

HUMAN SUFFERING DURING PANDEMIC COVID 19 IN ESCHATOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

Corona Virus disease that surfaced in 2019 is often called Covid -19, a collection of viruses that can infect the respiratory system. In many cases, this virus generally causes only mild symptoms of respiratory infection, such as flu. But then this virus can also cause infections in the respiratory tract, such as lung infections (pneumonia). This Corona virus is included in the class of viruses that cause Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and viruses that cause MERS (Middle-East Respiratory Syndrome). Although this syndrome is caused by a virus from the same type, namely the corona virus, COVID-19 has several differences with SARS and MERS, including in terms of speed of spread and severity of symptoms. The Covid-19 disaster has now become a global fact that shook the world. According to the latest data, there are 203 countries where this infectious virus has developed. The data was updated when the author wrote this article in this world as many as 5,698,421 people were exposed to Covid. (Pane: 2019, "Corona Virus.")352,475 who died and 2,443803 who recovered. Meanwhile in Indonesia until May 27, 2020, there were 23,851 Covid patients. 6,057 were declared cured and the dead were 1,473. On January 30, the disease was declared by WHO as a global health emergency. (Fasya: 2019, "Covid-19 And Theological Deconstruction). And on March 11, WHO officially declared the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore the Indonesian government decided that this outbreak was a non-natural disaster. In terms of the percentage of Covid-19 deaths, it is indeed small, at around 5%. However, what makes a disaster cause global panic is because of the distribution and number of its spreaders which are quite large and evenly distributed throughout the world. Not a single continent is free from this pandemic. In fact, holy territories, such as Mecca, the Vatican, Jerusalem, Badrinath and Karbala are also infected with this strange virus. Responses

to this virus have also come from various health scientists, psychologists, and of course also religious / theologian leaders. Various views on this epidemic have enlivened the attitudes of many people. Of course this policy has resulted in theological clashes because people are prohibited (temporarily) from gathering at ritual moments, such as congregational prayers or worship in churches. The same is true for Hindus in Bali who are prohibited from carrying out the Melasti ceremony, a tradition before Nyepi, although there are also Hindus who do not care less about the appeal of the local government, because some people think that the ban by the state is a kind of wrong fatwa'. (Worldometers: 2019, "Coronavirus.")

A religious leader named Pastor Rick Wiles from evangelical circles in the United States, claims that a new type of corona virus, 2019-nCoV, which has killed hundreds of people in China and spread in various countries is God's punishment. According to him, God is sending an angel of death to cleanse planet earth from sinners. Then Rick Wiles also told the audience on the TruNews web show, he warned the audience that Covid 19 would become a global pandemic that could kill hundreds of millions of people, therefore this virus is truly God's tool that will clean the earth. Based on this view, Of course many people are confused, does Covid 19 really have something to do with spiritual issues or not? and in more depth, the writer wants to explain that the Covid 19 issue cannot be separated from God's grace, it even has something to do with the end of time. Therefore, based on this view, of course many people are confused, is it true that Covid 19 has something to do with spiritual issues or not? and in more depth, the author wants to explain that the Covid 19 issue cannot be separated from God's knowledge, it even has something to do with the end of time. Therefore the author wants to see the Covid 19 issue in an eschatological frame of mind towards the end of time

RESEARCH METHOD

Based on this view, of course many people are confused, is it true that Covid 19 has something to do with spiritual issues or not? and in more depth, the author wants to explain that the Covid 19 issue cannot be separated from God's knowledge, it even has something to do with the end of time. Therefore the author wants to see the Covid 19 issue in an eschatological frame of mind towards the end of time

To discuss the above topic, the researchers used a qualitative approach, because the problem that the writer will examine is a problem that is currently happening in society, namely how people in various places are facing a reality of an outbreak, or what has been called a pandemic, namely Covid 19. However, because This problem must be associated with an understanding of the End times, so the author will describe the eschatological principles towards the end of time, which is then followed by the use of the exegetical method of verses relating to the subject of eschatology. Because with this method the writer will get a deeper understanding of the eschatology that is related to the plague. Then the author also uses the descriptive method as a conclusion to the results of exegesis, which provides an in-depth description of the subject matter, namely the Covid 19 epidemic or pandemic which has become a suffering for God's people. In accordance with the existing problems, the objectives of writing this scientific paper are: First, to find out in detail about Covid 19 which has become a pandemic in the world and especially in Indonesia.

Second, to give an explanation regarding the understanding of the eschatology, the explanation of this subject will describe the verses related to the main eschatological teaching towards the end of time.

Third, to explain the relationship between the current outbreak and eschatological understanding, and how it implies our actions in responding to the outbreak.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

To answer the problems raised by the writer in the introduction, the writer will try to describe it through an understanding of the eschatology.

Eschatology comes from two Greek words, eschatos and logos. Eschatos means final things or final events, and Logos means knowledge. Below is an outline of the origins of the word eschatology and the definitions given for this theological term.

The word eschatos NT: 2078, has the meaning "last, farthest, most end." This noun is used to denote time, degree (level), and place. Eschatos (NT2078 in Strong's concordance numbering), the superlative form probably comes from echo (NT: 2192) in the sense of distance; means the most distant, final (from place and time): In the KJV version of the Bible eschatos is translated "ends of," "last," "latter end," "lowest," "uttermost (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994)

Eschatos& Time.

When denoting TIME, eschatos is translated "time of the end" (Hebrews 1: 2 and 1 Peterus 1:20). In Mark 12: 6 Luke 11:25 and 2 Peter 2:20, eschatos is translated "at last." The same phrase is used in Matthew 12:45; Luke 11:26. In Matthew 20: 8,12,14 eschatos is translated "last." Eschatos in a similar sense, is found in 1 Corinthians 4: 9, to show the apostles as "the last" in a program of spectacular performances; 1 Corinthians 15:45 about "the last Adam", Rev. 2:19 and Matthew 12:45 about mankind's "last" work and state. Eschatos is also used to describe Christ as Eternal in Revelation 1:17; 2: 8; 22:13.

In several eschatological phrases, eschatos contains the following meaning:

a. End of time.

"End times" is a comprehensive term that includes both the time of the resurrection of the redeemed, John 6: 39,40,44,54 and 11:24, and the time in the future when unrepentant people are punished by God or executed by God on when the great White Throne is seen, John 12:48, Revelation 20: 11-15.

In 1 Peter 1: 5, "the last days" refers to the time of the Lord's second coming.

In Jude 18, "the last days" denote the present age, which is the age before the Second Coming of Jesus. In 1 John 2:18, it is called "the last hour (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994)

Last days.

The "last days," are mentioned in Acts 2:17, to denote a period associated with the supra-natural manifestation of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the repeated divine intervention in world affairs at the end of the present age, before the coming of the "great and great," which would mark the beginning of the messianist kingdom.

In 2 Timothy 3: 1, "the last days" refers to the end of world conditions in our day;

b. The Days Are Ending.

In James 5: 3, the phrase "the days which are ending" refers to the time before the Roman armies devastated the city of Jerusalem and the land in AD 70, as well as the time of the end of this age as it relates to persecution activities. by the Gentiles, including the "Jacob tribulation" (verses 7, 8); So this is the time for human suffering will be coming.

Eschatos& Places.

When indicating PLACE, eschatos is translated "the ends of the earth," (Acts 1: 8. 13:47) to denote "the most distant place." In Luke 14: 9, 10, eschatos is translated "bottom." (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Eschatos& Degrees (Rank)

When eschatos denotes DEGREES (Rank), the Greek word eschatos is translated "last" (Mark 9:35).

ESCHATOLOGY DEFINITIONS

The term eschatology comes from two Greek words, eschatos (end) and logos (knowledge) - so the definition is "the science of final things / events.(Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright (c)1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers).

In the sense of eschatology or the doctrine of the last things, includes ideas related to the period of future life, the end of this world (resurrection, judgment; in the New Testament, Parousia / Second Coming of Jesus), and the eternal destiny of mankind. Eschatology is a theological term which is the study of what will happen at the end of history, especially the study of events known as the Second Coming of Christ.(The New Unger's Bible Dictionary.Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988).

Definition of Eschatology

1. The term eschatology comes from two Greek words, eschatos (end) and logos (science) - so the definition is "the science of final (events) things."
2. In the sense of eschatology or the doctrine of the last things, includes ideas associated with the period of future life, the end of this world (resurrection, judgment; in the New Testament, Parousia (Second Coming of Jesus), and the eternal destiny of mankind. .
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Evangelical concept of Suffering

In this section the author will discuss how evangelicals view the suffering or disaster that is experienced by each person. The viewpoint is closely related to theological concepts which will be described as follows ;

God Is Sovereign Over Suffering

Among the evangelicals (Evangelical) view that is so influential, namely Calvinism. Calvinists are known for their emphasis on the teaching of God's absolute sovereignty.(Daun:2008) Calvinists are known for their emphasis on the teaching of God's absolute sovereignty. Calvinism's understanding of God's sovereignty is usually juxtaposed with the discussion of the concept of salvation that God resides in His sovereignty and grace to save mankind. Evangelicals as followers of Calvinism understand very well about the concept of God's about the concept of God's sovereignty.

With regard to God's sovereignty, Daun describes two issues of God's sovereignty relating to humans. Sovereignty in relation to His decisions should not be interpreted as the same as God's arrogance or arbitrariness

First, God's sovereignty in relation to His decisions should not be interpreted as the same as God's arrogance or arbitrariness because He is also just in His sovereignty.

God is sovereign but on the other hand what He decides and determines does not contradict His justice. Second, God's sovereignty does not violate any decrees that have been determined by Him. (Layantara:2015). This explanation clearly places a strong emphasis on the unerring authority of God in His decisions and actions and at the same time does not override His justice.

God has the highest authority over all events and events experienced by humans. As almighty He is sovereign over everything that happens, whether directly caused by Him or what He allows to happen. (Grunden:1994)

On the basis of an understanding of God's sovereignty, Evangelicals then consider every suffering and disaster that occurs also in the will and sovereignty of God.

God does all things well in His own measure. God allows natural disasters, sicknesses that even take human lives as part of His plan.

In suffering there is the Providence of God

In terms of God's providence, it can be defined as God's providence for all human beings and His creation. Grudem said that the providence of God is the inclusion of God for humans and all other creations without stopping by maintaining it, besides that God cooperates with His creation in everything that is done, God also directs all of these creations to remain in the corridor that should be done, and God continues to direct His creation so that it remains in God's purpose. (Grunden:1994)

God has the power to control everything that happens to His creation and He also continues this by caring for all of His creation, in all things God directs to His own purposes.

The emergence of the understanding that God always cares for His people, of course, has a strong biblical basis. Taanyid said, the biblical basis used in explaining God's providence is Matthew 6 ; 26 ; 10:30, Which says that everything that happens in His creation is known by God and God maintains them according to His Will. (Tanyit:2005)

Apart from that, what happened to Job is an important lesson and experience that God continues to be with His people in any serious problem they may experience. In the event Job taught that if God allows His people to experience disaster or suffering, there are certain limits set by God. Lazor et al said, when Satan was allowed by God to tempt Job, he remained subject to His absolute power, this illustrates how God's power over Satan was that he could not treat Job beyond the limits set by God. (Lazor:2015)

Evangelicals strongly believe that the suffering and calamities that occur to humans, especially for His people, are in the will of God. Nothing is by chance or happens outside of God's knowledge.

The suffering of Christ should be a reflection for believers that when they want to follow Christ they must be ready to take up the cross, that is, they are willing to experience suffer for the truth. Indeed, God with His power is able to protect His people from suffering, but God is more focused on protecting the character of His people than protecting anything else.

Of course, God's protection is in accordance with His sovereignty, for the good of the people themselves according to His viewpoint. (Kongguasa:2020)

The concept of God's providence in the midst of suffering, disaster and disease is certainly not easily understood by human's limited thinking so that it becomes easy to blame God for being evil.

Evangelicals believe that suffering does not come from God but is allowed by Him to happen because there is a better purpose for God for his people and behind all that God's goodness and care remains. The ruler explained, when believers experience evil, suffering and disaster, they should believe in the wisdom and goodness of God, even though human reason is very limited in understanding what God means among them.

Believers should boast in suffering (Rom 5; 3-5), because there is always hope that never disappoints for every believer, hope that comes from God Himself. God is present in everything with His wisdom, omniscience, goodness and omnipotence.

Suffering and Disaster Associated with Eschatology.

When discussing suffering and disasters such as the Covid-19 pandemic, it turns out that there are many people who directly associate it with the end time (Eschatology).

Basically such an opinion comes from premillennial adherents.

In terms of how to interpret the prophecy of premillennialism, it is divided into two namely dispensational premillennialism, which a very literal interpretation and historical premillennialism which tends to be more spiritual in interpretation and historical premillennialism, which tends to be more spiritual in interpretation. (Ryrie:2014)

Dispensational premillennialists strongly believe in the existence of tribulation (great tribulation). Faot and his friends said the tribulation or is the time when God will complete His judgment for a sinful world.

This period of torment is a period of seven years at the end of saman, during which time God will judge all people who reject Him. In addition, God will complete His plan of salvation for Israel.

This tribulation corresponds to the vision of the prophet Daniel (Dan 9 ; 24-27). THE 144.000 Jews are the first (Rev 14 ; 4) Part of Israel that was prophesied for Obtain redemption (zech 12;10 ; Rom 11 ; 25-27).³⁶ The occurrence of the disasters and suffering that occurred was part of the procession that preceded Christ's coming on earth to establish his kingdom. Peter wongso explains about the book of Revelation chapter 6 regarding the seven 8 and 9 regarding the seven trumpets and Revelation chapters 15-16 regarding the seven bowls of God's wrath is a terrible suffering which is a sign of the perfect victory of Christ. And soon afterward Christ will come to build his kingdom. (Wongso:1996)

Of course, the disasters and suffering that occur do not fully comply with the tribulation concept described above, especially regarding the length of the tribulation period. Yet dispensationalists often associate every calamity and suffering with the saman's end on the basis that Christ will soon come a second time and the events that precede it are certain to occur.

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Conclusion.

Based on the results of the discussion in this study, the authors conclude that the evangelical group does not provide a clear answer to the questions in the theodicy concept about it comes from and whether God created evil.

This research finds a very theological answer to the evangelical understanding of evil

And suffering, that everything. Evangelicals believe that in every suffering and disaster God is present in His wisdom, omnipotence, and goodness, and still cares for His people even though this is very difficult to understand by limited human thinking. In addition, evangelical groups often associate disasters and suffering with the and times as a part of the procession of Christ,s second coming.

Implications

In the midst of debates and issues regarding suffering or disaster, evangelicals put forward evangelicals put forward a very principle view. This attitude, of course, has implications

for the theological views of evangelicals has authority over His creation including what happens to His creation. Another effect is for the believer that the existence of disaster and suffering makes the believer closer to the owner of the highest authority responsibility to Him, and take responsions.

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