from the wicked, particularly regarding their world views on divinity and sociology.

CONCLUSION

Having analyzed the word *ṣalāh* in the Qur'an chronologically in the Meccan context, this study concludes that first, *ṣalāh* constituted a ritual that accompanied the prophetic mission because it served as the most crucial ritual symbolizing a unique relationship between humans and God. This relationship began with the revelation to the Prophet. Because *ṣalāh* was closely related to revelation, pre-Islamic models of *ṣalāh* having no relation in whatsoever with the revelation to the Prophet Muhammad were rejected.

Second, this ritual evolved from a personal ritual to a communal one, along with the development of the Prophet's career from *nubuwwah* to *risālah*. This evolution triggered the birth of a new community as a counterpoint to the

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[53] Q. 42: 38.

institution of Dār al-Nadwah controlled by the Meccan leaders. The Prophet Muhammad's community was not based on kinship but was more due to prophetic social bonds. With the formation of a new community, *ṣalāh* became a moral and ethical parameter that strengthened the prophetic community. The old religious community of Mecca strongly rejected this new spirit because it would endanger their social stability, which showered them with economic benefits. Therefore, they strongly opposed the Prophet Muhammad's mission, even though the new spirit claimed to have come from the Almighty God they already recognized. This is the primary reason for the clash between the two. Third, the development of *ṣalāh* from a personal ritual into a communal one was justified through the Prophet's claim for prophetic and apostolic missions and the practice of the ancient prophets and their people.

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