

# Shalom or Hamas? Reconciliation in the Biblical Hermeneutics and Its Important Role for Religious-Cultural Life in Indonesia

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**Abstract.** The paper explores the reconciliation in Biblical hermeneutics and its essential role in religious and cultural life in Indonesia. This paper uses a descriptive qualitative research method with a literature review approach. Literature focuses on hermeneutics, biblical texts, reconciliation, and religious-cultural life in Indonesia. This literature can help the author explore and describe biblical and reconciliation theories. From the results, the author found various insights on biblical hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is very important for the elaboration of human knowledge and action. In hermeneutics, we can interpret and elaborate on the meaning of the text (peace or Hamas?), the language of the text, the context of the text, and the application of the text in context. The author tries to understand and interpret the Biblical texts and relate them with the significance of reconciliation. Reconciliation is a movement of mankind, a movement beyond boundaries. True Christian worship includes the love of God and the love of neighbour. The two must go together, or our Christianity is false. Reconciliation cannot be restricted to the relationship between God and humankind but must also include reconciliation between different groups.

**Keywords:** Shalom; hamas; hermeneutics; reconciliation

## 1 Introduction

Hermeneutics is one pivotal point of the philosophy of knowledge. It is the universal art of understanding. Hermeneutics is very important for the elaboration of human knowledge and action. In hermeneutics, we have a chance to interpret and elaborate on the meaning of the text, the language of the text, the context of the text, and the application of the text in context. The context of the text may differ from the human context when interpreting it. Therefore, hermeneutics is very important for understanding the messages of the text in actual context. We do not only analyze the meaning of the text but also try to find the implication of the text for daily life, both personally and socially.

In this paper, the author tries to understand and interpret the Biblical texts and correlate them with the meaning of reconciliation. Reconciliation is a movement beyond boundaries. There is a correlation between peace and reconciliation. Rios says reconciliation is an essential factor in every peace process [1]. Reconciliation is an important first step in building peace [2]. Reconciliation occurs through God's amazing grace that works in the victims (and perpetrators), giving them the courage to abolish their sadness. Reconciliation offers a decisive view of salvation, healing, and wholeness, offering new insight into the world and providing forgiveness without ignoring the importance of its consequences

## 2 Method

This paper uses descriptive qualitative research method with literature review approach. Qualitative descriptive research aims to describe phenomenon to solve present and future problems [3]. In this study, the data collection methods are literature analysis. Literature focuses on hermeneutics, biblical texts, reconciliation, and religious-cultural life in Indonesia. This literature can help the author to explore and describe development theories [4]. The author also collected other data from various literature (books, journal articles, dictionary) relevant to the writing topic. On the other side, this paper also elaborates on various Bible texts with thematic study approach. When examining and selecting these texts, the author also considers hermeneutical principles of biblical interpretation, such as the context of the text and theology of the texts.

## 3 Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Reconciliation in the Biblical Hermeneutics

Christianity always has an intimate identification with the mission of reconciliation. This mission of reconciliation is not only for Christians but also for other religions who want peace in the world. We can say that the theology of reconciliation is part of the realization of inter-religious dialogue in Indonesia. So, this mission of reconciliation is universal. This universality comes from the central role of Jesus Christ, who promotes reconciliation as the central paradigm of His humanitarian mission in the world. Mostert says, 'the doctrine of reconciliation is a doctrine of the church, but its scope includes the whole of humankind' [5]. Specifically, for Paul, Christians are messengers of reconciliation (II Cor 5:18-20). Reconciliation and forgiveness are words often used interchangeably in the Bible. In Matthew 5:24 and I Cor. 7:11, reconciliation describes relations between men. Reconciliation is theological idea which represents the redemption of God. The term taken from Greek, *catal-lag e* (noun) and *katallasso* (verb), is used to describe God's excellent action to reconcile mankind or the cosmos with Himself. The Greek term shows substantiality and totality of change from God. *Catal-lag e* is term used in commerce to indicate *exchange, settlement, or payment* [6] [7].

One of the crucial goals of the reconciliation process is peace. Peace is an inherently multi-dimensional concept [8]. Kats mentions peace is elusive [9]. It is one of the most revisited concepts; scholars have provided various definitions of peace and what it does. In the Old Testament, the early story of mankind was the story of the contradiction between *shalom* as the initial plan of God for humans and violence (*hamas*) on the part of humans (Gen. 1-11). In the creation story (Gen. 1: 1-2: 4a), God created everything in goodness. *Shalom* means the goodness and happiness and harmony of human beings with themselves, other creations, and God [10]. If we read Gen 3: 8-19, we can also interpret that even though God has an essential vision of His creation which is peaceful, there is still violence (*hamas*). The man in the beginning commits violence for the first time and is fundamentally against himself. By trying to be great, he denied himself and avoided God, blamed God, and others, stepped on other creatures, suffered from being conquered by loved ones, and was disappointed by the earth, which was worked on by violence. Since then, the history of humans has been a history of escalation of violence. *Hamas* means not carrying out obligations towards others; every form of asocial behaviour is contrary to justice (Gen. 6:11), and all that has to do with sin, Ezek. 7: 10-11 [11]. Escalation of violence is not only against God but also against brothers and sisters. In Gen 4:1-8, Cain was angry with Abel, his brother and killed him. Here, one person is against other people because of the tendency to be jealous. Jealousy brings people to become

perpetrators of violence. Violence against brothers extends to wild violence (Gen. 4: 17-24). In the story, Lamech was banal to kill and be proud of it. The violence he played was without reason, uncontrollable, wild, and inhuman. Violence then reaches the universal dimension (Gen. 6: 5. 11) until the universe returns to zero (Gen. 7:11) [11]. Escalation of violence often minimizes brotherhood and negates togetherness in the community.

How can peace be created again? Peace realizes that the relationship between man and God is restored through the covenant and law of God (Gen. 8: 20-9: 17). God agreed with Noah. This agreement is an initiative of God, not only with humans but also with all living things (9: 9-10). God and humans live in peace together. Without God, human history is history of escalation of violence or *hamas* [12]. According to Cone, reconciliation is the bestowal of freedom and life with God, which takes place because of God's liberating deeds. Liberation and reconciliation are tied together and have meaning only through God's initiative. Reconciliation is God's initiative [25]. Here, divine forgiveness is covenantal (not contractual) and expresses God's righteousness [13].

The prophets have continued God's mission in peace and reconciliation. Peace and violence cannot dwell together, and where there is violence, God cannot be there (cf. I Chr. 22: 8-9). The proclamation of the prophets is always conditioned in concrete situations in the Israelite's lives. Prophets prophesied in the name of God by criticizing the uncondusive context. Prophets focus on the role of God first and foremost. Isaiah was one of the prophets who declared peace in the crisis of the Israelites. In crisis, Isaiah recommends reconciliation and peace with God. Isaiah 11: 6-9 reveals messianic prayers about creation and peace. The Messiah will be liberating those imprisoned or those who live in darkness (Isa. 49: 9-11). The Messiah is called the "King of Peace" (Isa. 9: 5-6) [11].

In the context of the New Testament, Jesus is central figure in the reconciliation process. Jesus has commitment to side with truth to fight violence and conflict. Although restoration is usually after making mistakes, it does not mean that the violence and oppression will stop. The violence continues to expand with various constructs. This also happened in Jesus's era. One of the purposes of Jesus' proclamation was peace between people, humans and nature, and humans with God (cf. 2 Cor. 5: 17-19; Rom. 5:10). In John 20, "peace with you" may have been meant to serve functions other than a greeting [14]. However, the presence and preaching of Jesus often brought opposition. Jesus asked His followers to take clear stance (option for the truth) [11]. The choice of truth made Jesus to death on the cross. This is a reminder that the law "love your enemies" does not always bring success, at least in a short period. Nevertheless, the decision to "love" Jesus is eternal regardless of whether humans reject or accept it.

Jesus did not go against violence with violence. Jesus fought it with love and peace. He allowed himself to be held by a group of soldiers in the Garden of Gethsemane (cf. Mark 14: 43-50; Matt. 26: 47-56; Luke 22: 47-54; John 18: 1-12). For Jesus, violence has been contrary to God's sovereignty over the transition of human history. In Matthew, Jesus said clearly and firmly, "... for all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Mt 26:52). So, His disciples cannot defend themselves by using violence (sword). Mark presents Jesus as the anti-violence Messiah. The Messiah can only be understood in the context of peace, suffering, and death (cf. Mark 8:31, 9:31) [11]. Stories of suffering and death become new life stories. The letters of Paul (Romans 5: 1, 10-11; 2 Cor: 18-19) explore this fundamental event for the life of the Church. The basic meaning is the death and resurrection of Jesus have produced peace or reconciliation between God and humans. Jesus destroyed the cycle of violence in the world. Here, God made reconciliation through Jesus's self-sacrifice. The victory in Jesus' resurrection is God's liberating act that makes human reconciliation with God possible. Moreover, in Romans (15:7), Paul

argued that the man of God's reconciling movement toward estranged humanity is the model for how the followers of Christ should relate to one another.

The Bible reveals that someone must love one another because God is love (I John 4: 7-8). There is an indispensable relationship between human relations with God and human relations with each other, God's Kingdom and politics, God's revelation and history, the redemption and forgiveness of sins, and the incarnation of Jesus [15]. The followers of Christ must reconcile by loving the enemy. Jesus said: "I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5:44). Loving others means loving everyone without exception, including enemies. Jesus described the act of loving the enemy in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10: 29-37). Jesus also praised a Roman soldier (Mt 8: 5-10) and a Samaritan leper, a foreigner who returned to Jesus alone to thank Him (Lk 17:17). In the story of his rejection in Nazareth (Lk 4: 26-27), Jesus said that God's blessings to a woman who was a widow from Zarepath in Sidon and Naaman the Syrian [16]. Reconciliation is not exclusively limited to Christians but tries to forgive those who have made mistakes. Reconciliation is a movement beyond boundaries (religion, ethnicity, race, and ethnicity). Reconciliation is the courage to leave revenge and negative feelings towards others. The call for radical forgiveness (for others) demands sincerity and willingness to accept those who ask for forgiveness. This happened when Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times" (Matt. 18: 21-22).

The fullness to reconcile all conflicts God desires is described by the word '*shalom*', or 'peace'. *Shalom* is an essential title of God. *Shalom* emphasises "fullness" in Jesus. Jesus has proclaimed peace as God has, not the world: "Peace I leave to you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you" (John 14:27). *Shalom* as the peace of God describes the wholeness, goodness, completeness, prosperity, welfare, and overall development of all people and all creation, personally and together, about God and each other [11].

Reconciliation is an opportunity from God. Here, humans must accept this opportunity. For Hill (2006:34-35), reconciliation in the theological context is an act of someone who integrates awareness of God's role [17]. In II Cor 5:18-19, it is not just matter of being reconciled to God when it pleases us. It is for God to reconcile us (human beings) to himself, or that human beings are reconciled to God. However, reconciliation cannot be practical without both the knowledge and the consent of the parties involved. Human expertise and contribution to reconciliation fulfil the request and invitation of Jesus Christ: "Let yourself be reconciled to God" (II Cor 5:20). Christ is the source of God's reconciliation for human beings, nations, and all things. Mostert also says that the force of Paul's appeal to "be reconciled", which he describes as God's appeal, seems to require a greater unity between the act of reconciliation in Christ and its actualization in people's lives at any given time [5].

### **3.2 The Important Role of Reconciliation for Religious-Cultural Life in Indonesia**

Peace and violence are two realities that always exist in the context of religious-cultural life in Indonesia. On the one hand, religion and culture are the commonalities with kindness, happiness, togetherness, solidarity, and peacefulness with one another. Religion and culture are the respect of the way of life for everyone. Religion and culture have positive intentions or significance for human beings. On the other hand, the diversity of religious culture can also cause conflict. Conflict causes divisions, acts of violence, hostility, and terror. Therefore, a correct understanding of reconciliation is one of the best ways to build peace in daily life.

Biblical hermeneutics inspire us to create reconciliation and peace in our society. God is the main reconciliator in all our life. God has the first initiative to develop good relations with us. The universal orientation of His reconciliation is not only for someone or one group but all

people in the world. Everyone has inherent peace, humility, respect, and solidarity in his/her life. A call for reconciliation means one's totality to manifest peace. But peace is interconnected with God's love and neighbours' love. Haws writes that 'true Christian worship includes the love of God and the love of neighbour. The two must go together, or our Christianity is false. Reconciliation cannot be restricted to the relationship between God and humankind but must also include reconciliation between different groups of people (Eph 2:14-16) [18].

Undeniably, from the stories of the Bible, humans always make violence in their lives. Sometimes, it is inseparable from daily conditions. The reality of violence is one of the actual phenomena in our society. Every day, through mass media or online media, we often access information about cases of violence. Violence has many types. There is social violence, cultural violence, ethnic and religious violence, etc. The many acts of violence in Indonesia make reconciliation problematic option. On one side, victims of violence had not been restored from their experiences of oppression. On the other side, the perpetrators of violence found it challenging to express their apologies to the public. In the context of acts of violence, Pope Francis has been supporting the victims and defending the rights of those who are fleeing war, violence, persecution, and poverty. Solidarity with the victims of wars, oppression, and economic injustices requires the moral choice to speak out for them and act in their favour [19]. Peace is the most crucial theme in human and church history [20].

Giving forgiveness to the perpetrators and apologizing to victims are essential dimensions of the reconciliation process. Social conflicts can only be overcome when victims rediscover their dignity. The victims must be recognized, heard, and appointed as dignified human beings. Victims must be empowered and their existence acknowledged. From the bottom of their heart, perpetrators also bravely admit their mistakes, and they want to take a new life without violence.

Sometimes, human forgiveness, especially for victims, is almost impossible. However, the story does not end here. The history continues. Victims must take the path of forgiveness to be free from fear of the past. When talking about forgiveness, then someone will feel pressure. This pressure can destroy the basis of identity, community, and even goodness itself. Forgiveness returns the point of balance, restores destruction, rebuilds the community and even anticipates salvation [18]. Therefore, conflict domination must be overcome. There are various ways to deal with conflicts in everyday life. One of them is reconciliation. Peace at the healing level of conflict wounds is always related to reconciliation. Reconciliation is one way to heal the wounds of oppression in the past. Some national leaders are practising it and relieving the victims because there is honesty in publicly admitting their people's or nation's mistakes. They show humility in reconciliation with victims of violence. For example, German Chancellor Willy Brandt "knelt" in front of the victims' graves of Poland. Of course, Brandt was just one of the many figures who saw the significance of the recognition of mistakes while at the same time asking for forgiveness and reconciliation from the victims. Bill Clinton was in the United States of America (USA) and Pope John Paul II was Catholic [21]. Reconciliation is a mutual journey and needs reciprocal participation. It includes willingness to acknowledge wrongs done, extend forgiveness and make restorative changes. Reconciliation helps build trust and makes truth, mercy, justice, and peace dwell together [10].

In realizing reconciliation, a victim decides to liberate himself/herself from the sadness. The person who gives forgiveness does not choose to forget the past because it cannot be erased again. One determines a different future or bright future. As Robert Schreiter said, 'The decision to forgive is the ritual act which proclaims the survivor's freedom to choose a different future. Forgiveness can liberate the victims from the past and then try to build new hope with goodness, togetherness, and kindness. Forgiveness and reconciliation are conscious choices. They do not take revenge as a solution. Reconciliation is often needed; it is a long journey, sometimes

disjointed and broken [21]. It needs transformation of habits and perspectives, different (positive) perspectives for others, socio-political change, and cultural and religious relations, such as relationships at the individual level with one to the others [22]. For Brink, 'reconciliation is not a hasty process. It is not simply liberation or even well-intended mediation. Reconciliation in a Christian context is rooted in our very faith. It is response to our having been reconciled to God' [23]. Forgiveness tries to liberate the perpetrators and victims. Jacques writes:

Forgiveness must be understood as a complex process of "unlocking" the painful bondage of mutual liberation. While the perpetrators must be set free from their guilt (and its devastating consequences), the victims must be liberated from their hurt (and its destructive implications). This mutual liberation implies a process of catharsis, and this is the point which scares most people [21].

Reconciliation is an activity to integrate awareness of joint initiatives, moral truth, patience, empathy, and solid commitment to improve the broken relations between people. This integration promotes collective attitude to minimize the concentration on the past without forgetting the crimes of the past. It does not mean that this integration oppresses the human side. Integration rebuilds religious, social, and political communities by giving priority to the core values of justice and truth. Reconciliation is the golden bridge in the history of liberation theology everywhere. This process would emphasize that liberation is not only about affirmations of clear identities but also needs healing from the wounds of history. The spirit of liberation expanded, forgiving, and reconciling the oppressors. This spirit is not easy. Reconciliation requires a process with perseverance and patience.

Reconciliation is not for fragile people. To act as a peacemaker and build bridges between individuals and hostile groups, one must be committed and ready to fight challenges. Often, it is a problematic and unwelcome task. However, the bridge was made to be stepped on and passed. Reconciliation is not building a wall but a bridge. The wall separates, but the bridge connects. Jesus Christ, a primary reconciler, reconnects the dividing lines. He expects his followers to do the same. Around the 1930s, a German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, said Christians must accept their salvation as God's gift they received freely, giving themselves entirely to God and others as living sacrifices [24]. Bonhoeffer made the distinction between "cheap grace and costly grace". Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, the cross, and Jesus Christ. Costly grace recognizes that reconciliation is bound with repentance [25].

From the Biblical hermeneutics, we learn that the term reconciliation contains a significant essence for Christians and the adherents from the other religions. There is transformation and openness for one concept in universal life. That is a peace (*shalom*). Our diversity needs peace and harmony. Reconciliation can also be described as an escalation of peace. In other words, peace is close reconstruction of social relations and political and psychological constellations because of the differentiation of interests. So, in reconciliation, we must learn from past mistakes. To create peace, we cannot make the same mistakes.

Peace is essential dimension in the religious-cultural life of Indonesian people. There is an intimate relationship between peace, humanity, and community. Peace only becomes sustainable when increased stability is achieved within a community and society [26]. Reconciliation from conflict is one of the substantial points to creating peace in our society. We must have perspective that reconciliation is one of our humanity's existences. Maybe this perspective comes from the existence of human identity that always creates "togetherness" in various contexts of life. Substantially, humans are social beings (*homo socius*) whose existence always presupposes the existence of others. Identity as a social being is related to many aspects and needs.

Indeed, peace is the result of learning about history so that we cannot make the same mistakes or failures. It is a comprehensive process with the practical search for truth, justice, forgiveness, and restoration. Through reconciliation, victims and perpetrators can gather or work together as brothers and sisters. Thus, the significance of reconciliation is not only about the victim's attitude to forgive but also gives perpetrators a chance to gather with them. It is more complex, but they must do it.

As God's want in the Bible, we want reconciliation and peace to exist in every community. Creating reconciliation and peace becomes our social responsibility. Reconciliation and peace are identities. Peace is a representation of human dignity. For example, parents, on various occasions, always invite their children to respect others, be polite and solid, and resolve conflicts without violence. Parents become models in creating peace in the one family. The same thing is in the context of society, religion, and government. There is a powerful synergy between humanity and peace. Here, we build bridges of peace that can destroy the dangers of conflict in society. But what if the conflict happened? Do we still create peace in our society? We must recognize that although, at the ideal level, every human being desires shared peace, conflict can occur in an empirical context. Facts are always open to conflict. Conflicts have implications or bring consequences for our togetherness. In togetherness, we can resolve the conflict without violence as Jesus did. We can actualize peace every day. Everyday peace refers to the practices and norms deployed by individuals and groups in deeply divided societies to avoid and minimize conflict and awkward situations at both inter- and intragroup levels. These techniques are universal in the sense that they can be found in every human society [27].

Jesus asked His followers to love their neighbour. In the context of peacebuilding in our society, we identify our neighbour as the subject. We find our faces in the other. For Levinas, encounter with the other leads us to responsible ethic for the other. An encounter with the face is like the living presence of another person and, therefore, is something experienced socially and ethically [28]. Living presence would imply that the other person is exposed to us. In the face of the other, we share a trace of God. We identify God in the face of the other. The other cannot be the object of the self but recognizes the otherness of the other. We cannot destroy the other's life. The other is the subject of how we can make constructive peace. In the face of other religions or other cultures, we find God, good values, and wisdom.

We can connect the concept of reconciliation with inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue. Jesus described the act of loving the enemy and neighbour as part of the reconciliation process in the parable of the good Samaritan, praised a Roman soldier and a Samaritan leper, and blessings to a woman who was a widow from Zarepath in Sidon and Naaman, the Syrian. Here, Jesus made inter-religious reconciliation (dialogue). Reconciliation is reciprocal communication between one and the other, between one religion and the different religions, in openness. It is a process of mutual enrichment. Reconciliation is openness to knowing, loving, and respecting someone with all his beliefs or ideologies, sense of religion, healing activity, and pilgrimage to uphold justice, peace, and welfare in the community. We can promote the vital attitude: 'a firm standing in one's religion, mutual respect, willingness to learn, and the readiness to share' [29]. We can also understand that reconciliation is a way of acting, a pattern of attitude, a passion directing someone's behaviour. Inter-religious dialogue presupposes attention, empathy, mutual trust, and acceptance of others. Reciprocal recognition, fraternal corrections and exchanges lead the dialogue partners in the reconciliation process to maturity and, in turn, increase interpersonal fellowship. The other religious adherent is not an enemy but rather a neighbour. Love of neighbour is central to the teaching of Jesus. Love one another is a significant paradigm in all religions in Indonesia. Religions are a source of goodness.

In reconciliation process, the human must learn from God's initiative, the prophets' proclamation, Jesus' commitment, or some religious leaders (Mahatma Gandhi, Kofi Annan, Pope John Paul II, Martin Luther King, Jr, Yasir Arafat, Abdulrahman Wahid, etc.) to fight violence with nonviolence, love, and forgiveness. These processes also show the paradigm of inclusiveness in the context of religious interconnection. The paradigm of inclusiveness emphasizes the changeable with understanding others and learning from them. Belief brings changes. Believers are agents of change. In inter-religious dialogue, learning from others is imperative.

Thus, we become the right man and happy because of openness to the identity of others in peace. Here, openness is often associated with a dynamic attitude that brings change. During reconciliation and peace, everyone has the same opportunity to express their opinions, perspectives, and thinking. Sometimes, there are debates and disagreements, but they listen to each other. Everyone tries to abandon their selfishness and individuality and eliminate stereotypes against each other. They share hurtful experiences and wisdom. Here, reconciliation connects with collegiality or the sociality of religious adherents. Their openness is a symbol of their engagement with others. Mashuri and Leeuwen mention reconciliation requires constructive cognitive orientations, including mutual trust and positive attitudes toward the other party [30]. An orientation of openness is how to develop harmony and peace in society. People will perceive themselves as a part of the other and vice versa; this expression emerges from social cohesion. Living in harmony and peace means people could get together and rejoice together in sisterhood and brotherhood.

We know that Indonesia has various backgrounds. Many cultures, traditions, languages, values, and customs exist. So, there are cross-textual hermeneutics approaches to integrating Biblical texts and texts with various contexts. We need different cross-textual hermeneutics in many contexts. For example, it shows how the Catholic Church approaches the Manggaraian context to implement cross-textual hermeneutics. That is an inculturation approach. Some theologians try to find the local belief and connect it with the Bible text. In understanding the biblical texts, the Manggaraian people also carry their cultural identity and values. Through inculturation, the Christian faith really internalizes into the cultural life of the people so that the mindset, attitude patterns and patterns of action formed by their culture are illuminated and guided by the principles and values of the Christian faith. Therefore, in the inculturation process, paying attention to the reciprocal process is necessary.

On the one hand, the Christian faith animates, illuminates, and guides' culture. On the other hand, culture enriches the Christian faith in the concrete life of the faithful. The process of inculturation presupposes an in-depth study of culture. The Church is open to local languages, traditions, various expressions of the existence of God, and the methods used to find God's contribution in daily life. For example, we know that one of the primary identities of the Church is community. Christians usually sit together and share their experiences and the meaning of the Bible text in daily life. Many methods can be used. Contextually, Christians can use the local tradition to realize the message of the Bible text on community. The usages of language and cultural characteristics are incorporated to effectively communicate the core message of the gospel. The Christians can use local traditions.

#### **4 Conclusion**

In the context of hermeneutics, we know that God's first initiative was to build peace and reconciliation with human beings. God reconciles us with love. The spirit of reconciliation is still relevant to our context in Indonesia. There are many cases of violence in our society. We



learn from the Bible text and local tradition that we consistently develop peace because God is primarily peace. Reconciliation is the right way to create a better future. A future atmosphere will be identified with peace, love, and brotherhood. There is no discrimination or superiority for one another. But many people also doubt the practicality of reconciliation. It is not easy to forgive and reconcile. Reconciliation that prioritizes restorative justice, restoring the dignity of victims, is a risky insistence amid demands for justice with appropriate punishment. Reconciliation and forgiveness are integral parts of creating peace in Indonesia. This is a long process and requires power from the religious adherents. The Church teaches that peace is possible only through forgiveness and reconciliation. The process of reconciliation will take place if the victim and the perpetrator sit together and tell the story of the violence. The perpetrator tells the true story and then humbly apologizes to the victim. The same thing happened to the victim. He/she must be making apologies to the perpetrator.

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